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Just Trying to  
Keep the Customer Satisfied

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THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF HOUGHTON COLLEGE

# THE HOUGHTON STAR

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*Student Project Fund competes with other campus improvements projects*

## Significant Changes to SPF Raises Concerns

BY ADAM KNEELAND

Houghton has announced that, due to economic restrictions, it will be making permanent, significant

changes to the Student Project Fund (SPF). The SPF is money set aside from student tuition that is used by students for on-campus projects. Controlled by the Student Government Association (SGA), the SPF has allowed direct student input regarding campus enhancement. It is used for permanent improvements to the campus and has funded such projects as the indoor track in the fitness center, the prayer chapel, the renovation of the Campus Center lounge, and the new outdoor

classroom. Oct. 12, Vice President for Student Life Sharra Hynes announced in Senate that "the current structure has to be adjusted as we move forward."

Hynes explained the changes to the Senate via Skype, saying "we're operating with limited resources... [There is not] a lot of extra, not a lot of latitude right now."

Debt accrued since the creation of the SPF in the early 1990s has placed restrictions on the amount of "capital spending" allowed to Houghton each year. SGA president and senior Zachary Adams clarified that these limits to spending "come from agreements with our lenders. They're not being set

by the institution." Because of these restrictions, the SPF has to compete with other projects that might get higher priority, like renovations to residence halls. Efrain Rivera, Vice President for Finance, explained that because of the competition between projects, the SPF has become ineffective in the face of Houghton's limited resources.

"There's not the level of control that the students would want because of that competition with other projects and demands," Rivera said to the Senate, via Skype.

Several SGA members have expressed concern that the senate as a whole was not officially notified

prior to Oct. 12 and that the reasons behind the changes were not fully explained. However, senator Theodore Janney, sophomore, did say that, "given it was a Skype [conference with the senate], late at night," Hynes and Rivera answered all the questions as fully as could be expected.

Adams said of these changes, "I was initially concerned, because I think this [the SPF] is a great way for any student to get involved in enhancing the student experience," but also said that the administration—and President Mullen, Hynes, and Rivera in particular—have clearly "wanted to include the SGA in the restructuring process, which

has been encouraging and speaks volumes for their personal philosophy."

Speaker of the Senate Benjamin Clark, junior, said that the response of the SGA "is going to entail working with the administration to outline a new policy through the Office of Student Life that will allow for direct student input in the development and approval process for capital projects."

What exactly will replace the SPF is unclear. One suggestion has been adding student representatives to the Campus Enhancement Committee (CEC), which controls a wider range of

*SPF cont'd on page 3*

## Alterations Made to Off-Campus Programs

*New Balkans semester added, London FYHP restructured*

BY ERIKA BREMER

A new opportunity has been added to Houghton's off-campus programs. Starting next fall semester, students will be able to accompany Dr. Meic Pearse to the Balkans for a semester of academic and cultural integration. In Pearse's words, the program is centered on the idea of interaction between three major cultures: the Protestant West, the Orthodox East and the Muslim world.

"Students will spend about a month in each of these 'worlds,'" he said.

The semester includes time in the Croatian city of Krk, Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and concludes with time in Zagreb, Croatia. Also included periods of traveling between these major city stays. Up to 25 students will be able to join the program.

The academic focus of the Balkans semester includes courses in history, literature, theology and fine arts. As

Pearse stated, most majors can benefit from this program because the last of these focuses can be substituted for an independent study that coincides with the student's field and relates in some way to the Balkans.

The academic demand for this semester is somewhat higher than other off-campus programs, requiring a GPA of at least 3.3. "This is serious academic work," Pearse said. "If you don't want to work hard, don't come." He will begin to recruit students from other schools of the Council for Christian

Colleges and Universities (CCCU). "We'd love to bring in as many as ten to 12."

The introduction of the

last three years, the college has been trying to get into a "best practices mode" for our off-campus programs through

researching the things that work best with other colleges. She said that she understands that "for a while, it may have felt like all the programs were closing," but these kinds of changes take a while.

The First-Year Honors Program (FYHP) in London is among the programs affected. "[FYHP] has been a

strong program and has been attractive in recruiting students, so we want to keep some of the things that are good about that program."

While most likely this will mean discontinuing the London residential aspect of the program, there is much discussion about ways to improve on the program as a whole. Factors contributing to the need for restructuring include financial considerations as well as the investment of faculty it calls for.

"I'm sad about the end of the program because I loved teaching it, but I also am encouraged because I think we can be creative," said Mills-Woolsey.

Concerning the reasons behind opening the Balkans program, Mills-Woolsey notes the success and appeal of Houghton's existing honors program in the Balkans, East Meets West (EMW). This program is relevant, said Mills-Woolsey, because the history of the area is important to us "historically but politically, too, to understand

*Balkans cont'd on page 3*



photo courtesy of revolutionaryfrontlines.wordpress.com

## Engaging the World

## The Deeper Failure: Overlooking People in a Voyeuristic Age



PHOTO BY JORDAN GREEN

BY TED MURPHY

Our culture has become strangely ambivalent about sex. The common perspective promoted is "sex is no big deal." The casual depiction in film and television of people having multiple sex partners is so prevalent we almost fail to take note. If sex were a commodity (which in some cases it is) one might consider the reference to it in films as a kind of "product placement."

Despite this prevailing casual regard for sex, for many individuals sex still means something intimate, significant, and special. The flippant references to "hooking up" are in stark contrast to an individual's potentially complex sexuality.

There is a mixed message in the entertainment media about sex. The manifest message of "sex is no big deal" is in tension with the latent message that "sex is constantly on our minds." Otherwise, why are we so bombarded by it in the very media that pretends to exaggerate its lack of significance?

The movie *The Virginity Hit* came out in mid-September. The trailer shows a teenage boy intent on losing his virginity to a girl by which he is smitten.

He plans to engage in sex while "friends" watch on a live video feed in a separate room. All this is interrupted when the girl discovers the cameras. We get all this and more in a 2:30 minute trailer. Beyond this I stop thinking about the film.

On the very week (almost to the day) of the premiere of *The Virginity Hit*, at Rutgers University, Tyler Clementi's roommate Dharun Ravi joined his friend Molly Wei in her room to watch Clementi have sex with another young man by way of a hidden camera. They posted this video feed on the Internet. On Sept. 22, Tyler Clementi took his own life.

Clearly for Clementi, his privacy and sexuality were a "big deal." His humiliation was so catastrophic he chose to destroy himself. Now the media is asking questions. Here is a sampling: How could a person's roommate do this? Because Clementi was gay, is this a hate crime? How should colleges educate students on "cyber ethics" and the proper use of the Internet? What has happened to our youth to be so callous?

The confluence of tragic events of Tyler's suicide and the release of *The Virginity Hit*, coupled with the hand wringing of the news media reminded me of the public debate that emerged on the confirmation of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. In 1991, during Thomas' confirmation hearings, allegations emerged from Anita Hill that Judge Thomas had sexually harassed her when she worked for Thomas at the EEOC. Senators lined up with questions about whether or not Thomas was therefore fit for a Supreme Court appointment based entirely on allegations which were well beyond the statute of limitations. It was typical politics and theater. Ted Kennedy, with an apparent

lack of irony, asked how such acts of sexual harassment could *this day* still be going on in our society.

What struck me at that time was the disconnect between the confirmation hearings surrounding the indignation over "sexual harassment in the work place" and the content of the then most popular show in the country: "Cheers." "Cheers" was a sitcom predicated on the topic of sexual harassment in the work place. It was a very funny show.

Today, one of the most popular television shows is "The Office." "The Office" is a very funny show. In both the U.S. version (and even more so) in the British version there is a particular form of humor on which the show is built. This goes by many names; the most common is "Cringe Humor." Cringe humor relies on humiliation. It takes energy from the degree of discomfort it can generate in the audience. Students can no doubt name numerous television and film titles that use this genre of humor. It is very big in the entertainment industry.

Cringe humor has leached into the Internet; upload video and photo sites are filled with examples. It has become a national pastime to post embarrassing material. Much of this is harmless, but some of it is dangerous. It was for Tyler Clementi.

Clementi became the object of Dharun Ravi's public joke. He was destroyed by this joke. The university where this took place now wonders if a "seminar on cyber ethics" might help prevent future situations such as this. There is actually no such thing as "sexual morality" or "cyber ethics." There is the Principle of Morality. It is never ethical to use another person for our pleasure or entertainment. It is never ok

to objectify another person. Technology only expands the reach of the violation. When we act out of Principles we are not nearly as often caught by the particulars of situations. When Principles become changed to specific categories we are often talking about Laws. Legality and Morality have different concerns. I am very doubtful that we can ever legislate morality. If I decide not to act in a certain way only out of fear of being caught then I am not free morally of my responsibility.

The erosion of our sense of ethics is in some degree connected to the things we choose to fill our minds with. The permission our culture extends to us to find humor in another person's humiliation should give us pause.

Obviously there is a difference between a television show and a hidden camera, which invades a real person's privacy. The problem for too many is that they fail to recognize the difference. I am not so naïve as to think shows like "Cheers" or "The Office" have any causal impact on our behavior. I see these things as more of a barometer to our cultural sensibilities. If there was not already some predilection toward voyeurism, movies like *The Virginity Hit* would fail.

There are plenty of ways to destroy another person. Most of us would not do what Ravi and Wei did. However, my need for honesty dictates that when I begin talking about some person I do not like, I tend (as also, most likely, do you) to take just a bit too much delight in mentioning some small bit of information I "heard" that diminishes that person ever so much. It is different in degree but not so much in kind to what was done to Tyler...and...but...it is almost always funny on "The Office."

## The World OUT There

BY DEREK SCHWABE

## UK Makes Massive Spending Cuts

UK Chief of Treasury, George Osborne, announced this week a national plan to make the largest national budget cuts since World War II. The new reduction plan will be implemented over a five-year austerity period. Public programs of all kinds were hit, including welfare, councils, police budgets, and even the household of Queen Elizabeth the II. As many as 500,000 public sector jobs will also be cut as the nation attempts to lift a burden of 156 billion pounds (\$245 billion) in national deficit. In a statement to lawmakers, Osborne asserted that "Tackling this budget deficit is unavoidable," pointing out the ensured benefits of a short term sacrifice. Calling the situation a "debt supertanker," he noted the greatest causes: massive spending in bank bailouts, a major drop in tax revenues, and a jump in welfare spending.

## US District Judge Rejects "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"

A federal judge formally refused to allow the Pentagon to reinstate its ban on openly gay men and women in the U.S. military Tuesday, declaring its "don't ask, don't tell" policy unconstitutional. U.S. District Judge Virginia Phillips issued a written decision denying a government request to lift her own injunction barring further enforcement of the ban. Phillips explained, in a six-page opinion piece, her concerns for military cohesion and unity, but emphasized the need to preserve constitutional rights of citizens as a first priority. While president Obama reaffirmed his continued support for the abolishment of "don't ask don't tell," he cautioned the judge to wait for a political remedy, rather than imposing one through the courts. Following Phillips' decision, the Pentagon made clear to instruct recruiters to accept gay applicants Tuesday.

## Microsoft Introduces Windows Phone 7

Microsoft Inc. unveiled its new Windows Phone 7 platform this week, in an effort to break into the mobile phone market thus far dominated by the Apple iPhone. The new mobile operating system, to be released early next month, will be housed in the interactive Samsung Focus Model and serviced by AT&T. Critics have given the phone relatively positive reviews, noting its capability to easily achieve most of the tasks that a user would regularly ask of an iPhone. One such critic praised it as a "surprisingly stable, user-friendly package." The greatest noted disadvantage was the lack of flash video capabilities. Reviewers agree that the Apple iPhone and Google Android will need to make room for a highly competitive new contender.



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## Bringing awareness to students

# Counseling Services to Survey Houghton Community on Sexual Harassment Policies of the College

BY COLLEEN WHITE

Since its inception in 1992, the Houghton College Policy on Sexual Harassment has undergone two revisions, the second of which was completed this year. Now in its updated version, the improved document is publicly available on the Human Resources website.

However, because most Houghton students receive their education on sexual harassment at Houghton in a half-hour session during first-year orientation, counseling services is going to be releasing a survey to faculty, staff, and students Oct. 29 as a refresher course. The goal of the survey, according to Wendy Baxter, College counselor, is to allow everyone in the Houghton community to share their observations and experiences pertaining to potential sexual harassment in order to better implement the policy already in place.

As it is, students, faculty, and staff with any complaints or inquiries about sexual harassment on campus can bring their complaints to Betsy Sanford, the Sexual Harassment Officer, in the Church Relations Office. Sanford is then able to consult the complainant on what the best course of action is. Often no

action is taken by the complainant, but other alternatives are to write a letter to the person the complaint is against, set up an informal meeting with or without a mediator, or in the most extreme cases, lodge a formal complaint which begins an investigative process.

If the parties involved are students, an investigative team of three students is selected from a pool of six students on the Sexual Harassment Investigation Committee, who, this year, are all members of SGA, though any student can hold this position. From there, students are advised by a faculty mentor and begin researching the case and gathering the facts. This is followed by a disposition where each person involved represents him or herself to the committee and they decide whether or not to take disciplinary action.

The number of formal complaints made per year varies, but in some years there have been three or four formal processes. The most important thing to remember, according to Baxter, is that whoever brings the complaint is not obligated to take any actions, and disciplinary procedures are "never taken out of [the complainant's] hands."

"Sometimes it's just good to go to someone and talk about it," said Baxter. All consultations are confidential, and privacy is highly protected.

The "back-door" goal of the forthcoming survey is, according to Professor Michael Lastoria, to educate not only students, but faculty, and staff as well as to what sexual harassment actually is. According to the official policy, sexual harassment is "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or physical contact of a sexual nature...when such conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's employment or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment."

Oftentimes, according to Lastoria, victims and perpetrators alike may not recognize sexual harassment when it occurs, because personal definitions of what is appropriate vary. However, as Baxter pointed out, there is a need to be careful with words and actions because of the diversity of backgrounds people have.

Students on campus last semester may remember the table advertisements in the cafeteria about sexual harassment, with phrases like "unsolicited neck massage" drawing particular attention from the student body. While Baxter understands how seemingly petty things might be taken as a joke by most people, she pointed out that the prevalence of sexual assault and abuse makes it unfair to assume that physical contact with everyone is always welcome.

"If it makes someone uncomfortable, it's disrespectful," said Baxter.

It is the purpose of the survey to foster self-reflection of this kind, and increase general awareness of sexual harassment, so that though misunderstandings are bound to occur, as a community we can gain more insight into how our words and actions affect others.

Anyone with sexual harassment complaints or inquiries can talk to:

**Sexual Harassment Officer**  
**Betsy Sanford**

**Church Relations Office**

**Betsy Sanford**  
**@houghton.edu**

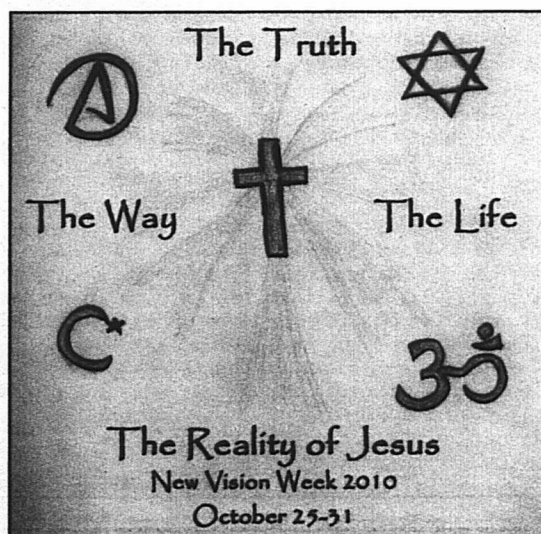
## SPF cont'd from page 1

projects than the SPF. Senator Garrett Fitzsimmons, junior, expressed concern that although there would be student representation, there would be no student senate involvement and less student control than before. Fitzsimmons also noted his concern that the wider scope of the CEC would allow for less time given to student-proposed projects.

Adams, however, said that whereas the SPF traditionally looked at only one project a year, this broader scope of the CEC might allow for

more student input. Janney also noted that consolidating the ways of funding capital improvements would decrease competition for funds and "streamline the process."

Adams said that the new structure, whatever its form, will most likely be in place by the end of this semester. Both Hynes and Adams stressed that a student voice will be maintained, and, said Adams, the new system will maintain the "original intent for the SPF, which was to have more student voice in what goes on at Houghton." ★



## Balkans cont'd from page 1

the religious-political landscape, the way in which people's faith and nationalism come together."

President Mullen said, "This program...provides for extended study in a part of the world that brings together a rich variety of geo-political and cultural issues that relate to a range of majors." Also, Mills-Woolsey noted that Pearce's involvement with EMW and the Balkans gives him the expertise to make this semester a success.

As a junior who is interested in doing the Balkans semester next fall, Kyle Johnson said he thinks studying abroad is important because "no matter how technologically advanced we become, a view of the world through a computer or television is no replacement for seeing it for ourselves." Johnson is a former EMW honors student who has interest in perhaps working in Eastern Europe someday. "I've always loved this part of the world," he said. His fascination for post-communist societies, Eastern European culture and a growing interest in the Eastern Orthodox Church make this semester a great opportunity. If he goes, Johnson is hoping to get a deeper appreciation for all the contours of the various cultures and an understanding

that he'll be able to apply in comprehending other cultures he may one day encounter, as well as making connections for the future.

Sophomore Caitlin Marr shared a similar passion for the Balkans. Though she did not do EMW, the past three summers she has been to Croatia for short-term missions helping at a church in the city of Karlovac. She said she thinks cross-cultural experiences help to take learning beyond the classroom. Marr is attracted to the program for a number of reasons.

"The people, I'm completely in love with them," and "to actually see the sites of the war myself will be emotionally impacting" in a way that will benefit Marr in her future engagement with this part of the world. She said that she is excited to add a new dimension to her experience in the Balkans through the academic rigor the semester will provide. Marr is hoping to gain "a better understanding of the area and the people...and what's happened in the past fifteen years...It will be eye-opening [and] in the long term that will help me mission-wise." She will be pursuing an independent study in the Croatian language.

As Pearce said aptly, "This program is unique; there are no other colleges or universities offering the Balkans semester...this is actually unique." ★



# Jumping on the Learning Bandwagon

## Unique Opportunity Now Available to Incoming Freshmen

BY KRISTEN PALMER

It started with an idea. Susan Bruxvoort Lipscomb, English professor at Houghton, wondered what it would be like to bring a residential learning community to the College. She recognized the great amount of research that demonstrates the advantages of regular interaction between students about classroom matters. She observed them firsthand, in honors programs she has taught and a class she helped teach that met five times a week. Both the honors programs and the class had the most vital element of a learning community — a high degree of interaction between classmates.

Lipscomb, who also serves on the Integrative Studies Committee, presented her idea to Gabriel Jacobsen, Director of Residence Life. Together, the Integrative Studies Committee and Residence Life staff formed a joint initiative and developed a proposal for a First-Year Learning Community (FYLC) that was adopted by faculty in March of this year, bringing to Houghton its first-ever residential learning community this fall.

"The FYLC connects resident life to academics and will benefit non-honors students," said Lipscomb. "Honors students at Houghton are provided with the opportunity to study together, but we didn't have that opportunity for non-honor students."

According to the FYLC page on Houghton's website, the program "seeks to help students make connections between what happens in the classroom and the out-of-class experience in college." Students interested in participating are required to take two integrative studies courses each semester with the same students they also live with. The girls would live together on a designated floor

in Gillette Hall, while the boys would live on one in Rothenbuhler Hall. As part of the program's curriculum, students will also be required to participate in several co-curricular activities outside of the classroom setting, such as "viewing and

by professor Terry Paige. The student-teacher relationship is not limited to the basement of Gillette, though. Teachers take turns stopping by the weekly meals and campus events the students share together, which builds an even stronger

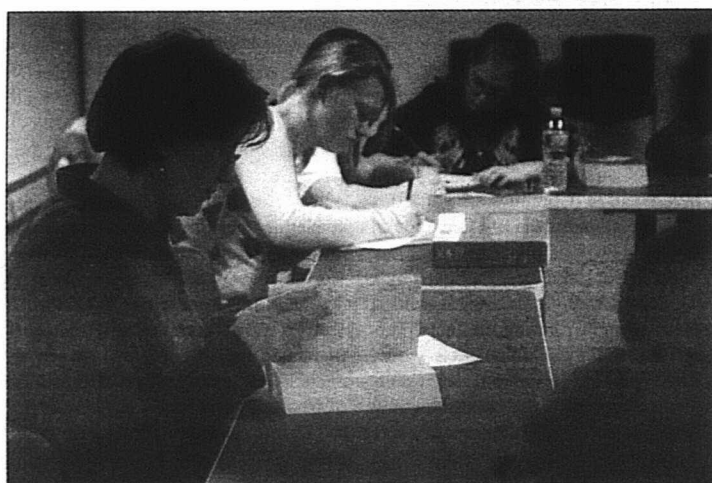


PHOTO BY JORDAN GREEN

Professor Lipscomb teaches *Literary Voices* to her FYLC students.

discussing films, having meals together, attending campus lectures or athletic events, reading the 'Houghton Reads' selection, or even taking a field trip."

This year's FYLC consists of 17 students (16 females and one male), and their professors come to them. The group meets in a classroom set up like a conference room next to the fireside lounge in the basement of Gillette. The students' fall schedules include the integrative studies courses, Introduction to Sociology, taught by professor Aaron Routhe, and *Literary Voices*, taught by Lipscomb. During the spring semester, the students will take *Metaphysics, Morality and Mind*, taught by professor Chris Stewart, and *Biblical Literature*, taught

bond, according to Lipscomb.

The group has already begun to meet its co-curricular expectations for the year. So far this semester, students have gone to see *Amadeus* at the Geva Theater in Rochester, and have also attended various campus activities together. A number of the students went to the gallery opening of "My Forked Tongue, pt. III" as well as the Chanticleer concert several weeks ago. The cohorts also intentionally engage in dialogue with professors and students alike. Mark Hijleh, professor of Composition and Conducting, led a discussion with the students about the Houghton reads book (*ReSounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music*) and Houghton graduate student

Micah Warf led a discussion with them following the Chanticleer concert.

"Students participate in other events on their own, such as sporting events and lectures," said Lipscomb. "They are required to do a mix of things — both pre-arranged by us and planned by them."

The program, even in its early stages, is already successful, according to Lipscomb. "Many of the learning outcomes we hoped for are happening," she said. "The students are engaging in study groups, preparing for class together as a community, and seem to be close-knit and very supportive of each other."

"Since the first couple weeks of school, our group has learned and grown together in ways I don't think we would have if we were not part of this intentional community," said FYLC member Kathryn-Rose Mello. "Before one of our first college exams, we took time before class started to step out of the room to pray, focus, and support each other before the test began."

Houghton's FYLC is attempting to make integrative studies more integrated, according to Lipscomb. "The students are likely to see connections between disciplines, and they can help each other succeed in college," she said. "The students' living arrangements naturally create opportunities for study groups."

Residential learning communities are common at colleges and universities throughout the country, including St. John Fisher College, LeMoyne College, and Southern Nazarene University, to name a few. Houghton has fulfilled Lipscomb's hopes of jumping on the bandwagon, and the hopes are that the program will take off as more students become open to the idea of living and learning together in a close-knit community. ★

# Aubri Ordway Dazzles at Graduate Recital

BY ABBY BUCKINGHAM

The night of Monday, Oct. 11 marked the second of two Graduate recitals performed by graduate student Aubri Ordway, now Aubri Enders, in her journey to earning a Masters of Music degree in vocal performance. Ordway sang a collection of pieces by five different composers accompanied by Dr. Sharon Johnson on piano.

"Her great technique is a living testimony to the quality of the Greatbach School of Music Education," said Aaron Young, freshman, after Ordway's recital.

Having already performed her first recital last September, Ordway is very close to completing her degree and becoming a full-fledged graduate of the Greatbach School of Music. Ordway's primary professor is Dr. Jean Reigles, professor of Voice in the Music unit. Reigles retired last year but has continued working as an adjunct professor. She and Dr. Ben King, who was Ordway's professor prior to

Reigles, assisted Ordway in choosing the music to perform at her recital.

At Monday's performance Ordway sang pieces by Franz Schubert, among others. King chose the Schubert piece "Der Hirt auf dem Felsen," for Ordway. Reigles said that piece "...suited her voice and went very well tonight." Houghton graduate student Daniel Wartinger accompanied Ordway and Johnson during the Schubert piece on the clarinet. "It was a wonderful collaboration between Aubri, Dan, and Dr. Johnson," said Reigles.

Ordway also performed Claude Debussy's "Fetes Galantes I," a collection of songs adapted from various poems by Paul Verlaine, symbolizing French restraint and taste. The first installment, "En Sourdine," praises nature, hailing it as a refuge from the suffering world in a somewhat hypnotic manner. "Clair de Lune," which follows, is set in the moonlight and evokes the beauty and melancholy of nature. The third piece, "Fantoche," centers around a spontaneous pantomime play, concluding the collection on a comedic and lively note.

The second half of the performance included "Adieu, notre petite table" by

Jules Massenet, "Hermit Songs" by Samuel Barber, and "La mi sola, Laureola," "Al Amor," "Corazon, Porque Pasais," "El Majo Celoso," and "Chiquitita la Novia" by Fernando J. Obradors.

Freshman Alicia Ucciferri commented, "Her tone had a cutting clarity to it that's pretty rare among singers and made her interesting to listen to. As soon as she put down her music in the second half, something about her performance came alive; I was shocked."

Coming from the popular opera *Manon*, Massenet's "Adieu, notre petite table" is a song in which the protagonist, Manon, grieves over the loss of her lover, using the little table as a symbol of their love. The five songs by Fernando J. Obradors are based off of various texts by Spanish writers from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, and are written in a folk style. Their treatment of love in many different manners; some are playful and some are more lamenting in tone.

In keeping with the literary theme, "Hermit Songs" is derived from poems and notes written in the margins of manuscripts transcribed by Irish monks during the

Eighth to Thirteenth centuries. There are ten different songs within this piece, all musings by the monks about their lives that are straightforward and, at times, amusing. One such song speaks of a monk and his cat, Pangur. These were "...very difficult pieces but done well by Aubri and Dr. Johnson," said Dr. Reigles.

Freshman Janelle Conklin, who especially enjoyed "Hermit Songs" and Obradors' pieces, said, "Aubri's voice was incredible! I loved the emotion that she used; even if the song was in a different language you could always tell what she was singing about because of the emotions playing out on her face... her technique was very good."

Along with pursuing her degree, Ordway works as the vocal teacher at Belfast Central School. She was also married this August to her husband, with a young son and daughter. Reigles said that Ordway has a "...very ambitious agenda... and she is doing well." ★



# COMING SOON: Two Amateur Acting Ensembles Bring Back Golden Age of Theatre

## "Dragnet" Delivers a Dose of Mystery and Drama

BY NICOLE MOBACH

Among this fall's theatrical performances is *Dragnet*, a pre-*CSI*, pre-*Criminal Minds*, 1950s mystery drama. Based on an old radio/television show created by Jack Webb, the play version is written by James Reach. Director Nicolas Gunning said about the play, "I always used to watch the reruns. I choose it mainly because of the cast; there is really

not a bad role."

The play follows two detectives, Sergeants Joe Friday and Frank Smith, investigating a mysterious suicide at the Hamlin house. Karl Hamlin is found dead in his study, a gun in hand. What first appears to be a routine case, where the crime scene reveals all the facts, spirals into a full investigation when the facts don't add up. *Dragnet* follows the detectives and the Hamlin family as they continue on through the various processes

of the investigation.

Joe Friday, played by senior Michael Blankenship, is a relatively emotionless character. Very straightforward and factual, Friday (Blankenship) creates a serious tone throughout the play.

Noting the difficulties of playing the character, Blankenship said, "[Friday] is a deadpan character; he doesn't show emotion." As a main character however, Friday is important to the plot. The play follows Friday and Smith as they discover

the truth about the strange suicide of Mr. Hamlin and its affect on the relationships in the Hamlin family.

"This is one case in the style of iconic 50s-1960s crime drama," said Blankenship. "You have family conflicts, infidelity."

The Hamlin family consists of Mrs. Hamlin, her mother Mrs. Gaylor, and daughter Ginny Hamlin. The former two remain reserved throughout the play, while Ginny, played by freshman Amy Coon, is more outgoing and outspoken. "[Ginny] has a lot of attitude," said Coon, though her character is simultaneously "really loving to her mother." Coon explained the challenge of acting in portraying Ginny, saying, "It's hard to act as your father just died. There is a mix of emotions that's really hard to depict."

Ginny's relationship with Brad Roney, played by Ben Layman, also adds a bit of a romantic flair to the play. Additionally, the small number of characters creates an interesting and unusual dynamic for an observer. "It has a different rhythm to it," said Gunning.

With a cast ranging from freshmen to seniors, the quality of the performance is impressive. Blankenship's favorite aspects of the play were, in his words, "Working with these people. Interacting as old-fashioned cops. Playing off of each other." Coon highlighted her love of acting, the exploration of one's character, and especially, "learning under Nic."

Filled to the brim with mystery, crime, and romance, *Dragnet* is a true drama. Coon described it with words such as "enticing", "shocking", and "exciting." Blankenship called it a "classic" and a "big surprise." All of the words used indicate an intricate, unexpected plot. In Gunning's words, "It's a unique retelling of a TV classic."

*Dragnet* runs from Thursday, Oct. 28 to Saturday, Oct. 30, with shows starting at 7p.m. each night. There is also a matinee show at 2p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 30. Tickets are on sale for five dollars at meal times up until the show, and will be sold at the door. ★



PHOTO BY NICOLAS GUNNING

The full cast of *Dragnet* (L-R): Liz Raucher, Carly Trask, Eric Mikols, Marisa Cruzado, Mengfei Li, Courtney Taylor, Michael Blankenship, Joseph Perrotti, Ben Layman and Amy Coon

## Encore, Shakespeare Players Redefine Old "Harlequin" Comedy

BY WILLIAM EVANS

Welcome to *Harlequin*! Directed by senior Katrina Koehler, Encore's presentation *Harlequin, Refined by Love* is a play of twists and turns with a theatric genre quite new to Houghton College. Originally a French play written by Pierre de Marivaux, Koehler has translated *Harlequin* into English (just a bit) while assigning it a "modern, avant-garde" style. Koehler said the play adheres to the Commedia dell'Arte genre, which developed in Italy during the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century. This genre is largely improvised and relies on stock characters, conventional plot lines, and slapstick comedy. Koehler

made this selection with the intention of expanding students' theatrical tastes at Houghton.

*Harlequin* is a play in which the forces of good and evil cannot easily be discerned. As Koehler noted, "It's not a cut and dry play where there is a good guy and bad guy." The protagonist of the play is Harlequin, a funny, self-contradictory character with multiple personalities and behaviors. At times, he is evidently clueless, but he can also be highly cunning, especially when he deals with the ever-so-vain Fairy Queen.

The plot is one of entangled romances. As the play commences, the audience is introduced to the Fairy Queen, who is wed to the scholarly magician and master of

the universe Merlin, who, in this version, writes the well-known book "Alakazam; My Life as the Most Powerful Wizard Ever." At the same time, the queen is interested in the apparently foolish, clumsy Harlequin. However, Harlequin fancies the shepherdess Sylvia, with whom he forms an immediate romantic connection. Dimas the shepherd pursues Sylvia, but when Sylvia does not reciprocate, he intentionally tries to thwart her out of frustration for their state of affairs towards one another. The Fairy Queen eventually discovers Sylvia and Harlequin's affections for each other, and she will stop at nothing to break them apart.

For those who saw *King Lear* or *Candlewick*, *Harlequin* will be a sharp

diversion, though just as entertaining. The play is very innovative in its blending of historic plot with the humor of the present day and age. Adding to the chaos and playful confusion, Koehler also employed the use of character pairs: one character is in two people. One "half" of the character is speaking French and the "other half" speaks English. Even though the play is bilingual, it does not necessarily take place in France, and has no definitive setting per se. All in all, be prepared to laugh out loud with all of the slapstick comedy, but also be prepared to be quite confused at times!

*Harlequin*'s second and final showing runs tonight at 7p.m. in the Van Dyke Lounge. ★



# Jesus is Confusing: The Violence of Affectations of Certainty



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELISA SHEARER

BY ELISA SHEARER

So I've been reading the Bible, and it's blowing my mind. Specifically, Matthew – more specifically, the Beatitudes.

Let me explain the mind set from which I'm reading Matthew, and maybe that will in turn explain why it has been so mind-blowing – because nothing in the Bible should be a surprise to a student at a Christian college, right?

I grew up in churches and around people with definite religious postulations, either blatantly stated as true or silently enforced by a don't-ask-don't-tell policy. Ideas like "Catholicism is legalism and therefore bad," "Communion [not 'Eucharist'—too Catholic] is obviously only symbolic," and "Evolution...[followed not by actual words, but a lot of scoffing, and nervous dismissive laughter]."

Above all, one of the main ideas in which my consciousness was marinated was that a literal (even better: Fundamentalist) reading of the Bible was the only way to go, and had been the only way to go since approximately forever. Anything other than that was the unholy spawn of twentieth century thought, and if anyone suggested a non-literal reading of the Bible (didn't matter which Testament) they were, sadly, another soul lost to the duplicitous and questioning attitude of academia. The formation of the canon, the translation and cultural

context of the Gospels and letters weren't really addressed; it was better to think of the Bible as a book which fell out of the sky five to six hours after The Ascension.

So the Bible was an abstract idea to me. Worse: an inerrant, abstract idea. This allowed the meaning of the text to be sort of moldable, I think – the presentation of the Bible I often received from churches or youth groups was way too certain and clear to be the confusing jumble of contexts and influences and hermeneutics that the majority of us tried to comprehend in the glory days of Bib Lit.

So there were a lot of sermons on Ephesians 2:8-9 (often lovingly shortened to the "faith not works" verse, a.k.a. the "take that, legalism!" verse) which all but ended with "...and that's why the Catholics are wrong." There were considerably less sermons on James 2:20, and those that were given weren't so much "faith without works is dead" as "works are all right, but... let's talk about Ephesians again."

And as the Bible was less a canon of ancient texts and more an unquestionable abstraction, so was Jesus less a living and dying (and living again, right?) person, and more a sort of fairy tale character, whose main goal was to render moot all those dusty Jewish laws (legalism!) and preach love and warmfuzziness to the nations. I am being hyperbolic here, but probably less than you would hope.

At Houghton, too, there are some similar trends of thought. More than one dinner table argument is brought

to a stumbling halt with "Well, Jesus just told us to love each other, so [topic of argument] can't really be too big of a deal," (note: Java table arguments are less easily derailed; they are much more serious, involving raised eyebrows and thoughtful tilting of heads).

So when Jesus says things like "Therefore, whoever breaks one of

the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven," (Matt 5:19) my mind is blown. For one thing, he's still talking about the "law and the prophets" law, the Torah law, the no-shrimp-no-braids law, right? But then later (Matt 7:12), he says that the law and the prophets is "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you." But what about "whoever breaks one

of the least of these commandments" two chapters ago? Also, what does "least in the kingdom of heaven" even mean? Kingdom of heaven on Earth? In the presence of God? How can one be "least" in that?

And then, terrifyingly, he says "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord', will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only one who does the will of my Father in heaven." And I remember altar calls and prayers written on pamphlets, the one-way non-refundable ticket to eternal glory (might as well buy it, just to be safe). And, by the way, how on Earth am I supposed to know (never mind do) the will of his Father in heaven? Is it no-shrimp-no-braids, or the vague "do unto others"?

And then he says that "anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery" (Matt 5:31) So is this supposed to be hyperbole like the passage before it (tear out your eye if it causes you to sin...that's hyperbolic, right? Right?), or do we just ignore it?

So I'm completely ignoring all of the rest of the Gospel, and the Gospels, and I suspect context and translations would be elucidating, and there are professors who've studied these things, and Bible majors who (annoyingly) can give me a direct translation of the original Greek. But my goal is not to slap down random, out-of-context incongruities in front of a professed Christian while saying something to the effect of "Ha! Let's see you explain that one!" That is not productive, nor meaningful, nor intelligent, and it has nothing to do with what I'm saying.

What I'm saying is that affectations of "Oh, I know all about-" and "Clearly, it says-" and "What a silly question!" are violently damaging to ourselves and to others, especially regarding religion, and especially regarding the Bible. Being convicted in our beliefs is not synonymous with asserting those beliefs as the indisputable truth. There is an essence of self consciousness (the humble kind, not the Myspace-pic kind) which I think is lacking. But, maintaining the theme of my answerless article, I don't really have any foolproof solution to suggest. The best plan of action I have come up with so far is to abandon all pretense of certainty just long enough to look up confusedly and ask "so...what does this mean?"

Seek and you will find, right?

*Elisa is a junior English and Psychology major*

Being convicted in our beliefs is not synonymous with asserting those beliefs as the indisputable truth

## HOW WELL DOES SGA REPRESENT STUDENT OPINION?

SGA represents the administration more than it represents students' interests

53%

Out of 34 votes

Check out [www.houghtonstar.com](http://www.houghtonstar.com) to vote in the new poll or comment on articles

When I voice my concerns, they are heard 15%

## Letters

### to the Editor

Dear Editor,

As a Houghton resident and alumni, I enjoy reading the Star. I work with an interdenominational mission and am helping to develop post-secondary education for the people of Africa and the Caribbean. I served in the Virgin Islands as well as Nigeria. In my relationships I have gained a deep love, appreciation, concern and desire to build up these brethren in Christ.

As I read your September 17, 2010 article, you expressed a statement about black people that I do not believe to be true. You stated, "The TEA Party has reminded

us that anti-black racial sentiments still exist in this country, and are possibly gaining strength and intensity." From my knowledge the TEA Party is not an organized group such as the Democrat or Republican party. Rather it is a movement of concerned Americans who are of both Democrat or Republican parties or even Independent or Conservative. They are people who are peacefully voicing the need of fiscal responsibility.

I am not aware of the "anti-black racial statements" to which you referred. The TEA Party focus is not on social issues but rather on taxes. Just as the Boston TEA Party was a demonstration of taxation without representation, those who gather at TEA Party rallies have a similar concern. When referring to the TEA Party it should be noted that TEA stands for Taxed Enough Already. Citizens are worried that state and federal debt is out of control. Thus, the TEA Party focus is about government debt and taxes. It has nothing to do with racial hate. You might consider doing a bit more



## From the Editor's Desk

## Just Trying to Keep the Customer Satisfied

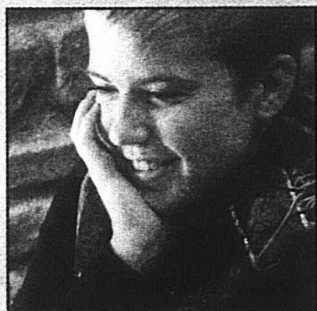


PHOTO BY JORDAN GREEN

BY MONICA SANDRECZKI

"Houghton College provides an academically challenging, Christ-centered liberal arts education to students from diverse traditions and economic backgrounds and equips them to lead and labor effectively in the changing world of the 21st century."

We're all familiar with this. You may have seen the school's mission statement before on the bottom of almost every web page on the College's website, and thought, "Yeah, I'll buy that." I would too. Overall, it sounds like a stand-up purpose to be striving for and I'd get on board with it.

However, over the past couple of years here, I've seen different decisions made and shifts in programs to make me question our goal of providing a liberal arts education. I think that we've lost track of that purpose, dare I say, tradition, that's been one of the selling points of Houghton for years. As tuition has risen, it seems standards of liberal arts excellence has fallen.

First of all, let's try to get a clearer understanding of that amorphous idea of "liberal arts" that no one seems to be able to quite to pin down. George Marsden, a history professor at Notre Dame who appeared in a work for the Institute for the Liberal Arts at Westmont,

which, at the time, was directed by President Mullen, described modern liberal arts as including the classics and a "study of modern literature and languages, history, and the fine arts as well as introductions to philosophy, the sciences, and the social sciences." So, in short, a broad learning of a wide range of subjects. A sort of training the Renaissance men of the next generation. But, as is raised by Stephen T. Davis in his reflection, *Eight Hundred Years of University Learning: Two Pictures of the Liberal Arts*, which appears in the same work as Marsden, Davis argues that there are certain expectations that graduates from liberal arts colleges are intended to have such as intellectual breadth and depth, critical thinking and communication skills, and technological literacy, many of which Houghton, frankly, is lacking.

Davis also outlines a few of the reasons why providing an education in the liberal arts is so difficult for many colleges in the same boat as Houghton.

One of the reasons he presented is the push from students and parents for a pre-professional, sort of vocational, education out of college for the purpose of finding a financially secure job after college, making that picturesque idea of liberal arts scholarship fall by the wayside. He says that while the want to be marketable to future employers is a valid one, there has been a tendency for traditionally liberal arts schools to try to appeal to the consumer and offer the classes and opportunities that the students want to learn.

Now, I like taking fun classes as much as the next average individualistic that's-just-not-my-thing Joe, but I think that it is necessary to stick, first and foremost, to our mission as a liberal arts school. Not to do away with Western Civ or Intermediate Language requirements, or water down the Bible course requirement in exchange for more specialized courses that only serve to build an unstable excuse of a foundation constructed of a stone soup of classes that

are "more relevant to my interests."

Part of the problem at Houghton has been the change to the four-credit system that, honestly, has not been fulfilling that need to have intellectual breadth and depth. In a recent survey given out to juniors and seniors, to evaluate the switch to the four-credit system, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment said that the switch from three credits was to create a "greater depth of coverage...[with] fewer overall courses, each going into greater depth." By the nature of the switch, we cannot take as many courses as under three credits, ergo less variety, and less intellectual breadth. Furthermore, from my experience in formerly-three-credit-now-four-credit classes, the intellectual depth hasn't exactly plunged into dark zone of understanding, but instead has generally resulted in one more 12-15 page paper per course per semester or slightly more reading, not a more profound discussion.

Another reason Davis names is tight budgets, the ones that have been squeezed dry and wrung out, the kind that moths come fluttering out of the wallet any time its pried open. It's no secret that the price of higher ed has been on the rise over the past several years, and private schools, especially, are even pricier. And I understand that. Between the economic downturn, underwater endowments, and even low enrollment, the cost of tuition is bound to be on the rise. However, we do have a responsibility to spend money wisely. In a recent phone interview with student journalists, President Obama talked about his discontent with the way a lot of universities have been throwing money around by saying, "When I go to some colleges and universities, public colleges and universities, and I look at the athletic facilities... or the food courts...it's sure a lot nicer than it was when I was going to college. Somebody has to pay for that. And part of what I think we've got to examine is, are we designing our universities in a way that

focuses on the primary thing, which is education." And for Houghton, that's a liberal arts education.

At Senate a couple of weeks ago, our president, Shirley Mullen, discussed that switch from NAIA to NCAA will be able to give athletes and Houghton more publicity and attract students and donors. I have no qualms about making Houghton College more attractive to that curious and questioning high school senior, but I don't think that widening the athletics department is the way to go. The College has said that the upcoming athletics budgets under NCAA will be more than the 2008 athletics budget and that with each sport that is added, there will, obviously, be added costs for operations and facilities like pools or baseball fields. The money to fund the building of these fields is to come from a combination of donor and institutional funds, but it's still unclear how much of that would come directly from tuition.

Instead of the rigmarole of adding more teams and facilities, we could trim the athletics department down to being independent of other conferences or solely intramural, and have a certain percent of those funds (that weren't specifically donated to the athletics department of course) should be reallocated to build up the traditional liberal arts classes that have been left out to dry like in foreign languages or the humanities. If we are so boldly labeling ourselves as a liberal arts school, we should focus on strengthening the different liberal arts disciplines, treating them as if we actually care that they are part of the recipe for creating that well-informed scholar citizen.

*Monica is a junior Intercultural Studies and French major*

research on this topic on conservative web sites or World Magazine (a Christian news magazine that comes out biweekly).

As I work with black people I listen closely to their concerns. The people I have heard speak about the TEA party are equally concerned about our growing national debt. Not only will the debt effect current social programs, it is likely to draw more into poverty (which is at a 40 year high). Thus the black people I hear speak do not identify the TEA Party movement as "anti-black," but they too see the TEA Party address the need to control government spending.

In any group there can be some misguided people. There may be some anti-black people who identify with the TEA Party, but that is not what the TEA party is about. Just as the burning of the Koran is not believed to be a common practice of Christians and Americans. It is important when communicating that we are very careful not to stereotype people. To state that everyone in a certain group acts in a certain way distorts and clouds people's perception of the group as a whole. That can lead to discrimination and division among people.

Thank you for taking time to read this

letter. If you have sources that state the TEA Party is an anti-black group, please let me know. God bless you as you oversee the Star as editor. One other item you may like to consider in upcoming issues is to post stories of Highlander teams or give the scores of their games. I am a sports enthusiast and there are others who would be interested in such updates as well.

*-Dr. James Szymanski, Houghton resident*

Dear Editor,

A few weeks ago Josiah Armstrong asked Houghtonites to consider more seriously the decision to "scan and scam", claiming that it is an issue of integrity. Why? Because to say that you are fulfilling a role and then to not earnestly try to do so is deceptive.

As Houghton considers switching its title to "faith-based" instead of "Christian", I question the school's integrity.

To be "faith-based" is to have grounds in some sort of faith, in some sort of god;

to be a "Christian College" is to have a foundation in the Christian faith and aim to grow in a relationship with God as well as academically. While being Christian requires Houghton to be faith-based, I do not find the term as specific as Houghton's actual culture is. Perhaps I'm mistaken, but I thought of Houghton as striving to be the latter, as well as working to raise up Christian leaders who set an example of what it means to try to be Christ-like.

The switching of Houghton's title is not, according to President Mullen via SGA Senate minutes, going to change the character of Houghton College. We are changing the title in order to increase prospective students' curiosity. "the assumption that 'Christian College' means 'Bible College', and 'Maintain the concept that 'faith' means Christian'.

In my experience, "faith" can be had in Allah, the God of Islam just as strongly as it can be had in Jesus Christ. As a prospective student, I would find the term "faith-based" to either mean "inter-religious" or to mean "probably Christian but wanting to sound more inclusive". Generally, Bible Colleges tell you in their

title that they are in fact, Bible colleges.

Changing Houghton's title to something more accurate may be beneficial for those students with prejudice against the term "Christian" as a definition of an academic institution. However, just as "Houghton Bible College" would not be a satisfactory switch because, while we are a Bible-believing community, we do not fit many of the connotations of that specific category. In becoming a "faith-based" college, we are trying on an ill-fitting outfit which expresses only the most general definition of our school. This indeed attempts to justify using deception to cover a deeper problem. Christian Colleges bear a scarlet letter, and something needs to be done about that.

Let us not go the way of the (well-intending) hypocrite, instead let us try to defend our integrity as a Christian college and avoid misunderstanding through misleading statements. We as a college need to take the time to dialogue about our self-definition and how we profess it to the world.

*-Bethany Cheney, Class of 2012*



## ARTIST of the WEEK

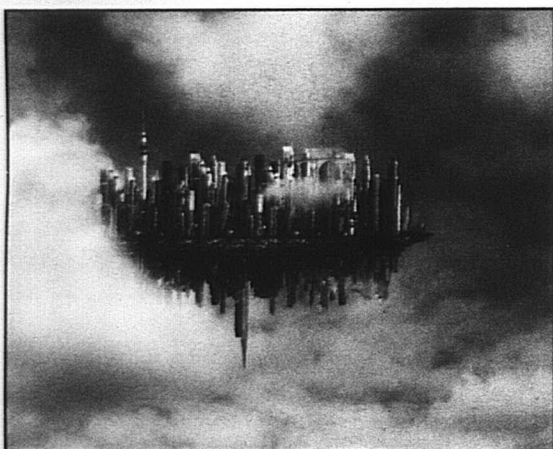
## Madison Murphy



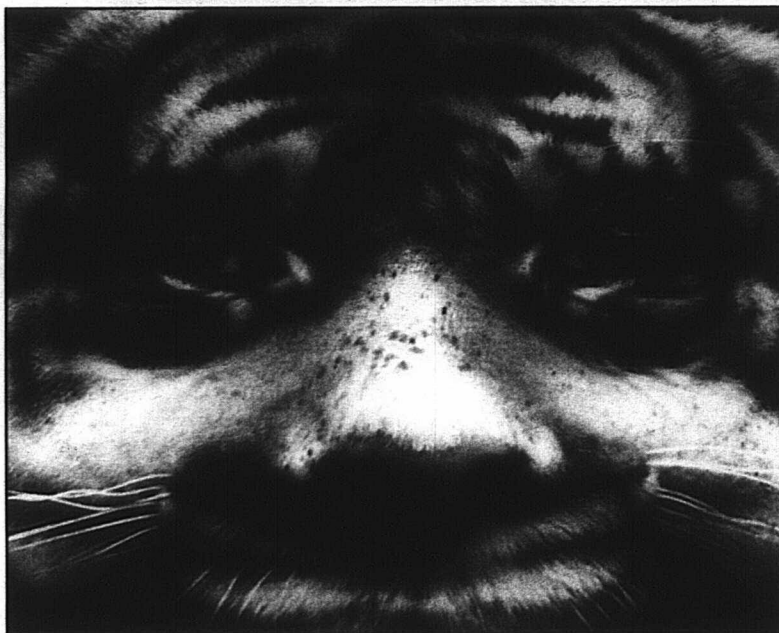
Savannah, digital manipulation

*A note from the artist:* John Lasseter of Pixar said that, "Art challenges technology, and technology inspires the art." This is why I find using computers and software as a medium so compelling. I love having an idea or an image in my mind, and thinking, "Huh – I wonder if I can do that?" and then working at the problem in whatever software I chose until I find a solution. It's the greatest "aha!" moment to find an answer, and have my design come to life. Sometimes it works the other way around: I'll see a new technique or tool, and that'll inspire the concept of a project. It's a kind of push-and-pull that motivates me.

I also really enjoy the collaborative atmosphere of digital work. By nature, digital work is easily shared online, and as a result the online forums of people sharing their experience, work, and thoughts as resources are fairly rich. I love being part of a community that is so eager to share their knowledge and talk about what they're doing.



City in Clouds, digital manipulation



Jackson, digital manipulation

## sudoku CHALLENGE

Prize: *Leroy Townes and the Lonestars* album!

Last week's winner of the Suduko challenge was Raphael Derungs! Please come by the STAR office to claim your prize.

Bring your finished sudoku puzzle to the STAR office clearly marked with FULL NAME.

1		2	6	8	3	9	5	
9						2	8	
5	3		2		7			
8					2	3		
		6		4			7	
	5	4				8	6	2
						1	9	8
4			8	7		6		
6		1		2				