

# The Houghton Star





## Growing Up at Houghton

by Naomi Woodmansee

I'm convinced that I am still a child at heart. A lot of "growing up" has taken place during these past four years of what we call "college life" but there is a kid inside of me who refuses to die!

There are lots of things I'll remember about Houghton: professors who taught and cared, chapel speakers who challenged, late night papers, fun times with friends, heartbreaks that healed, and quiet times alone with God. But the memories that I'll treasure the most are of those times that were simple enough for a child to enjoy - swinging on the Doezeema's swing set on a sunny afternoon, having a picnic with a friend at the Houghton cemetery or a walk at Letchworth, or playing through a kid's musical, "Down by the Creekbank" when I'm feeling down and need to be cheered up.

I guess you could say that I'm quite easily amused. It's true. And I like it that way! Sometimes it's hard for me to like myself; but as I sat on a Florida beach over Spring Break - just sitting and letting the waves break quietly over my body - I decided that I liked myself for the very reason that the simplest things in life amuse me. I believe that it is in recognizing the value of those "little things" that I am prepared to face and appreciate the bigger events of my life.

In my faith I am more than ever convinced that God desires for me to "grow up" in Him, and that, in our world today, "growing up in Christ" requires not only believing but also knowing why I believe as I do. I believe in a God who has given to us His very nature; therefore, He can expect us to be strong, mature men and women of God. But over and over again, I am taken back to the simple truth - that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself." A childlike trust in such a truth is enough to affect the way I live my life. A childlike faith doesn't mean that I'm opting out of

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dealing with the hard questions of faith and life; for me, it means that in the middle of those hard question, I have to daily seek to know what it means to be called a "child of God."

Now I'm walking into a world that expects me to be all "grown up." Houghton has been a part of that growth, and I've got a long way to go in this growing process. Being at Houghton has stretched every area of my life; it has prodded in me that ongoing process of building a Godly character. Wherever I go I know I want to enjoy and appreciate my salvation to the fullest by living with a maturity and a soundness of spirit that points others to the cross. And I know that in a "grown up" world, I never want to lose my childlike spirit - a spirit that helps me to appreciate the little things in life.

Walking in the sunshine,  
Laughing in the rain;  
Lover of the children,  
Make me young again.

Climbing in the treetops,  
Running down the shore;  
Lover of the children,  
Make me young once more.

Vigorous and daring,  
Teachable and mild;  
Lover of the children,  
Make me like a child.

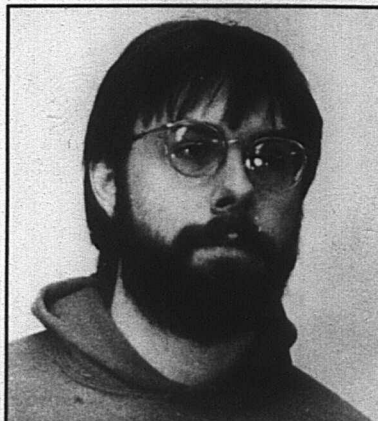
Trusting in Your goodness,  
Walking where You lead;  
Lover of the children,  
Make me young indeed.

Make me young enough to know  
that alone I cannot go  
through the darkness of the night;  
Make me young enough to see  
that your love will never let me go.

Make me open to surprise,  
put wonder in my eyes;  
Make my vision clear and bright.  
Make me willing to be led,  
and to follow where you bid me go.

Fearing not tomorrow,  
But trusting You today;  
Lover of the children,  
Make me young, I pray!

"Lover of the Children"  
by Ken Medema



## Three Questions: Thoughts of a Senior

by David Wingard

"Grant me, Lord, to know and understand whether a man is first to pray to you for help, or to praise you, and whether he must know you before he can call you to his aid. If he does not know you, how can he pray to you? For he may call for some other help, mistaking it for yours."

St. Augustine, *Confessions*

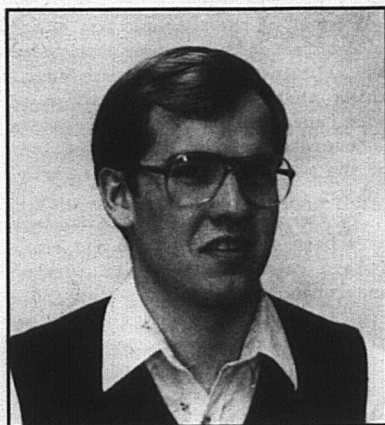
"The periodic movements of the universe are the same, up and down from age to age. And either the universal intelligence puts itself in motion for every separate effect, and if this is so, be thou content with that which is the result of its activity; or if it puts itself in motion once, and everything else comes by way of sequence in a manner; or indivisible elements are the origin of all things. - In a word, if there is a god, all is well; and if chance rules, do not thou also be governed by it. . . . For who can change men's opinions? And without a change of opinions what else is there than the slavery of men who groan while they pretend to obey."

Marcus Aurelius, *The Meditations*

"SISINNIUS: Alas, I don't know what I am doing. I am cast down by the societies of Christians. Look, I go around the mountain and, though I sometimes find the trail, I can neither take the way up, nor go down the way I came."

Hrotswitha of Gandersheim, *The Dulcitus*





## Lightfoot Learns "Literature is Truth"

When I received a letter from the *Star* asking me to write a Senior Essay, my initial response was "why me?" After all, as last year's editor of the *Star*, I had plenty of opportunity to speak my mind. So I asked Pat. Apparently, since I haven't written anything of public note during this past year, she felt it might be interesting to hear me philosophize about Houghton. So here I go.

As a freshman I wanted to major in writing; that hasn't changed. I also wanted to major in computers; that craving was quickly quashed into a minor. I didn't choose my major with the idea of getting a job after college. I was much more concerned with learning, growing, developing myself. And, as far as it goes, I still haven't related my major to getting a job. I have, however, grown to be more of the person I want to be. Houghton, for me, has thus been a success.

In American Literature with Dr. Bressler I learned that "Literature is Truth," and suddenly realized how right my choice of major was. After all, it must be something to create truth.

Now, up until my junior year, I had been quick to take up my pen in response to anything, shouting forth that truth. Then I became editor of the *Star*. My year as editor mellowed me, expanded me. I learned that the best response to most of the critical letters aimed against me was silence. The importance, yet very weakness of the written word became immediately apparent to me.

At the end of my year as editor, I made a promise to myself that I would not write a letter to the *Star* during my senior year, unless it was absolutely necessary. And, every time I've been tempted to write, I've asked myself that question, is it absolutely necessary? If anyone has noticed, I have

written no letters to the *Star* this year. I've learned that the big answer is almost always unnecessary. Instead, I have prayed, let time mellow my thoughts, and talked individually to the people involved. I've tried to talk rather than write, to listen rather than speak.

I also had the opportunity to be one of the two Senior Class Chaplains this year, a position which many seniors still don't know that I hold (it shows who hasn't been to prayer meeting). The seniors were in a combined prayer meeting with the freshmen a few weeks ago, when someone in the room spoke up and asked why the chaplains always talked about being joyful and living victorious Christian lives, yet still grumbled like everyone else. We chaplains tried to explain this difficult problem. The statement that I came up with was that we don't confess to be perfect. It is our duty to strive for perfection, but unless each one of us freely admits that we are still a sinner, we are putting on a false face. So we chaplains fall, just like everyone else.

I think that is why I am very encouraged about Houghton. By being a good listener I know so many things that are wrong with our college. As a member of the senior class cabinet I have been frustrated with the Administration and Student Senate, but I have learned to let love cover it all. The recognition of our fallen state within the bounds of our striving breeds in me patience, and the ability to tolerate imperfection.

I've blown up a few times. I even admit to being frustrated with people. And there are times when we must not tolerate certain actions. There is an uneasy balance there. But we must tolerate, lifting our brother up in love, fearful lest we have the same fall.

Can anyone guess what my one great concern for Houghton is? My concern is that Houghton College will be left behind, squabbling, while the newer and narrower fundamental schools take the lead in producing the great leaders of future Christendom. I feel very strongly that Houghton's liberal arts education is superior to schools like Liberty University, yet I am afraid that schools like Liberty will make a greater impact on the world than Houghton, and not just because of their greater number of graduates. The people at schools like Liberty know there is a war going on out there, and they are striving to fight it. We at Houghton sometimes can't even live together in peace, much less reach out to the world.

So let us strive for the right, and tolerate one another as one body, rather than letting Houghton get stuck in the quagmire of the have-beens.

Thank you for listening,  
Jonathan Robords Lightfoot



## Mein Kampf

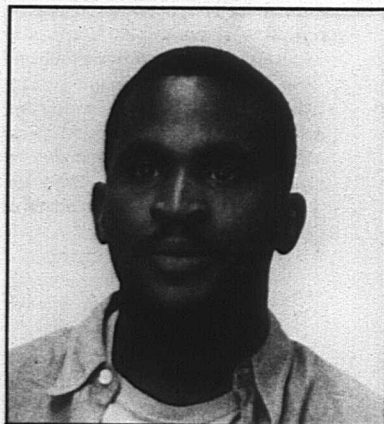
So, college is over. Am I supposed to care? Somehow I can't bring myself to get all excited about it. In the past four and one half years college has stripped away from me any semblance of order and stability from my life. Oh, it hasn't just been college, it's partly my fault. If I never came to college, met the people I met, experienced those things I have experienced, I believe I would be an infinitely happier individual. College has forced upon me awareness. I can never be ignorant again.

Often I wish I was different than I am. Capable of different things. Who I am hasn't made me happy. Four and a half years ago I was a fundamentalist Pentecostal, I wasn't content. Today I am completely opposite of that. I am still not content, but perhaps we were not meant to live a life of contentment. Christ showed us that the cross we must bear is one of suffering. I don't know if I can bear that cross, or if I want to. I can't define grace, forgiveness, sin, or explain how Christ could have existed. I have not experienced God. I can't share Him therefore with anyone.

College has not taught me anything I can use in struggling with the absolute. It did not teach me Christianity - I am not a Christian, I never, ever, was, not even when I thought I was. I did not learn to love, instead I learned I do not love anyone and I am largely incapable of that emotion in its truest, or most common, form. I've seen how much our darker feelings are the motivations for our most kind, sincere expressions. I do not trust the nature of man (or woman) anymore. It has shown me how capable it is of hurting and killing in the name of love and Christ.

My only comment to anyone is that growing up and growing older is like having an operation without an anesthetic. All you can do is bite on a bullet and hope to hell it doesn't hurt.

Good riddance:  
Gicchino Jack Urso



## Beckford Encourages Critical Thinking

by Robert Beckford

Ludwig Feuerbach's renowned sociological research into the Sociology of Knowledge is pertinent to understanding my experiences at Houghton during the last two years.

Feuerbach argued that reality was not found in philosophical abstractions, but in concrete life, feelings, wants, and needs. Therefore, for Feuerbach, uncovering truth was determined by an analysis of the common experiences of humanity. In short, Feuerbach believed that our *social thought* could not be divorced from our *social existence*.

Marx took Feuerbach's research to its political and economic end by relating the material forces of society to the intellectual forces, showing the ideological character of bourgeois thought. He concluded that the important ideas in any context were not independent of their social and economic context: for Marx, the ruling class.

Liberation theologians have applied the work of Feuerbach and Marx to theological thought and concluded that theological ideas are derived from the social, political, and economic contexts of those interpreting Scripture. Consequently, theological constructs are a reflection of the social, political, economic, and historical traditions and biases of this school of thought. How does this apply to Houghton?

Houghton's theological roots originated in the Wesleyan Methodist tradition, which was actively involved in the social issues of its day (i.e., emancipation, ordination

of women, and mass education). It would be fair to say that the contemporary Wesleyan Church is not as committed to social issues as were its founding fathers. Instead, the contemporary concerns of the Wesleyan tradition, as exemplified at Houghton College, are more closely related to the aspirations of white middle class of America, rather than the oppressed minorities of the inner city, and the hungry of the Third World. In short, conservative Christian white middle-class theological and social constructs are evidenced at Houghton College, as its social reality is defined by the social, political, and economic contexts of the contemporary Wesleyan Church. In light of this, I have found it easier to understand the prevalence of certain attitudes within sectors of this institution.

First, slow progress in the Admissions and Academic Deans offices regarding the importance of recruiting of minorities, women faculty, and students. Conservative religion in the latter part of this century has not had the reputation of being actively involved in the fight for racial and gender equality. In fact, some critics have argued that conservative schools of thought, such as that at contemporary Wesleyan schools, have perpetuated these inequalities. Therefore, I interpret the lack of psychological and social support I have received from this institution as a minority, and as an international student, as the result of contemporary conservative Wesleyan racial and gender traditionalism which is interpreted by most ethnic groups and feminists as parochialism and ignorance.

Second, the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (W.A.S.P.) curriculum neglects most critical approaches to education, (i.e. ideological diversity in the faculty, encouragement of critical questioning from opposing points of view from students and faculty). Feuerbach would interpret this situation as the inability of those coming from a conservative academic paradigm to encourage the development of the intellectual tools that do not exist within their educational frame of reference.

Marx, on the other hand, would state that those in authority will rarely, if ever, encourage the de-

velopment of the academic tools that will threaten their power structures and illuminate their shortcomings. I think that the interpretations of both Feuerbach and Marx are accurate interpretations of the motivations of the administrators of this institution.

My two years at Houghton College have been mixed with hope and fear. I have been challenged to further understand commitment, vulnerability, and trust, not through my classroom experiences, but through living at Hazlett/Leonard Houghton Fellowship. I have also been depressed by the unwillingness of most faculty and students to challenge the academic structures of this college (i.e. curriculum and administrative procedures).

In conclusion, in light of Feuerbach, there can only be change if the institution's academic ideals are challenged by those with differing ideals to make their voices heard, and bring about a synthesis of academic thought that will discourage ignorance and encourage critical thinking.



## Seven Ideas Learned

by Julie Williams

These are some things that I have learned during my four years at Houghton. They are not all direct results of the "Houghton experience" as such, but rather products of relationships and musings that have coincided temporally with these years of my life. They are both related and unrelated to classes, chapels, and the other institutions designed to encourage student growth. Wherever they originated, God has caused these ideas to come alive to me, and to change my life. Here they are:



1. God really does talk to people- even today. Jesus said, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." (Jn 10:27) I believe what he said. I think that if we really want to hear and are willing to obey, God will make His thoughts known to us somehow.

2. Compliance with human reason is not the criterion for truth. Some things cannot be explained. That is not to say we shouldn't try to understand truth, or miracles, or whatever. It is to say that our lack of understanding concerning a given phenomenon does not prove that the phenomenon has not occurred. It is possible to have faith without understanding all aspects of the thing that is believed.

3. Pride is sin. "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." (Jms 4:6) I don't have to "stand up for my rights", especially if I have given all my rights to Jesus and have humbled myself before Him. As His slave I receive protection far greater than any I could seek to provide for myself. Pride says "I am as good or better than you, and deserve to be treated that way." It causes contention and anger.

4. Suffering is not always bad. We are to "rejoice that we participate in the sufferings of Christ". (1 Pet 4:13) Unpleasant experiences are, by definition, unpleasant. But I don't think we need to avoid them as strenuously as we do. To radically obey God (that means to do what He says no matter what the rest of the world decides to do) is usually an unpopular decision. But is it more important to please men or God? This leads to the next lesson.

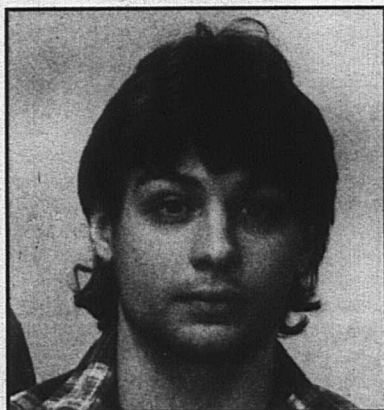
5. It is more important to please God than to please men. This has been a difficult one for me to learn. Indeed, I still struggle every day to live up to it. I have wasted a lot of energy trying to please people in order both to retain credibility for my message, and to enjoy the pleasure of people's acceptance. But I am seeing more and more the danger of man-pleasing, especially with the presence of evil in the earth. Doing what makes people accept me will increasingly mean doing what makes it impossible for God to accept me. I must fear God- His opinion is eternal and just. Paul said, "If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ." (Gal. 1:10) This verse is written in my physiology textbook. I need to be reminded often.

6. God is not mean. He is not evil. He is good; He loves us and really does want the best for us. We seem to think that

God wants to force us to follow a bunch of rules so that our lives will be boring and dry, without life. I see that the opposite is true. The laws of God are the keys that help us to keep in step with the Spirit of God and what He is doing. I've seen the excitement, the consistent joy that comes from walking where God is and doing what He says. It's exciting to see one's family restored, or to watch a man's life change and move from one of addiction and despair to one of freedom and wonder. It gives me pleasure to see someone learn to forgive and get rid of bitterness. It makes me happy to overcome temptation using God's Word and by His grace. There is a pattern visible in the lives of those who consistently seek the Lord and do not fall away. They remain full of joy.

7. Finally, life is pretty short. We may not have much time left here. A lot of people that I have known have died over the last four years. I don't understand it, but through it I do see that every minute is important. The decision I make right now could be my very last one. It is best to choose to do what is right now since there may never be a chance to choose again. Let's forget trying to avoid all pain. Let's live for something beyond this world. It can be done.

Maybe these ideas are new to you. You could give them some thought. Or maybe you have already learned these things. Be encouraged! Someone else believes them too. In any case, I'm glad you have been a part of this college community where God has taught me so much. I pray that you might find righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.



**Bentley Says Man is Depraved**

I know not the internal constitution of other men, nor even thine, whom I now address. I see that in some external attrib-

utes they resemble me, but when, misled by that appearance, I have thought to appeal to something in common, and unburthen my inmost soul to them, I have found my language misunderstood, like one in a distant and savage land. The more opportunities they have afforded me for experience, the wider has appeared the interval between us, and to a greater distance have the points of sympathy been withdrawn. With a spirit ill fitted to sustain such proof, trembling and feeble through its tenderness, I have everywhere sought sympathy, and have found only repulse and disappointment. Shelley, *Essay on Love*

Four years have passed since I first arrived at Houghton College. In these four years I have met many people. Shelly has captured the sorrow that my experiences with these people has afforded. In reflection upon these various encounters, debates, relationships, and friendships it has been evidenced that these, in most cases, were empty experiences that gave testimony to the futility of words.

I have hungered for a way to express my confusion, but found that the price one pays for confusion is a heavy burden. When I tried to express my concerns and fears I've heard my words twisted and my character sullied. I do not want to suggest that I was unaware of the heterodoxy that many of my ideas embodied. But I did anticipate a level of maturity on the part of those I encountered. Yet I was often chastised for this assumption. I was told several times that the students at this school were not mature enough for reality (or as some have said "reality from a certain perspective"). I must admit that I did not heed this advice, I believed that with a mature, intelligent person one could reason; I was wrong, instead, as I opened myself, I found only repulse and disappointment."

This essay was not intended to slam anyone, nor is its intent malicious. The purpose of what I have written is to admit that I was wrong and you were right (I was often called an Idealist, I thought that this was Christ's call). After four years at Houghton College you, my peers, have proven your argument: Man is totally depraved, and as such cannot be trusted. Thank-you.

Yours in Christ,  
William H. Bentley

...Which every wise and virtuous man attains: And who attains not, ill aspires to rule Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes, Subject himself to anarchy within, Or lawless passions in him which he serves. --Milton, *Paradise Regained*



## A Tale of a College Grad

by Mary Jo Patton

Once upon a time there lived a young girl in a small Adirondack village (yes, even smaller than Houghton!) who, upon graduating from high school with top honors, eagerly anticipated her new role as a "mature" college student. September, 1984 found her standing on the steps of an old, well-worn and well-used brick building with classrooms that soon would be filled by equally as nervous and excited Freshmen, waiting for their first classes of POW, Western Civ., and Bib. Lit. Ah, but those were the *easy* days.

She adjusted well to the college scene - planning the next semester's courses, living with a roommate on a floor of noisy girls, socializing at Big Al's Snack Shop, and, of course, trying to handle the academic pressures and deadlines and study efficiently for exams. Throw in a boyfriend for a few months, homesickness, *lots* of typing, and shock treatment after paying for text books and she became the typical Houghton student.

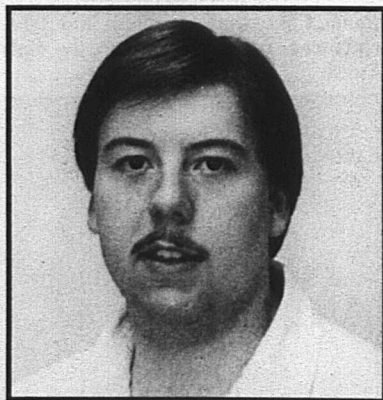
The next two years passed quickly, with each semester busier than the last. More campus involvement, including a position on class cabinet as historian, long talks with new-found friends, Artist Series concerts to attend, refreshing walks or skiing in the woods all were legitimate times spent away from the books. However, taking upper-level courses in history and economics as well as fulfilling gen. ed. requirements never allowed for a lot of leisure time. One question loomed overhead - what will she do after graduation? No matter, there was still plenty of time to decide. Little did she know how fast time flies when one is having so much fun!

With a summer away from home on her own behind her, she entered her senior year with just a touch of trepidation. She had been

elected Senior Class President in April, and now faced the challenges of leadership. Also, there was a *need* to make a more positive career decision, a scary Senior Seminar term paper to finish upon which the fate of her entire four years rested (not really, but the work required for it seemed to suggest so!), and a realization that the maturity she thought she had reached when she came in as a Freshman had only been an illusion, with real maturity a road still traveled.

An easy class load allowed her time to concentrate on the demands of class presidency, which included setting up committees, talking with key people, making phone calls, and leading Cabinet meetings. She also conducted a Koinonia Bible Study group which provided her with excellent Christian fellowship. A car from Mom and Dad, given as an early graduation present, allowed her ample opportunity to "get away" whenever the hassles were too overwhelming. Support from super friends and a caring roommate gave her the confidence to persevere until May. Final preparations to attend grad. school in Albany, New York, for Library Science and archival management, and a summer job on the Jersey shore completed her post-graduation planning.

This is not the end of the story of the young girl from the mountains who is now a college grad., for the story will go on as the tale of a committed Christian in a crazy world - the "real world." But, she will never forget the lessons learned or the people encountered at the little college in the country that made such a big impact as her "real world" for four years.



## Marshall Muses on Ho'ton

by Tim Marshall

When I first came to Houghton in the fall of '85, it was after having spent my freshman year at SUNY Buffalo. Following a year at a place where students identified themselves on papers and exams by

their social security numbers and not by their names, I was ready for the more personal Houghton approach. Like most entering students, though, I could not imagine what the next three years would contain.

I remember driving to Houghton and remarking that it had not seemed quite so far away from civilization on my previous visits. Oh well, I looked at the positive side and decided I would be encouraged to study more. When I arrived, the first thing I decided was that I was not going to look like a freshman. Everything on campus was as new to me as it was to them, but I possessed one item which they did not: college experience. Because I had been placed in the freshman wing of Shenawana hall I was determined to stand apart and spent the majority of the time the first week trying to foolishly impart nuggets of wisdom on the other freshmen. It was not long, however, before I was heavily engrossed in my studies and I soon forgot my freshman paranoia.

Unfortunately, I also discovered that many students fail to see that the key word here is not "accept" but "unquestioningly."

As the first semester moved along I formed many of the friendships which became the foundation for an enjoyable college life. These relationships were cemented by many nights at Big Al's, trips to Rochester, Buffalo, and Olean, struggling through late-night study sessions, and discussions about our relationships with the Lord. Many of the friends I made that first semester have either graduated or chose not to remain at Houghton, but I always remember the great times we shared together.

One of the things which did differentiate me from most freshmen was that I had already decided on a major. The wonderful world of history awaited me, and my pre-law status gave me the honor of being advised by the venerable Dr. Katherine Lindley. It was not long before I learned how Dr. Lindley had acquired her reputation. As any of her former students can attest to, her courses are rigorous and she expects the best.



Demanding as it was, though, the history major has not only prepared me well for success in law school, it has taught me how to think in a way I never had before. Many of my beliefs were challenged for the first time and I learned not to accept unquestioningly what my parents had taught me about the world. Unfortunately, I also discovered that many students fail to see that the key word here is not "accept" but "unquestioningly." I see the world differently now than when I entered Houghton. My previous assumptions about life have been held up to critical scrutiny and through this process I have become more open to opposing viewpoints than ever before. However, though some of my beliefs have been modified and some even rejected, I have also learned to reaffirm much of what my parents gave to me. The difference now is that my beliefs have, for the moment, survived my intellectual challenges and have been given a rational basis. I have discovered that it is not wrong to accept what your parents or society gave to you, but it is foolish to accept their beliefs only because they said they were valid. Too many students go to the extreme of rejecting all that they have previously assumed to be true, believing it to be the intellectually correct thing to do for its own sake. Discarding or modifying beliefs that fail our intense critical challenges, we must also learn that it is acceptable to reaffirm them if they survive. Only foolishness ignores the wisdom of centuries of hard-earned knowledge.

Academics aside, college life cannot be complete without participation in extracurricular activities. To this end I became involved with several groups and committees on campus. My sophomore year taught me just how slow committee work could be. Serving as the student representative on the General Education Review Committee taught me patience and much about how seriously student opinion is valued by the administration and faculty. My most significant extracurricular accomplishment, though, was founding and serving as chairman of the College Republicans. Through this I not only gained a wealth of political experience, I learned how to work with others to achieve lasting results.

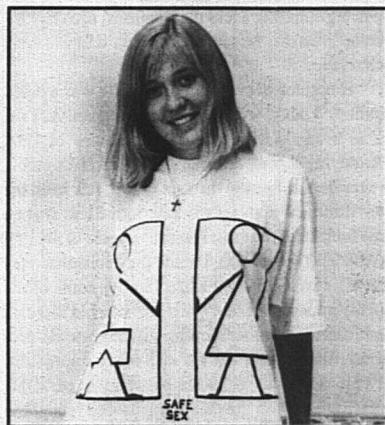
For me the Houghton experience proved to be many things: a solid education, activities to mold me into a more well-rounded individual, and friends that I will have for the rest of my life. But the greatest change that occurred in my life while at Houghton was in my spiritual growth. Of course this sounds like the "right" thing for

a Houghton student to say, but for me and many others here it is true. I was not living very close to the Lord when I first came to Houghton. In many ways I was rebelling against Him. One thing that Houghton showed me was that people my age could be on fire for God and still be "normal." Even more, though, having Christian friends was the major reason for getting my spiritual life back on track. Christ regained control over my life as He proved His faithfulness to me in the many trying ordeals I underwent. I still have a long way to go, but the Lord showed me that he has a purpose for my life and that he is big enough to lead me safely through any situation.

If I was asked to give some advice to the students who will follow me at Houghton it would be to get involved in campus life as much as possible. You only live your college years once. I often hear people complain that there is so little to do at Houghton, but these are usually the same people who rarely take advantage of campus groups and activities. There are many opportunities for involvement here, but you must be willing to invest some of your time into them. Most of the learning that you retain when you leave school will be the lessons in life you learned outside of the classroom. Extracurricular participation can be personally beneficial while making you a well-rounded individual. You will gain many more friends by it and experience things that you could never experience in class.

Finally I would say that the most important thing to do while you are here is to serve the Lord with all your abilities and cultivate your relationship with Him. The Lord has given each one of us special gifts with which to serve Him. Some gifts are being prepared for future use, but others may be used right now. Each student will undergo a different experience while at Houghton, and some will undergo much more pain and sorrow than others. I wish for each student the ability to say what the Lord has been teaching me to say for the last three years regardless of my situation - It is well with my soul.

It is time for the Houghton chapter of my life to draw to its climax. The long-awaited dream of graduation remains only a few days away, but as I leave I thank God that he led me to Houghton College. Yes, I had my share of problems while I was here, but the pleasant memories I will carry with me will far outweigh remembrances of negative experiences long into the future.



## It Takes all Kinds

by Sharon Wittemann

Its 1:21 AM and I'm still not sure about what I should write in this essay. I've waited for four years to spout off my ideas in an open forum, and now that I have the chance I don't have anything to say. No great pearls of wisdom, no platitudes to level, and no great suggestions for this institution. I'm glad to be leaving, not because of anything this place has or hasn't done or been for me, but because Life moves on and there are new horizons to explore. My theme at first was failure—historical and human—and our propensity for self-destruction and hatred, but I figured you'd all be reading Urso's column, so I decided to dwell on themes optimistic.

Yesterday I found myself in Dean Danner's office sheepishly explaining why I had missed chapel for almost twelve consecutive weeks. He asked me later what I thought was good and bad about Houghton. Most of you out there who know me will attest to the fact that I usually have a list of "bads" handy and am always prepared for a tirade, but yesterday Danner caught me off guard—I just sunk into his easy chair and scratched my head. Good, bad, not ever indifferent—what was wrong? Had apathy settled in that much? Sure there are bad things about Houghton e.g. the false hopes of academic success, parochialism run rampant, and an empty religion. So here was my second opportunity for a tirade, an open forum, why didn't I go off on the place? Changes need to be made, there is work to be done—had I lost my touch? Had I learned at Houghton to settle for a complacent, conservative lifestyle? Every inch I sunk into that easy chair stripped me of my title as one of Houghton's three angriest women—a title I wore like the badge of a battle-scarred veteran.

Now this is the point where this senior essay gets difficult. Let me admit right here and now that the following explanation for my apathetic behavior may be misconstrued as a rationaliza-

tion legitimizing a less than zealous, activity-oriented lifestyle. Misconstrue if you'd like—we'll chat later.

Houghton at one point in my life was a destination. Today, with a bit more perspective, I see it as a way-station along the highway of Life. Annoying at best, infuriating at worst, Houghton, regardless if I enjoy the fact or not, has been the environment that has worked on me and shaped me for four of the most formative years of my life. (And let's face it folks, I made the decision to stay here.) I'm frightened when I notice some of the many imperceptible ways Houghton has affected me, and the summer months will be spent de-programming myself in bars and seedy nightclubs. I've noticed, though, that most of my anger at this place arose from the fact that I viewed Houghton as a destination. Houghton didn't deliver—I had arrived, where were the goods? My thoughts began to change after I heard from a friend who graduated last year, and after a visit to the University of Maryland with Rich Perkins and his Soc. Theory class.

## The student union was a mini-mall.

I picked up correspondence with a friend who was here last year. She's working in Upper (Upper) Manhattan i.e. Harlem. The pay is low, hours long, and the students more than a challenge. Everyday on the way to work she passes crack houses bombed out and boarded up, bag ladies begging for a dime and despair and hopelessness on the surface of everything. I read her letters on the way to class, crossing the brook breathing sweet air, and passing smiling, well-fed faces. Perhaps our despair at Houghton is hidden behind a well fortified facade, but I've appreciated the relative safety of being able to take a walk—Alone. A hike into woods and sinking mud, brambles and ancient apple orchards, broken down fences and half thawed Tucker Hill Pond...

The University of Maryland—40,000 students. A virtual city. We amble out of the conference center on our way to lunch. Anonymity can be a refreshing change, but after talking with a few other students most of us Houghton folk admitted that the place made us feel alienated and lonely. "How would a person go about making friends at a place like this?" we asked. The student union was a mini-mall. People rushed by and the cleaning lady in the women's restroom yelled at me. After a grueling seven hour trip we were back home—I mean back at Houghton.

This place has become rather familiar to me, and like any old acquaintance I am acutely aware

of its bad points. I'm ready to move on. Houghton inevitably has become part of me, next time I'll choose my environment more carefully, probably not. For now allow me to quote my mom one last time (apologies to friends): "Honey...(sigh), it takes all kinds."



## Friends Make the Difference

by Mary Chacko

When I think back on my four years at Houghton College, the following terms immediately come to mind: fruit flies, student teaching, all-nighters, rats, calculus, homecoming, mice, chemistry, Opus, long calls home, chapel, suicide chicken wings, Bedford House, pizza parties, Knowlton House, etc.

What do all these words mean? They symbolize four years of intensive training in academics, relationships, and in my walk with the Lord. These three areas have been most affected by my life here. I've been stretched, tested, tried, and put through the fire in these areas, and I've come out with more wisdom, knowledge and enthusiasm than when I had entered Houghton. I leave eagerly, but with these lessons planted deep within me.

**When I changed my attitude about studying habits, that is, I began to study to learn, not for the grade, I actually enjoyed my courses. I had fun learning about the physiology of a grasshopper.**

As a freshman, I enjoyed biology and I thought the best way to use this enjoy-

ment was to study medicine. As I delved deeper into the biology, I lost that original love. I studied for the grades, to get an A. It was when I was frustrated, and had very little confidence, that my first attack of "Let's get out of here!" hit me. However, through the encouragement of my parents, friends and patient professors, I stayed. It was also at this time that my biology professors challenged me to look at other options in biology. I was encouraged to examine my talents and abilities, and see what I would most enjoy. I finally decided on teaching. When I changed my attitude about studying habits, that is, I began to study to learn, not for the grade, I actually enjoyed my courses. I had fun learning about the physiology of a grasshopper. I actually began learning something. No, my grades did not drastically improve, but I was not upset, tense and frustrated all the time, only during test time. Although I did have attacks of "Let's get out of here!", I learned to persevere and not give up when the "going got tough."

I also learned valuable lessons in my friendships. The most important lesson was learning what commitment to a friend meant. I was taught to be open, honest and very vulnerable. It is a hard lesson in trust, because I am human, and on the whole, most of my friends are human. We fall each other miserably, but commitment means we pick each other up, build each other up and encourage each other to not give up; to persevere. I'm ashamed to say that it took me three years to build relationships in which both parties are fully committed. These friendships helped my grow spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and yes, I've even become physically fit through them. My friends have kept, or at least are trying, to keep a check on those disagreeable qualities in me, while trying to build the good ones. They have been valuable and will continue to be precious to me.

My friends have also been a factor in my growth as a child of God. From the Bible we've seen that we can't grow alone, we need others to keep us growing, learning, etc. My friends have made me accountable to them in areas I could never conquer on my own. They have been Christ's servants to me. I've also been challenged to trust God in every area of my life. I feel that after four years, I'm just beginning to learn what it means. Yet after the way God has provided for me, with friendships, monetarily, academically, etc., I'm just learning



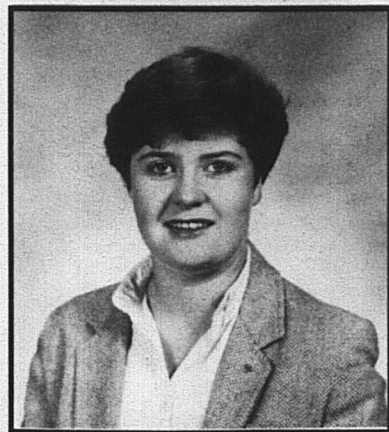
what it means to practically trust God in every day activities, e.g. will the paper get done? Will the year-round cold ever go away? Will I ever find the perfect man for me? etc., etc. I'm learning not to box God in. My spiritual walk with God has been an exciting adventure, never a dull moment.

I would like to end with a three-part challenge to those who we leave behind, and especially to those who will read this. First, set realistic goals in your academic lives, then do the best you can. Also, enjoy what you are doing, otherwise your four years here will be a waste. Study material with an attitude of learning. Don't study for the grades. A's, B's, etc., don't tell you how much you learn. Study because you want to learn and because you enjoy it.

Secondly, make the most of friendships now. Don't wait until your senior year. Making true commitments to friends will challenge you to grow. They'll teach you about yourself and about areas you never even knew you had a problem with. In the end, the companionship is worth the hassle.

Finally, you are not alone in your walk with the Lord. Your friends, brothers and sisters in the Lord, are here to help you overcome those areas which are not pleasing to the Lord. As brothers and sisters, we are responsible for each other. So, don't be prideful, take that helping hand and make yourself accountable to your brothers and sisters.

Well, Houghton, I'm outta here!



### The Wise Fool

by Patricia Uleskey

When I was a sophomore at Houghton I decided to change the course of my entire life. It was a conscious decision, and one that I would not change as I look back on it now. I think that my choice to switch majors from biology to writing was crucial

to my present happiness. That is not to say that the two years I spent as a biology major were not profitable.

### At that time I doubted my ability to achieve at anything and wondered whether I'd be working at McDonald's the rest of my life.

I spent many a long and arduous night studying with Mary Chacko, Martha Gomez, and Toni Quarshie, slaving over Dr. Christensen's chemistry problems and preparing for Dr. Munro's genetics exams. I never guessed college would be so challenging and demanding. I thought I had all the proper high school courses to prepare me for a biology major: two years of high school biology, chemistry, physics and three years of Regents math. How could I lose? Well, I lost it—or at least I thought I lost most of myself—right before I changed my major. Grades plummeted, and the freshmen ten became the sophomore twenty. I began to wonder whether or not I was cut out for college at all, let alone a potential degree in medical technology.

Searching for a new identity, I thought back to my high school years, often musing over the subjects I had taken and the activities I had been involved in. Would I be happy doing and learning things that would help me be something other than a biologist? At that time I doubted my ability to achieve at anything and wondered whether I'd be working at McDonald's the rest of my life. I thought the idea of education was to get a degree so you could earn more money and be more successful than the other guy who never went to college. I found education to be much more than that once I found a field where I felt most comfortable: writing. My new curriculum helped me see that education is a way of life by which one continually strives to alleviate the dualisms in our lives and in the world around us.

All the time I was in high school I thought of journalism as a hobby because I'd been doing it for such a long time. I began by being recommended to the position of editor of my junior high school newspaper. Ever since then I have learned more and more and participated more

actively in the field of journalism. But by the time I was a senior in high school I was so accustomed to editing I thought of it as just a hobby. It was just a crazy addiction: I had to write, type, edit, layout, and circulate. I wonder what would have happened had I seriously considered it as a vocation in high school?

Houghton is not exactly known for its journalism department, although our writing department is good and comparable to any other small college's. That is not to say I did not have thoughts of transferring. I stayed at Houghton because I knew that I would have friends here who cared about me. Perhaps changing my life so drastically was a poor excuse for being frightened and insecure. So I decided to make the best of my time here.

I have learned a great deal from many wonderful people who I've worked, learned, struggled, laughed, and cried with, and I appreciate the compassion and understanding of my friends during times of utter and total helplessness and despair. I want to thank my friends for sharing their lives, their fears, their pains, and their dreams with me. There's something different and truly unique about a Christian community. It's not a perfect place, but it tries almost too hard at times to perfect itself for the good of all its members. A part of Houghton College will always be with me.

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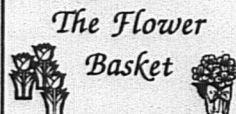
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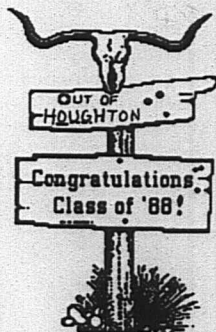


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