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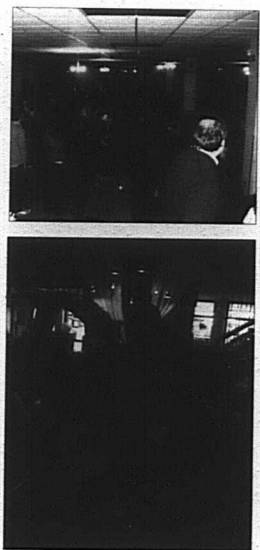
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Save The Beach



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Wishing *Godspeed* God Speed?

Last month Tim Fuller, Houghton's Vice President of Enrollment Management, announced his decision to eliminate the college's ministry teams for the 2006-2007 school year. Among the teams are the worship band *Godspeed*, vocal ensemble *Heirborne*, and string quartet *Fourknown*, all of which travel regularly during the school year sharing music at churches, youth events and chapel services on campus.

Fuller's decision to eliminate the teams was made in consideration of both budget constraints and the college's long-term goal of increasing enrollment to 1400 students by 2010. Next year's budget restrictions unfortunately allow for either the re-establishment of a Director of Church Relations position, or keeping the ministry teams running. Expenses for the latter include not only administrative

costs but stipends, musical equipment and travel for the seventeen students involved.

Reintroduction of the position of Director of Church Relations, a job previously held by Women's Soccer coach Dr. David Lewis, is a move Fuller believes will be strategic in reaching the 1400 goal. Fulfilling the role of pastor/mentor/counselor for the ministry teams and coordinating their interview, selection and training processes and church placements are only part of the Director of Church Relations' job description. Also included are the administrative aspects of running *Equipping for Ministry*, Houghton's Wesleyan ordination program for non-traditional pastors, hosting on-campus church events and helping building mutually beneficial relationships between the college and churches.

(cont'd on p. 2)

Only One Thing?

Calling students to "more than this," OneThing Ministries hosted a mini-conference during the last week of January featuring Allen Hood from the International House of Prayer in Kansas City. The subjects of his talks were the prayer of Christ (on Wednesday morning) and prayer in the life of the church (on Wednesday evening). In keeping with the thrust of the ministry hosting the conference, Mr. Hood challenged students to consider the effect of placing a relational prayer life with God as the "one thing" which defines their Christian walk, asking "Can we be bold enough to forsake our culturally-sensitive methodology to pursue lives of fasting and prayer?"

Reactions to the messages were mixed; some embraced and were encouraged by this call, some dismissed it while taking issue with his non-exegetical preaching, some disagreed on philosophical grounds, while some were apathetic. For some, Mr. Hood seemed to authenticate what they had felt called to pursue

or to express something which they had felt was needed. For others, the call to a lifestyle of prayer seemed to be imbalanced. One student felt he came across as "having the one and only method" to being a true Christian and that anyone whose life looked different than his conception of prayer must be doing something wrong, possibly contributing to a spiritual elitism which seems to pervade those involved in prayer ministry in the body of Christ.

The messages raised issues of not only how individuals approach their own devotional life, but of what emphasis those involved in Christian education should place on developing the hearts of those being trained. Expanding upon the need for a relational Christianity, Mr. Hood suggested that God is not seeking, nor does he need, servants who can work out just the right methods (indeed, the angelic servants at his disposal are stronger than we could ever be) of service, but rather, God desires hearts that are relating to him and to each other in

love. The questions raised are if we will relate to God and how we will relate to him. If God is a relational God, existing for eternity as a loving community of persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, how might we respond if we realize that we are called into relationship with the one who first loved us as the Father loves the Son?

The final invitation given at the conference was to answer that call to relationship by cultivating a life of prayer. In response to the first and greatest commandment, Mr. Hood suggested that there really is only one thing that is necessary: to fall in love with God and respond in relationship through prayer.

So, is only one thing needed, as extreme as that sounds? Hopefully this question will raise and foster dialogue as students ask this question and discern an answer for themselves. ♦

-Brent Chamberlain
Guest Writer

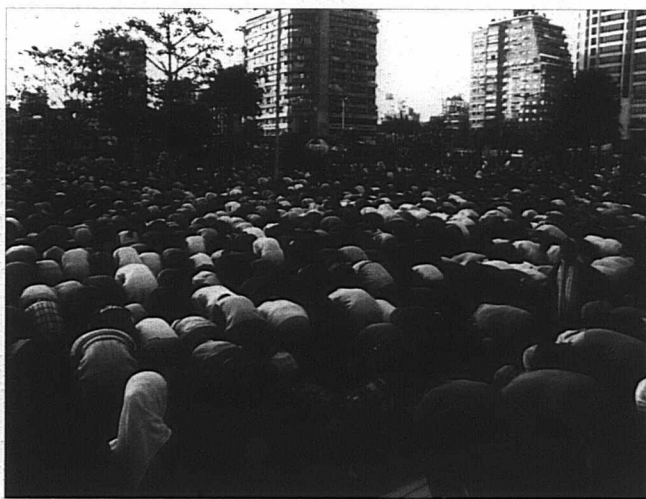
Which God Are They Serving?

The idea of inclusivism with regards to salvation through Christianity is just that, an idea. It stems from a desire, an earnest longing, for the salvation of all people. In certain contexts the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is nearly impossible to bring to light. It is the impossibility of the goal to reach the "lost" around the world and provide them with the message of salvation that has led many people to explore the prospect of a further reaching deliverance from the sinful nature of man. Those who know and have accepted the gift of Christ often are stricken with questions regarding who will be saved. If it is an exclusive group then why are some more fortunate than others? Why is it that, if the only way of salvation is a personal proclamation and acceptance of Christ as Lord, some people are more likely to be presented with or discover this truth? Inclusivism explores the idea that some people may be saved from eternal punishment and have their transgressions forgiven outside of their personal knowledge and acceptance of Christ.

While traveling across the Middle East I spent most of my time with Muslim men and women. As I discovered who each individual was and how their faith in God affected their personal lives I was challenged with the idea of inclusivism. Being unable, both legally and socially, to share the gospel message with them, I tore myself apart wondering why everyone that I came into contact with was damned according to what I had been brought up believing. As I studied the Muslim faith I found one similarity after another to my own beliefs. But it seemed that Islam completely overlooked the most important element of Christianity, the deity of Jesus Christ. Essentially, the Muslim view of God is incomplete.

The idea that God became a man for a time and was killed by man is absolutely offensive and terrifying to a Muslim. Christianity, which focuses on God's love for man, sees the manifestation of God as the ultimate expression of his loving character. God lowered himself to our level because of his unconditional love for us.

As I conversed with different people I tried to get some insight as to who a Muslim believes Jesus was. The Koran mentions Jesus several times and Islam generally gives a good impression of Christ. Christ is one of the great prophets who were given messages from God. Christ was a bringer of love and by the power



of God was able to do many miraculous things. But Christ was not deity and they believe that to think so is not only foolish but an offense that will send Christians to hell for a period of time.

So what happens to the man who is upright? The child who is ignorant? The woman who is pure? Will the salvation brought to humanity by Christ be exclusive? A sort of celestial country club where the fortunate enough to hear are the only members? These questions broke me apart as I wandered the streets of Cairo looking into the eyes of all the people that failed to meet the prerequisites club membership. My faith became so unstable that some days I felt I was a Muslim and others I tried to be a Christian. I prayed in mosques and read the Bible. I couldn't come to grips with the idea that in crowds of so many individuals there was no one who came before God as righteous but me. Muslims are not evil people. Evil people can be Muslims. I came to a semi-conclusion that Christ's work on the cross was indeed for all humanity, but some men may not even realize the graciousness of the God they seek.

When I came stumbling out of the Middle

East I was broken and wandering. I was lost and desperately wanting to be found. I went home to Kenya and I walked for three days in the Rift Valley by myself with nothing to eat wondering if God had allowed anyone else to feel as I did. Why was Christ clear to me yet so mysterious? I couldn't disbelieve yet I wasn't comfortable believing.

It's difficult to say where I am today. I can't even begin to suggest that I have answered any of my questions. I always wonder if God will snap his fingers on a day of judgment and say to us all, "hey, you, look at me...I am the God you were looking for, though you were confused and misled." On a daily basis I find myself asking God over and over again to have mercy on me and all those who seek him. I wonder where my friends and acquaintances in Egypt are and how I can help bring some light to their lives. I pray that God would show them a true picture of himself and that they would come to accept it. But still there lingers the question.

What about those who don't ever come to the conclusion that Christ is Lord? Are they forever damned? I've never found an answer. ♦

-Aaron Adkins
Guest Writer

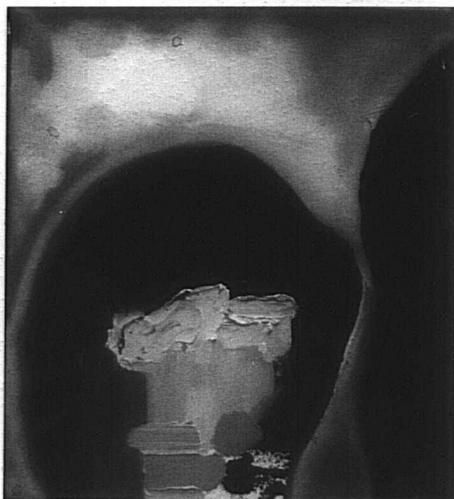


From the Editor...

I realize that these ideas are challenging to most of us, and that a few people might even be offended. However, one of the goals of the Star is to discuss the many different ideas of those in our community. The Star is trying to begin a dialogue that we will all learn and benefit from, but we can't do that without your voice.

With that in mind, please email your responses to this or any other Star article, to star@houghton.edu.

Featured Artist: *Jaqueline Speiller*



Oil on canvas by junior, Jackie Speiller. The concepts behind Speiller's paintings get at one of the mysteries of human history: some of the most motivating philosophical and theological concepts are the most difficult to define. When language falls short, nonobjective painting may be the most appropriate medium for expressing the ineffable. Speiller explains her paintings with some of these mystifying words, like unity, purity, atonement, uniqueness and process.

"For this painting I was thinking about purity," she says, "the purity of the color and the purity of the form." Her interpretation of these concepts are deeply influenced by her faith. "If I had to I would title this 'the blood of the Lamb.' I'm trying to understand what that means to me—that the blood of Jesus could be pure and holy." Speiller describes having a sense of "dialoguing with God" while she paints. "I feel like he shows me a lot through it that I can't really put into words. Of course it's very

expressive. Painting is a way of meditating for me."

Her color choices are also influenced by an idea that the goal of mixing paint is to come to the shade which is the most pure. It's an idea which has interesting theological implications, since the most pure color is not what comes directly out of a tube. Purity can only be arrived at through a meticulous development of combinations.

"I think it has something to do with unity," Speiller says. "When I'm mixing colors I don't ever feel like they're ever competing with each other, but they're working together and it's coming to be something in the end." The result in Speiller's paintings is an amazing vibrant intensity. "They're bright like life," she says. ♦

-Kelsey Harro
Arts Editor



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Cibon



Downtown Rochester is home to a number of little bistros, cafés, and delis. One of the "must visit" spots is Park Ave's Cibon. The European style bistro serves up a stylish city lounge atmosphere with an eclectic array of art, chandeliers and leather couches. Whether you want to eat a meal, dessert, or just have coffee or tea, Cibon is worth finding for the atmosphere alone.

For a meal or snack they serve a wide array of focaccia pizzas and panini sandwiches as well as pasta dishes, a number of salads and appetizers like Bruschetta and cheese trays. Served with mixed greens, the Saint Oliver panini was a perfect blend of mozzarella cheese, sun dried tomatoes, and olives that provided a flavorful kick. For dessert the blackberry gelato was smooth and flavorful but not worth \$2 a scoop. Stick with a slice of cheesecake or danish.

The portions were a little small for the price. At dinner the panini was \$9 which I did not have a problem paying mostly because, much like a gambler in a casino, I was so engrossed in the environment that I lost myself in another world of conversation and candlelight. What I really paid for was the experience, and the food was a delicious bonus. Check out the menu and get directions online at www.2taste.com/cafecibon. ♦

-Adam Sukhia
Columnist



Email your response
to this or any
other article to
the Editor at

STAR@HOUGHTON.EDU



IMAGE

"Culture: the cry of men in face of their destiny."

Albert Camus

King Kong & the Desert Fathers: the Aesthetics of Altitude

I went to see Peter Jackson's remake of King Kong film twice over Christmas break and absolutely loved it. I am drawn to this story – not simply because I blindly love any film with dinosaurs in it – but because I feel that King Kong is a magnificent modern myth. It is about the beast inside us that is killed by society, because it simply cannot exist in the highly mechanized, highly manner-driven world we have created to protect us from the evils of the unknown. Kong's ascension of the Empire State Building, his defiance in the face of the fighter planes, his fall into the streets of Manhattan – are a perfect allegory for the castration of modern man. Something wild has been sacrificed for something safe. And when this ugly thing inside us we have conveniently airbrushed out of our

lives rears its head- the part of our world that doesn't recoil in shock and horror you can be sure is loading the heavy artillery.

I thought about this allegory for some time and wonder – what is it about altitude that we love in the aesthetics of our stories? Why does Kong have to climb to the top of the skyscraper? Why does James Cagney in *White Heat* climb the gas tower before exclaiming: "Top of the world, Ma!" It seems that as soon as we got kicked out of the garden, we started building towers. To get where?

This tower aesthetic reminds me of Luis Bunuel's 1965 film, *Simone of the Desert*. The film is based on an actual 4th century desert monk, Simone, who in pursuit of holiness and inner purity, stands on top of a wooden tower.

The devil comes to tempt him many times and Simone has to deal with peasants expecting miracles and fellow monks expecting blessings. What drove the monks to the towers? Did they, like Icarus, equate elevation with immortality? There is something about the Icarus story that appears over and over again – King Kong, for example – in our stories. And every time, we know the hero will fall, even as we exult in the ascent. Perhaps it is because art, like Camus says, is our collective rage against the gilded cages we have built for ourselves. ♦

-Stephen Sorenson
Columnist



Faculty Book Review

Marilynne Robinson's *Gilead*

I read this novel last summer while sitting in an Adirondack chair under the maple tree in my backyard, looking up occasionally to watch my daughter on her swing-set or my son asleep in his stroller. The setting seemed particularly appropriate to the mood and pace of this book. *Gilead*, with its slow, deliberate, and meditative tempo, is not for those who are looking for a brisk plot. If you have the time, however, to sip rather than gulp a novel in the coming weeks or months, this one will reward you with a finely crafted reflection on a lifetime of faith and faithfulness. The narrator, John Ames, is a 76-year-old minister who has been told by his doctors that he could die suddenly and at any time. The novel is thus the first-person narrative of his life with his thoughts on what it means to surrender a world he loves. While a novel with such a self-reflective narrator could be interesting, it could also be very dull. What saves

Gilead are two masterful choices on the part of the author, Marilynne Robinson. First, this is not a self-indulgent, introspective ramble. This old preacher has a very particular audience: his seven-year-old son. Ames writes to explain his faith to the son whom he will not live to raise. This lends an urgency to his narrative of why he has remained a believer when others in his family did not and gives poignancy to his thoughts on the faith. The second important move Robinson makes is to introduce a plot line that occurs alongside Ames's meditations on the end of his life. The wayward son of a dear friend returns to town and begins to spend time with Ames's wife and son. Ames must then decide how to treat this man, whose past actions he finds despicable, and to think about what will happen to his own family when he is dead. Few novels written in the past one hundred years take the claims of the Christian

faith as seriously as *Gilead* and, of those that do, even fewer are so skillfully written. Save this novel for a moment when you can savor it, but don't fail to put it on your reading list.

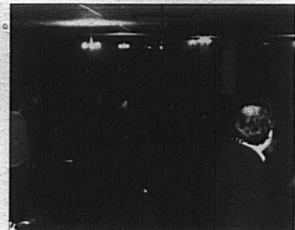
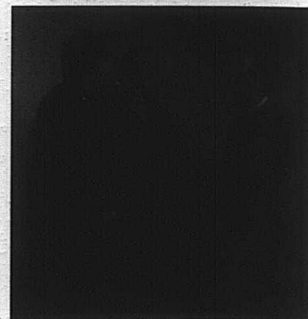
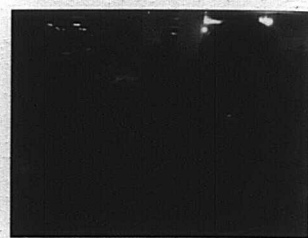
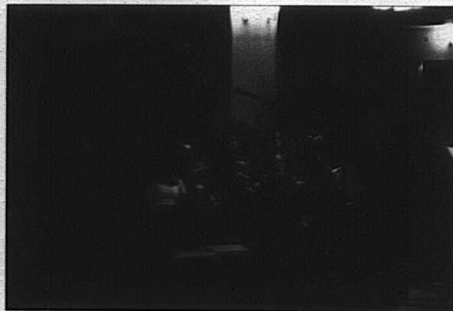
Two notes: 1) this novel is available in an audio version. I have both read the novel and listened to it on c.d. I would recommend either version—or both! 2) Marilynne Robinson will be speaking at the Calvin Festival of Faith and Writing (which a group of Houghton students and professors will be attending) this April. If you're attending this festival, don't miss hearing her speak. ♦

-Susan Bruxvoort Lipscomb
Professor of English

Students Gather To "Save The Beach"

The Save the Beach coffeehouse and forum on February 1st drew a crowd of students and faculty, which, in all likelihood, broke the campus center fire code. Concerned friends and students of Dr. Beach gathered to discuss the circumstances surrounding the elimination of his position, expressing their support with petitions, onstage statements, and sheer numbers. The crowd was entertained with performances by Leroy Townes and the Lone Stars, Henry Langston, John Buteyn, and alumna John Haley. Of special note was a cheer led by Inti Martinez and a stirring comment from Dr. Airheart, urging students to be cognizant of the influence that goes with their role as the college's prime customer base. SGA President, Jason Shambach, and Vice-president, Kevin Thompson spoke about the issue of communication between the student body and the administration and particularly expressed concern over a decision to use the Student Activities Fund for other purposes. They invited any student with comments about issues on campus to come to the SGA office. Three hours and 20 pots of coffee after the forum's start, the petition asking the administration to reconsider their decision had over 500 signatures; this means almost half of all Houghton students signed a document attesting to our appreciation of and continuing support for a beloved and esteemed professor. ♦

*-Nick DiFonzo
Staff Writer*



Opinion

Friends,

Sometimes it is easy to get discouraged, especially this time of the year. It is cold, grey, snowy, Christmas is over and there's already so much work...and it is a long, long way to get to any metropolis from here!

But I have had an 'ah-ha moment', and I feel as if it might be ameliorative to pass it along to the rest of the Houghton Community. My spirits soared tonight listening to Dr. Bill John Newbrough's spectacular recital. During the intermission I walked next door and viewed one of the most enjoyable art gallery displays I've ever witnessed. (The Buechner exhibit.) How very remarkable it is, in this tiny hamlet, to enjoy that quality of art and music, all free of charge. I realized anew how blessed I am.

On any given week in Houghton, say this week for example, one can have the opportunity to hear a nationally known Tolkein scholar speak in chapel; to sit near Shirley Close in church and enjoy her angelic voice; to watch a spirited athletic competition and the accompanying pageantry of Shenawana: Men in Kilts; all while living in Christian community and participating in the on-going philosophical dialogue that has continued down through the ages of higher education. (This and the possibility of Houghton's first woman president all in one week!)

As humans, it is all too easy to focus on the potholes and miss the charming country road. Sometimes at Houghton we can get bogged down on budget cuts, politics, and petty strife and miss God's blessings on this place.

Just a postscript: While enjoying the piano recital, I absentmindedly sat my wallet and keys down in the aisle by my seat, and then promptly forgot about them for the whole concert and intermission until I went to buy one of Bill John's CDs at the end. And of course, being Houghton, the wallet and its contents were safely there when I went back. All things considered, I believe I'll take the joys of Houghton life over mall proximity any day. I come back to a favorite passage from Psalm 16: "The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance."

So I thank you Dr. Newbrough, and all of you, for being a part of my abundant life in this community and forgive me for when I don't appreciate it, and you, enough! ♦

-Tim Nichols

In Response...

Before I begin I would like to thank Inti for his submission, which I know was intentionally provocative for the purpose of debate. As a friend and fellow seeker of truth I just have a couple points to make about his editorial "Mistake After Mistake," also for the purpose of debate.

Firstly, Inti, I am confused about the purpose of your article. You seem to be mixing two issues. First, you have a genuine dislike for American policy. Second, you are exhorting community members to have a proactive Christian worldview that involves formulating and voicing opinions as well as traveling abroad to expand those opinions. I have no beef with those two purposes in and of themselves. We can certainly debate the specifics of US domestic/foreign policy. Also, you and I both agree that Christians should be more involved, and I direct you to an editorial I authored in Fall '04 that stated just that.

The problem, however, comes when you mix these two purposes together. You have, in essence, used Jesus to support your views on very political issues. "WWJD?" you ask. "He would be opposed to the tax cuts for the rich and social program cuts for the poor."

You have taken a political issue, tax cuts, simplified it into a sentence full of political and partisan jargon, applied your understanding of "social justice" to it, and finally claimed that because you find that sentence to represent something "wrong" or "unjust," so would Jesus. You can certainly say that as a Latino from Honduras your ideas lean toward socialism and you hold many anti-American views. I very much appreciate that you hold such views because it encourages debate and an active search for the truth y lo mejor. Also, we certainly need to apply our understanding of Jesus from Scripture, other writings, and personal revelation

to our world. That is the essence of having a Christian worldview.

I do not believe, however, that you can put such words directly into the mouth of Jesus simply to buttress your argument.

Finally, I have a problem with your statement regarding the gap between public opinion and public policy in the US, which you assume is a negative thing. In my understanding of The Federalist Papers, particularly #'s 52, 56, 57, and 58, this gap is a good thing in the eyes of the authors of the Constitution.

Just try and follow your logic to its end. If public opinion and policy were one in the same we would be governed by the results of Gallup polls. That may not sound like such a horrible thing to the reader who has not seen the results of such polls, but for those of us who have, it is not a desirable way to formulate public policy. You ask us, the readers, to look at our history. Well I ask you to do the same. What is popular amongst the people has not always been what is

right or good or just. Not only is "the public" basically incapable of informing themselves of every detail cornering a particular policy in order to formulate a sound opinion on the matter, but many people lack the virtue and wisdom to rule justly and selflessly. Thus, we are a representative democracy where that gap between public opinion and policy is intentional and valuable.

In no way does this render us incapable of expressing our opinions to our representatives and being proactive Christians. It is part of our representatives' job to listen us, the constituents, in the deliberative process. In this way I agree with some of the points following your comment on the opinion-policy gap.

I would also like to recommend that you read *The Mild Voice of Reason* by Joseph M. Bessette, which provides the basis for my second argument.

-D. Elliott Tait

Houghton Abroad

Houghton Down Under: With Kingsley College in Melbourne



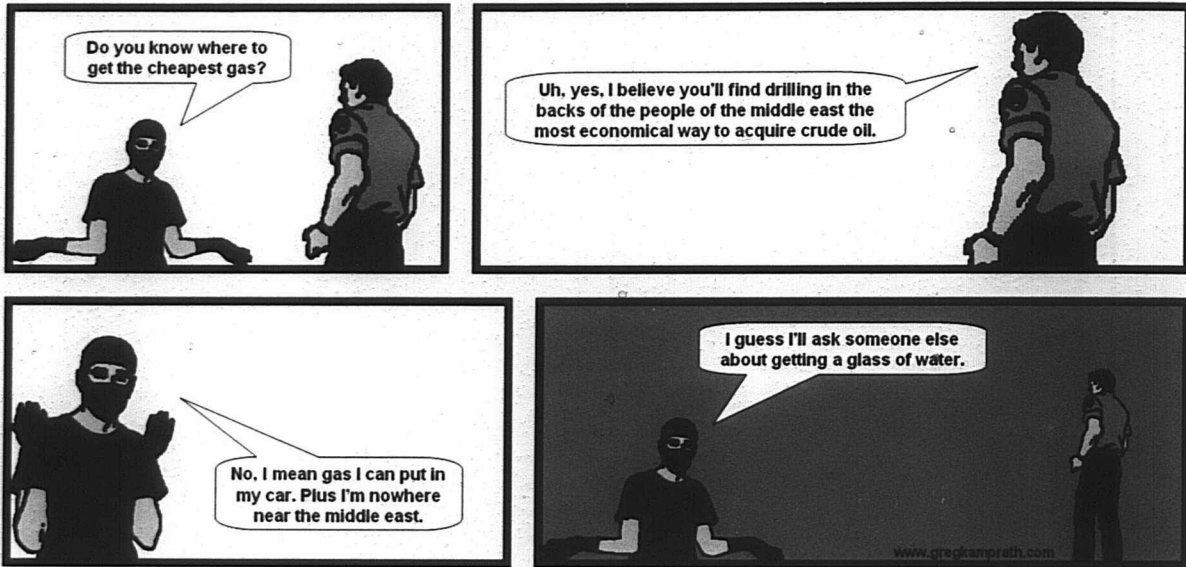
"The Twelve Apostles"
Great Ocean Road, Australia



A scene very typical for a sun-worshiping culture like Australia's, sunbathers at the famous Bondi Beach in Sydney.

Comics

The Camp Wrath Songbook



The Life and Times of Fitzgerald and Monalu

by Lizbeth Allen



Joe and Ducko

by Joseph Freeman

