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Houghton Students Visit Washington D.C.

CATHERINE DEOLIVEIRA

Hannah Sievers '20, John Kanu '21, Elijah Tangenberg '20, and Jesse Rucquoi '21 traveled to Washington D.C., along with Sustainability Coordinator Brian Webb on Monday, January 28th. The group attended the Christian Leadership Conference hosted by the National Association for Evangelicals (NAE), along with 80 other students from various Christian institutions. The motto of the conference was centered on "Justice, Mercy, and Humility" and Micah 6:8, "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

The conference addressed issues including climate change, police brutality, immigration policy, abortion, poverty, LG-BTQ rights, civility in the public discourse, partisanship, and bipartisanship. Speakers at the conference ranged from Ted Cruz to Nancy Pelosi - "as wide of a spectrum as it gets," Brian Webb commented. "The NAE was intentional about bringing in diverse speakers to present a large variety of perspectives to intelligently form their [students'] thoughts and ideas



Students and Faculty Visit Washington, D.C.

COURTESY OF HANNAH SIEVERS

without being spoon fed the party lines." Webb was impressed with how the Houghton students were among the most vocal in the group. "They were actively engaged, clearly learning, asking lots of questions. When do you get a chance to ask someone like Mitt Romney a question, in person, in a small setting? Our students really took advantage of those opportunities."

Kanu, the Executive Officer

of Diversity and Inclusion, described the experience as educational and life-changing. "It was a great experience to be able sit there in front of senators and congressmen, they are telling you exactly what they believe is right or wrong. You don't get the arbitrary type of news from the media; you hear [it] straight from them and get a better concept. The conference itself was learning a lot of different perspectives and a lot of

people's political ideologies that helped better shape my own." One quote that was powerful to him came from a discussion about prison reform: no matter what the situation, "You'll never look into the eyes of someone that Jesus Christ does not love." Kanu said, "I will always keep that with me." Kanu's favorite part of the trip was when President Mullen joined the students and Webb to lobby alongside the

presidents of Roberts Wesleyan and King's College in New York. They met with senators Schumer and Gillibrand's offices to lobby for federal funding for Christian Higher Education. "It was an honor to be there and work with my president of the school along with my other constituents. That is something that really mattered to me because I was able to explain how far Houghton has brought me. A Christian institution is very prominent and is valuable to this day and it is very distinct from a public education."

A group of students advocated with Brian Webb at congressman Tom Reed's office to advocate for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Divided Act to put a price on fossil fuels and return it to American households as a dividend. Instead of going towards government programs like a Carbon Tax would, the act disincentivizes the use of fossil fuels through a natural market-based mechanism. "It's a win-win for the environment and economy," Webb says. "Advocacy is important, and I think it is particularly important for us as Christians to have our voice heard in society. Christians are

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STAR CELEBRATES

110 YEARS

DEVEN BLOWERS

Before World War I, when Houghton College was 26 years old and still a seminary, the first STAR was published. In February of 1909, students, professors, and community members got together to produce the Houghton College paper that is still published today. Throughout its 110 year duration the STAR has been a voice for students to communicate with others on and off campus. Though promoting journalism has been the STAR's primary goal for the duration of its existence, it has also provided a creative outlet for students and advertising for local businesses.

Contained in the pages of this first issue are a variety of introductory pieces intended to inform the community about the paper. The first piece published, "Kingdom of Iniquity" an essay by Theos Thompson, provides arguments for temperance and prohibition, while J. A. McPherson's poem "Houghton on the Genesee," chronicles through verse Houghton's his-

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Students Honor Victims of Racial Violence



COURTESY OF ZORAN KOKANOVIC ON UNSPLASH

MADISON COLLINS

Students and faculty gathered in the CFA recital hall for the Lamenting Lives Lost to Racism event on Wednesday February 6th. This was one of the many events being hosted on campus in observance of Black History Month. At the vigil, students presented a variety of tributes to those who have been

victims of racially-targeted violence toward minority groups. Alexander Wood '20 and Jolene Quiah '22 facilitated the event, in which there was poetry read in a several languages, a series of prayers, vocal performances with musical accompaniment, applicable Bible passages, and more.

Several of the performances were triumphant; joyously celebrating the unique cul-

ture that has not and cannot be crushed under the foot of white supremacy. Various students shared their talents such as Daron Richburg '22 who played guitar, Sarah Phillips '22 who sang, and Lysette Vasquez '21 and Juwan Moore '20 who sang a duet in Spanish. Merris Ackon '20 and Francesca Etoa '21 jointly presented the poem, "And You Call Me Colored" by Agra Gra in French and English. Shaphan

Hestick '19 delivered a rousing rendition of "Rise Up" by Andra Day, declaring "I'll rise up high like the waves, I'll rise up in spite of the ache, I'll rise up and I'll do it a thousand times again".

Many of the performances were sobering. Carolyn Case '19 shared a Psalm that her and her high school classmates turned to for comfort when George Zimmerman was found innocent for the murder of Trayvon Martin. John Kanu '21 shared some of the tragic history of racial violence in the American church, reading a multitude of verses that were used by white slave owners to religiously justify their brutal behavior towards — and murder of — slaves. Dr. Pettway and Isander Ramos '20 both did dramatic readings of poetry which enlightened listeners to various black experiences, while Matthew Baker '19 vulnerably opened up about the lifelong impacts of police brutality upon the lives of individuals who experience racism at the hands of higher authorities. Oluwabusayomi Fadiya '19, EunJin Kwak '21, Jolene Quiah '22, Joel Mulindwa

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CAMPUS FACILITIES HOURS OF OPERATION FOR 2019 SPRING SEMESTER

Campus Center Dining Hall:
Hot Breakfast:
M - Fri | 7 - 9:30 a.m.
Sat | 8 - 9:30 a.m.
Continental Breakfast M - Sat | 9:30 - 11:30a.m.
Continental Breakfast Sun | 8 - 11:30 a.m.
Lunch:
M - Sun | 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Lite Lunch: M - Sun | 1:30 - 5 p.m.
Dinner:
M - F | 5 - 8 p.m.
Sat & Su | 5 - 7:15 p.m.

Courtesy of houghtonmetz.com

Kerr-Pegula Field House:
Monday-Friday 6:00 am - 10:00 pm
Saturday 10:00 am - 6:00 pm
Sunday 1:00 - 5:00 pm

Kerr-Pegula Field House Weight Room:
Monday-Friday 6:00 am - 8:00 am
4:00 pm - 10:00 pm
Tuesday/Thursday 11:00 am - 1:00 pm
Saturday 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Sunday 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Courtesy of the Houghton College website

Big Al's / Poblano's:
Weekday Lunch
M - Fri | 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Dinner
Su - Th | 8 - 11 p.m.
Fri & Sat | 8 p.m. - 12 a.m.

Courtesy of houghtonmetz.com

Willard J. Houghton Library:
Mon - Thur 8:00 am - 11:00 pm
Fri 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Sat 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Courtesy of the Houghton College website

Java 101:
M - F | 8 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Sat | 11 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Sun | 1 - 11 p.m.

Courtesy of houghtonmetz.com

Nielsen Center:
Monday-Friday 8:00 am - 10:00 pm
Saturday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm
Sunday 1:00 - 5:00 pm, 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Nielsen Center Pool:
Open Swim
Monday-Friday Noon - 1:00 pm
Tuesday/Thursday 8:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Saturday 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm Community Swim
Sunday 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm Community Swim

Nielsen Center Climbing Wall:
Monday 7:00 - 9:00 pm College students and community
Wednesday 8:00 - 10:00 pm College students ONLY
Thursday 8:00 - 10:00 pm College students ONLY

Courtesy of the Houghton College website

STAR from page 1

tory up until that point, and the “Philomathean and Neospfic Societies” provide reports from nearby literary societies which the members of the Houghton belonged to at the time. Also contained in this issue are a number of familiar names such as Luckey and Fancher, who in addition to being part of the community, were also contributors to the STAR.

Starting with this edition, students have used their voices to contribute to ongoing conversations throughout campus. Thompson’s temperance opinion is the first example. Although, the STAR was originally subscription-based and extended to the communities outside of Houghton, it served the students as a journalistic source for stories about on-campus matters and the broader world.

Monica Sandreczki ‘12, Managing Editor at WSKG an NPR affiliate and former Editor in Chief of the STAR, states, “censored journalism is no journalism at all, and even in the midst of conflict with the administration there is still this affirmation of student press rights.” Student press was affirmed even if students made mistakes. She said, “We didn’t have a journalism class. Students were training each other in what journalism was like.” Similarly, in the 1909 publication, it says “We shall, no doubt, make many mistakes before everything runs smoothly.” In fall 2018, Sandreczki helped educate students by teaching a journalism class.

Stanley Wright pens, “If there are wise ones today, from East,

West, North, or South, who will follow the gleam of this ‘Star,’ they will find in a little village among the hills of Western New York some of the followers of that Teacher, teaching yet the greatest truths He gave to the world.” ★

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called to stewards, we know that the earth is not ours, we know that it belongs to God. How do we treat what belongs to God? Do we abuse it for our own short-term gain? Or do we steward it wisely, thinking about how it can benefit others?”

Rucquoi, an intern for the Office of Sustainability said, “I learned a lot about Christianity and politics and the relationship between the two and possible job opportunities.” She was surprised by the amount active Christians in the government. Students heard from Barry Black, the Chaplain of the United States Senate. He talked about how he has Bible studies for different members of congress. Rucquoi says the amount of people that come to Chaplain Black and ask for insight of prayer is encouraging. She says, “God is in the government, He is there, He’s working.”

The group got go into the floor of the House chamber, led by a former congressman who talked about his 20 years of experience in the House. “That was just a cool experience,” Webb said, “to be able to sit in the seats that our representatives sit in.” The conference ended on Friday morning

with a White House visit. “Being blessed with the opportunity to go there was amazing,” Kanu said. “I would never have thought I would be able to go to the White House or go to D.C. and sit at a Senator’s district office when I first walked into Houghton. This school has opened doors for me to do so.”

“There is an opportunity for students to go next year. It is an amazing opportunity to travel to D.C. and get on the same page as the rest of the country,” Rucquoi said. “Going out and talking to politicians made me realize that [at Houghton] we need to have more discussion about current issues. We are the age of voters, we are the next generation to fill their spots.” ★

HONOR from page 1

‘21, Emmy Erisman ‘21 and Mer-ris Ackon ‘20 lead emotional and convicting prayers, one of which the words “God, forgive us for the crimes of which we have been complicit...” was prominent. These prayers of confession, repentance, and consecration asked God to forgive the ways that we have been violently racist, have been silent towards racism, and have participated in a systematically racist society. Additionally, they prayed for Him to be with students as they move forward to engage the hatred in our world with understanding, humility, strength and love.

Hestick reflected on the night, commenting that it was the “first of its kind” at Houghton in which “a lot of the silent grieving that

happens among the students of colour behind closed doors was brought to and shared with the community”. This optimism and confident support towards the event was echoed by other students as well. Marcus Mena ‘19 called it “a much needed platform on campus for African American

On February 11th the “Kill-O-Watt” competition officially ended, crowning the residents of Perkins 49 the winners of a pizza party. This competition was held to increase awareness of energy use and promote energy conservation. Students were challenged to reduce the energy they used for three weeks. The reduction of energy was converted into points and the house with the most points won. Madison Collins ’20 says, “I appreciated this competition because it’s hard to find tangible ways to make a difference regarding environmental issues as a college student. I’m encouraged by individuals who are equipping their communities with mediums to do just that.”

According to Shaphan Hestick ‘19, the Energy Coordinator for the Center for Sustainability, nine houses participated in the competition, with a minimum of four students per house and a maximum of eight. Hestick says energy conservation at Houghton is important because “... our energy demand creates ripple effects. The more energy that

students to express their fear, hope, and prayers for the America they wish this country was”. The night was serious, communal and meaningful, as all who presented and attended were able to express their grief, vocalize their fears, and be encouraged by each other’s presence. ★

students use here... the more energy demand there is on the wider grid and, therefore, the more energy consumption there is and the more energy production there is. The more energy production then more resources are being used.” Meghan Rearick ‘19 said, “I think it was little changes like utilizing natural light during the day, only charging devices when absolutely necessary, and showering in the dark that really brought light to just how much energy we consume as college students. Energy conservation is possible, it just has to be intentional. This competition provided an exciting opportunity to get people thinking about ways to change their everyday habits in an effort to steward our Earth and resources in a more beneficial way.” Hestick concluded, “At Houghton College, the less we use, the better message we send to our community... Saving energy and being energy conscientious is always a good practice, we’re saving natural resources, anyone that does that should be celebrated!” ★

“Kill-O-Watt” Competition Sheds Light on Energy Conservation

KRISTEN SAVASTANO

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STAR Rerun

Attention: All Those Who Care Enough to Send the Very Best

JIMMIE GILLIAM

This rerun column features various Houghton STAR articles from our archives. These articles do not contain current information, but are meant to show the past culture and events on Houghton Campus throughout the College's history This particular article is from Volume 48 Issue 8 of the STAR published on February 10th, 1956.

The following articles may contain inaccurate or dated information.

Saint Valentine, for all we know, may never have had a girlfriend, but who can doubt his contribution in the area of Romance. Long before the “romantic movement” he petitioned and persuaded the Human Affairs Committee for a standing date on the calendar of yearly events; he even got his name attached to it. The entire twenty-four hours of the 14th of February were ten-

derly set aside for friends and lovers. That was long before the discovery of the nervous system, therefore we find no mention of “steadies” or “unsteadies.” Traditionally, Saint Valentine’s Day is a day for lovers, and since Houghton is steeped in tradition, we naturally celebrate the day.

Of course, classes are not dismissed; the professors have to have something to do. Nevertheless the activities of the day are irregular and not specifically described in the Handbook. As the day speeds on, 3:30 comes early. We also note a surplus of mail, and a fortunate few push back their potatoes and meatloaf to peek into the eyes at her left while her felicitous heart aids in the digestion of surplus chocolates.

Stuttering and blushing are common ailments reported at the infirmary, the cure can best be found beside you at the library, perhaps. It is the customary thing to say, “I love you.”, but due to the limited facilities of the Speech Department many young lover resort to cards. Mr. Backer and Mr. Hurd efficiently have a large and early supplies catering under such labels as “Tall, Dark and Handsome”; ”Short, Pale

and Ugly”; “One and Only”; “A Senior and Lonely”; “Almost but not Quite”; “Ti’l a Better Comes Along”; and there are some sealed with your favorite flavor of honey.

...”Be your valentine? I’d rather be dead!” ... These messages range in price from 5¢ to 50¢. Honey is expensive, you know. But there is room for economy even in such a matter so delicate as this. Proof for this statement was actually observed on this campus. The young lady was searching the racks for of the Fillmore Department Store valentine display. She desired a suitable valentine for her husband (After six months of student wedded bliss she still loved him). At last she was attracted to a card. On the front was the picture an elephant (grinning as only an elephant can and showing his tusks) and as the card unfolded several times the elephant got bigger and bigger. The caption, “With lots of love from lil’ ole me!” This appealed to her accent but the 25¢ price was a frustrating obstacle. Houghton students and their lovers are first economical, but they are also intelligent. The practical wife merely relied on foresight and

bought the valentine. It could be carefully preserved until the very first birthday party of that very first offspring-- put to excellent use in the game, “Pin The Tail On The Elephant.” ★

Import of History of St. Valentine’s Day for Celebration at Houghton College

JEANNE WILLET

This particular article is from Volume 61 Issue 13 of the STAR published on February 14th, 1969.

With Valentine’s Day upon us once again, it may be profitable to us, as knowledgeable college students, to look back into the annals of history and examine the origins of this traditional celebration.

According to legend, the feast of St. Valentine commem-

orates two saints of the same name who suffered martyrdom in Rome around the time of the emperor Claudius. The present day celebration is not connected with either saint but rather seems related to a pagan Roman festival of the Lupercalia, which took place in the middle of February, or to the spring season in general.

What does Valentine’s day mean to the typical Houghton student in the twentieth century? Opinions vary form “a red rose” to sending nasty cards form Barkers to your girlfriend. It is heart-shaped chocolate cake with vanilla icing. It is a chance for Seniors to legitimately send a card to the guy they’ve had a crush on for four years.

Another student recalls the second grade days when everyone bought a penny Valentine card for each member of the class.

Another says “Valentines Day shows the failure of the Admissions Committee to maintain an equal ratio of the sexes on campus.”

And finally, one student suggests that we use the new computer to match up couples on campus for a special Valentine celebration! ★

Highlander of the Week

Isander Ramos-Net



PAIGE COLLINS

Isander Ramos-Net has received the award of Male Highlander of the Week. Isander is a player on the Men’s Basketball Team and averaged 18.5 points per game for the week. Isander is a Junior at Houghton College, Majoring in Business Administration with a Concentration in Finances

Ramos-Net explained how he felt honored to receive the Highlander of the Week award. He stated, “It motivates me to work harder. It’s an award for

me and the whole team.” Ramos-Net stated that what helped him reach such a productive week was “Motivation from the coach and my team.” He continued, “Wanting to win and getting better everyday.”

As the season continues, Isander has goals and aspirations for what’s next, like any athlete. Isander stated that his are “Improving every day... Making the best out of it.” he continued that “Playing hard for the Seniors who are not coming back.” and “Closing off on a good note for next season.” are goals of his as well.

The motivation, and driving force of Ramos-Net can be attributed to God, his family and his team. Isander elaborated, “God because He gives me the strength to keep playing. My family because they always supported me. Same with the team supporting me. I play with them on the court so they definitely give me strength and motivation.”

Isander’s favorite sport to play, when he isn’t on the court, is volleyball, and his favorite athlete is Dwyane Wade, from the Miami Heat. His favorite movie and TV show are Sav-

ing Private Ryan and The Office respectively. If you see Isander in the dining hall he’ll probably have a plate of rice, beans and chicken, his favorite meal, and he’ll likely be eating chocolate cake on cheat day, his favorite dessert.

The Men’s Basketball Team has only three games remaining this season until the Empire 8 Tournament takes place towards the end of the month. ★

Write for the International Perspectives Column

Are you an international student?

Do you want to report on current issues in your home country?

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Review// *thank u, next*

TYGER DOELL

Two albums in six months? In the words of Ariana Grande, “that’s deep.” The pop star is inclined to think so, of course, because this is exactly the feat that she’s accomplished with her February 9th release of *thank u, next*.

Some may think that this dive right into another album so close to the release of the previous seems hurried, but to be fair, a lot can change in six months; at least for the singer, life is much different from how it was when her innocent and light-hearted fourth album *Sweetener* came out in August of 2018. Since the release of that album, Grande’s short engagement to actor Pete Davidson has broken up, leaving her heavily criticized in the media. In addition, Grande’s ex-boyfriend Mac

Miller (the relationship ended in May of 2018, just weeks before her engagement to Pete Davidson) passed away from a drug overdose. This all comes just a year after Grande’s concert in Manchester, UK was bombed by an extremist, leaving the singer with anxiety and PTSD which she continues to deal with.

This difference in Grande’s life is effectively conveyed throughout her entire album. Songs like the titular “thank u, next” and “bloodline” seem to be a reference to her past break-ups, with “thank u, next” even referencing by name her ex-boyfriends. There are also songs in which the singer gets introspective, admitting her limits and sharing with fans how she’s beginning to understand herself. In “fake smile” she describes how she no longer wishes to pretend that she’s okay if she’s not, “I won’t say I’m feeling fine/ After what I’ve been through, I can’t

lie.” In the song “ghostin”, she sings to an unnamed (presumably male) person about how “know[s] that it breaks your heart when I cry again over him.” She even recognizes in the song “in my head” that her fantasies don’t necessarily match up to reality, singing “I thought that you were the one/ But it was all in my head.” In these songs and more, we see Grande becoming more reflective on her life, and not allowing herself to get caught up in the excitement or innocence anymore. Although some might argue that there isn’t much which makes *thank u, next* different from Grande’s previous work, or any other pop song in general, the difference in Grande’s life (and subsequently, her lyrics) makes the album all the more different than what’s come before.

This shift from innocence to experience is really the theme that characterizes the entirety of *thank u, next*. Looking back

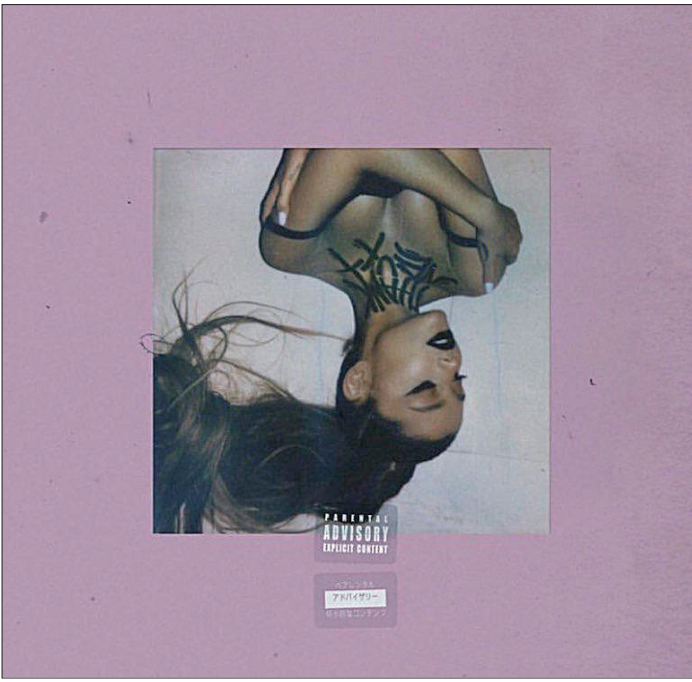


PHOTO COURTESY OF IHEARTRADIO

Ariana Grande's new album was released Friday, February 8.

at Grande’s previous album, *Sweetener*, we see a version of Grande that knows there are things like breakups and bombings in the world, but desires to retain that innocence. The cover art depicts a brightly colored background, and a heavily made-up and innocent looking Grande upside down. The message of that album, with it’s upbeat pop undertones and overall happier lyrics, signals what Grande herself called “bringing light to a situation.” But where *Sweetener* brought light to the situation, *thank u, next* brings something quite different to the situation: the ability and desire to move on and focus on oneself rather than a person who doesn’t love you anymore. The cover art of the album depicts a very different Ariana Grande: The singer’s hair, lips, and outfit are all black. Although

she’s upside-down, we see that this is a much darker version of the pop star than we’ve known before.

In the end, it’s a message that we resonate with, as shown by her dominance over the US and Global Top 50 on both Spotify and Apple Music. Music, like all other forms of art, is largely autobiographical; the reason we resonate with Grande in her newest album is her ability to be honest about herself unlike ever before. While some may find her newest album unoriginal, one needs to only look at the context to see that Grande’s life has changed dramatically, and this has influenced the ways that she’s approached her newest album. Besides, she has one thing to say to any would-be critics: thank u, next. ★

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Shedding Light on the Radiance

HOPE LOHOUSE

The Radiance, one of the many clubs on campus, is somewhat shrouded in mystery for the students who are not members. The club exists to create a space where people who enjoy various popular culture and media topics can enjoy interests together such as Marvel, Star Wars, Harry Potter, video games, and so much more. President Ellirose Edwards (affectionately called Nerdmaster by the members) describes the Radiance as “a club to come nerd out about stuff. If you’re a fan of anything, you can come and find others who are also a fan or

introduce the group to a new thing.” Meetings usually consist of a short planning session where possible events are discussed, followed by casual chatting about the various interests of the group members. When asked about the types of events they do, Ellirose stated, “We do one convention every fall and then we try to make it to any nerdy movies that premier during the semester. We also have more lowkey events where we watch previously released movies or get together to play games.” The Radiance usually helps to arrange transport to any of their off-campus events.

Fairly unique to the club, the Radiance has a Discord server which is managed by member Elise Koebl. Discord, a service developed primarily

for gamers as an alternative to Skype and other such services, allows for discussion and communication outside of the club meeting times. It features discussion channels such as movies, comics, video games, art, YouTube, and many more. When asked what her favorite thing about the club was, Elise replied, “What I really love about this group are the people. Sure, fandoms are fun to enjoy on your own, but there’s something special about being able to find people who share those interests.” The Discord server helps to facilitate those group interactions and conversations. It is also frequently used to decide what movie to watch at a movie night or to initiate impromptu Super Smash Bros sessions. The Radiance leadership encourages

group consensus and member input, something many of the members appreciate.

The Radiance members are also always excited to welcome newcomers, regardless of interest type or level. Treasurer Emma Bruce in particular urges people to join, stating, “We always love to see more people. More people means we can organize bigger events, or delegate smaller and more varied events to people who want to see them happen, such as if they have a game they want to teach or a show they want to get people into. Mostly, we’re just a casual group of nerds that get really excited about nerd things, if you yourself like to get excited about nerd things, you’ll be in good company. We like to avoid gatekeeping, so there’s

no ‘Obscure Star Trek Trivia’ or ‘Saw Star Wars 27 Times’ bar for entry, and we love discovering cool media we’ve never heard about!” Ellirose reinforced this sentiment, saying that they welcome “anyone who is interested in sharing their passions and is also willing to be respectful of other people’s preferences. There really doesn’t need to be any arguments over which show is better, ya know?”

The club meets at 7pm on Saturday nights in the conference room behind Java 101, and anyone with questions or interested in getting involved can email Emma Bruce, the club secretary, at emmaBruce20@houghton.edu. ★

Dr. Rhett Delivers Faculty Lecture

GABI SHEELEY

We all wish we had more time for personal projects, and that’s why it’s always so exciting to see the great work accomplished by Houghton faculty in the midst of a busy semester. The latest lecture in the Faculty lecture series was given by Dr. John Rhett of the art department on “Industrialization and the Machine Aesthetic.”

Opening with an image of a sleek, black iPhone, described as “the epitome of the machine aesthetic,” Dr. Rhett launched into his analysis of several 19th and 20th century pieces of art, including *The Fighting Temeraire* by Joseph M. W. Turner from 1839. The painting documents the journey of an old warship on its way to be decommissioned and dismantled after 35 years of service in the British navy. It is full of symbolic meaning, as the more ‘natural,’ wind-powered vessel made out of wood is passively pulled along by a steam-powered metal one – an old era of technology making way for the new.

The machine aesthetic seen in transition in Turner’s work broke through with full force in the art world by the turn of the century, with painters and sculptors such as Charles Sheeler, Constantin Brâncuși, Jacob Epstein, and Piet Mondrian. Their work showcased a “process of formal reduction” used to create minimalist, industrial interpretations of familiar, organic forms. Charles Sheeler’s *American Landscape*, a painting portraying a Ford Motor Company factory, and Constantin Brâncuși’s *Torso of a Young Man*, a simple, piston-like sculpture, were featured in Dr. Rhett’s lecture as examples of

how the machine aesthetic iterated artistic tropes through a new set of industry-inspired values: repetitive, efficient, inorganic, and emotionless.

At this point Dr. Rhett’s lecture took a turn towards cultural critique. In his own words, “the industrial revolution introduced the potential for a new type of imagery in Western Art,” but at the same time, the machine aesthetic was about more than visual aesthetic. It came laden with cultural values describing how the world was becoming and/or how the world should be. Some artists from the post-war period of the early-mid 20th century sought to “reinvent visual language” into a “utopian art that everyone can agree on.” Repetitive, efficient, inorganic, and emotionless. Sanitized of anything narrative or ornamental. Yet, at the same time, these values were creating an industrial system rife with abuses. Child labour, mechanical injuries, and industrial waste documented by the photos of Lewis Hine and other mid-century reformers exposed and immortalized the human cost of industrialization. The organic became inorganic, and humans became machines. However, as

Dr. Rhett was quick to point out, the same causes and symptoms of the machine aesthetic are still with us today. Dr. Rhett showed startling images of contemporary industrialization alongside some iconic shots from Lewis Hines. The blank, evocative stare of a young girl standing between two endless rows of thread-spinning machines in a faded black and white image from 1908 is echoed in the eyes of a young boy, in nearly the same position, among rows and rows of sewing apparatus in a contemporary sweat shop.

This is what we see when we look at an iPhone – a beautifully



PHOTO COURTESY OF HOUGHTON COLLEGE

Dr. Rhett gave his faculty lecture Thursday, February 7.

sleek, minimalist, mass produced, dehumanizing artifact of a culture that “has acclimated...to the way of machines.”

However, Dr. Rhett’s cultural critique didn’t seem to come from a place of self-righteousness, as he pulled out his own iPhone for all to see. It was more of an encouragement to wake up from our cultural numbness and join him in his suspicion of the notion of progress. As for the machine aesthetic as art, Dr. Rhett says just because he can critique it doesn’t mean he can’t appreciate it as beautiful. But for him personally, landscape painting will continue to be his preferred method of creating art. After all, what could be simpler than sitting in a field, and contemplating God’s creation as it is?

There were about 35 people in attendance at the lecture, including Daniel Berryment and philosophy professor Dr. John Giannini. Before coming to the lecture, Daniel already found

the machine aesthetic somewhat unattractive. He says, “I am not a visual artist, but in my writing I find that I avoid images of machinery. I tend to find...this imagery to be reductionistic of humans and the world. Often the best question that can be asked, which you’ll often see in stories about robots or clones, is when our humanity begins to break down. The best answer anyone seems to be able to give is when we stop feeling.” He goes on to express his suspicions of the visual machine aesthetic present in our everyday lives, such as iPhones. “They want to communicate that they are basic and simple, like water or light. But something dark is hiding behind those suspiciously white shells.” In contrast, Dr. Giannini has appreciated parts of machine aesthetic for a long time. He says, “I find precision, uniformity, and fine machining pleasing. I often prefer artifacts which cleanly and elegantly reflect their mechanical function and production to arti-

facts that look more hand-made.”

Overall, the lecture seems to have left those who attended wondering where to go from here. Daniel says, “I didn’t feel like we got much advice beyond, “Wake up, sleepers!” I think the best thing to do is to become aware of our own history and humble ourselves.” Getting rid of our iPhones (or other smart phones and tech) just “doesn’t seem feasible.” Although Dr. Giannini also struggled with knowing what to take away from the lecture, he says, “I think it’s prompted me to worthwhile reflection about what the machine aesthetic, and a preference for it, may signify. As Dr. Rhett persuasively pointed out, striving for the machine-like as an ideal can have a very dark side to it.”

The next faculty member to be featured in the Faculty Lecture series is retiring English professor Dr. Stephen Woolsey, of Java chalkboard fame, who will be giving a valedictory lecture on Thursday, February 28th.. ★

Photo
of the
Week

HOUGHTON FACEBOOK



No Joke About Sin



TIM PASCHALIS

ZACH PARIS

Arguably the most diabolical villain in all of comics is The Joker. When I was younger it boggled my mind that he had followers, let alone a girlfriend. But as I watched more of his movies and television it became clear. The Joker and the characters around him can be read as representations of sin and its consequences, and they have a lot to teach us.

In DC Comics, the Joker is the embodiment of sin. There are few characters in the DC Universe who can measure up to the horrific acts he commits. This culminates

in Alan Moore’s The Killing Joke, where the Joker comes into Barbra Gordon’s (aka Batgirl) home and shoots her in the stomach not to kill her, but to paralyze her. Commissioner Gordon, her father, is then kidnapped by some of the Joker’s goons while the Joker sexually abuses her. He then documents what he has done with photographs and forces Commissioner Gordon to stare at them while he himself is humiliated. The only reason that the Joker does this is to prove someone can go completely mad from just one bad day. The Joker does not care about money, fame, or

himself. He has two choices. Get straight or follow the Joker. He decides on the latter. At the beginning of the story all Jonny wants is to be like the Joker. Soon he discovers that the Joker is much more than advertised. He witnesses the Joker slaughter two elderly people in their bed and then sleep in it. Jonny wants out, but he knows he is in too deep. This is a parallel to how people experience sin. Like the Joker and Jonny, sin will make you go where you never wanted to go, make you stay longer than you ever wanted to stay, and make you pay more than you ever wanted to pay. Thinking

“...No one who is suffering... sees a way out. Just turmoil.

However, this doesn’t mean there is no escape...”

anything else. He literally only wants to ruin people’s lives and cause chaos.

In Brian Azzarello’s Joker, the narrator of the story is Jonny Frost, the Joker’s loyal but naive henchmen. Jonny has been in jail five times, and all he wants is to make a name for

he knew what he was doing and had planned it all out, Jonny had no idea what was ahead of him. Often in life, we think we have everything figured out, but in the end we make ourselves look like fools. A word that Jonny uses to describe the Joker is a disease.

He says that there is no cure for the Joker. Just a Batman. We have a Savior in our lives as well. We just need to accept his presence.

Harley Quinn, originally from Batman: The Animated Series, is another representation of the reality of sin. Formally known as Dr. Harleen Quinzel, Ph.D., Harley Quinn was a psychologist at Arkham Asylum. The Joker was one of her patients and over time she fell in love with him. She threw away not only her career but her life to be with the Joker and she refuses to betray him because she loves him. You could compare Harley’s love for the Joker to an addiction to drugs, alcohol, or pornography. You continue to keep partaking in this activity even though nothing good has ever come out of it. Even if this addiction is killing you inside, you keep going back because for some reason you have to. Nothing good ever comes out of Harley’s relationship with the Joker. But she is still loyal to him.

When someone sees us as something to use and abuse, that becomes part of who we are. It becomes our identity. In Harley’s eyes what happens to her is fine because she is

used to being abused. She is brainwashed, numb, and trapped. Even if Harley wanted to escape, like Jonny she feels there is no way out. However, there is always a way out of sin, even addictive and abusive sin. I personally have witnessed people in my life make destructive choices because of a toxic relationship. One thing that is constant in each situation is that no one suffering from this sees a way out. Just turmoil. However, this doesn’t mean there is no escape. Through faith, all things are possible, even if they are not easy.

Through some storylines such as the one of Injustice 2, Harley breaks free of the Joker’s grip after his death, and she decides to fight with the good guys. Batman is Harley’s savior in this story, but Jesus is ours. Harley decided to accept Batman’s invitation to his team. Harley did not let the Joker completely consume part of her being. As much as sin can be consuming, you can always decide to do the right thing. ★

Zach is Junior majoring in Communications

Free Speech: Not A Free-For-All



TIM PASCHALIS

MELISSA HODDE

I’m incredibly grateful for the right to voice divisive opinions in this newspaper. I took advantage of it last semester to offer my thoughts on sexual brokenness and its (lack of) connection to LGBTQ individuals, and I’ve read some incredibly daring, authentic voices through the Opinions section during my time at Houghton. I believe that freedom of expression mirrors God’s desire for us to have free will, and thus carries sacred connotations. For this reason, I would advise my fellow students who seek any platform

for public discourse to consider their words carefully, and use their right to free speech in a way that will lift others up rather than mocking their desire for respect and human dignity.

Of course, this doesn’t mean avoiding topics that upset people because they feel strongly about them, or voicing contrary opinions. These are essential activities for energetic discourse, especially in a space designed for conversation like Houghton. The process I would recommend for producing a productive and godly conversation begins with looking at the motivation behind your choice of ideas and your approach to expressing them. Are you looking to change minds on a topic, and if so have you arranged your argument in such a way as to invite those who disagree to read thoughtfully? Perhaps instead, you’re writing to spread awareness of a particular subject

“...I believe that freedom of expression mirrors God’s desire for us to have free will and thus carries sacred connotations...”

- in that case, have you done some research on what’s already been said in social media, news outlets, and local discussions like chapels and coffeehouses? Are you just really, really frustrated with something - and if so, have you considered talking it out in a private space before you make your message public?

If this seems like a lot of work just to get your words out there, consider how many people are going to be listening. By definition as a public audience,

“...Be thoughtful and gracious when using your right to speak freely, just as you use your free will to honor God...”

you don’t know them all. How do you know what types of trauma and life experiences your readers or listeners have gone through? Can you be sure that a casual approach to a loaded concept - like being triggered, let’s say - isn’t going to be another knife in the wound of someone like a veteran with PTSD, or the survivor of a house fire who just can’t stand that particular shade of red? In particular, speaking on a topic that hits closer to home for your readers than it does for you is a risky activity, and doing so with love requires some serious introspection and care to verify the accuracy and sensitivity of your message. Bystanders are also a critical factor in this thought process, since information presented as a personal opinion can sometimes be stored and retrieved in the

mind as fact, a phenomenon called “the sleeper effect”. What you say casually in a public conversation may be quoted by someone years later with very little concept of who said it other than an elusive “they” - pay attention to yourself, and you may find that you quote others in the same way.

I don’t say any of this to discourage writers and speakers from putting their words out there. In fact, if writing is your preferred communication style and you’ve never written an opinions article before, I strongly encourage you to contribute your voice to the section, whether this semester or in the future. What I do advise is to be thoughtful and gracious when you use your right to speak freely, just as you use your free will to honor God. Before you hit send, pray for your readers; I’m about to pray for you, that what you hear and remember from me furthers His mission of love. ★

Melissa is a Junior majoring in Enviornmental Biology and Writing

The Origin of True Government



MICHAEL SIEVERS
CHRISTIAN MILLER

Consider two opposing views on the role of government. According to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the influential social philosopher, the law ought to transform people and create or eliminate property. Rousseau says this, “He who dares to undertake to provide institutions to a people, must feel that he is capable, so to speak, of changing human nature, of transforming each individual who, of himself, is a perfect and solitary whole, into a part of a much greater whole from which this individual is to receive to a certain degree his life and being.” According, however, to classical liberal economist Frederic Bastiat - who represents the second point of view - society, people and property existed *before* government.

The opposition between these systems of law is radical.

Rousseau’s, indeed, was tried and stained with the blood of the French people during the 1789 Revolution. Therefore, for posterity’s sake, we must answer correctly this question, “What creates Law?” Is it nature or the human legislator? According to Rousseau, the object of the legislator is to organize, amend, and even eliminate property if he thinks this necessary; according to Bastiat, however, the *true* object of the legislator is limited to only guaranteeing property and ensuring that it is respected.

To understand Bastiat’s theory, which is a theory of Natural Law, we must understand the observable truth of nature.

“...It follows that if the products of [a person’s] labor are not guaranteed, their lives are also not guaranteed...”

properties necessary to sustain life. By *property*, we mean the right the worker has over the products of their labor. These facts are true and constant for *all* people. Bastiat, summarizes the idea as follows, “A human cannot live without satisfying his needs, he cannot provide for his needs without work, and he cannot work if he is not certain of

and sensible progression that a combination of people have the right to organize and support a common force to protect these rights constantly. This means the *only* function of government is to ensure that individual rights are respected – through institutions such as the police, military, even fire departments. But it is crucial that these institutions do not infringe on the individual rights that give them existence. Who would dare say that force has been given to us to destroy the equal rights of our countrymen? Government is the substitution of a collective force for individual forces. As soon as the collective destroys the individual, it has diverted from and violated its own source and reason for existence.

With this understanding of the purpose of government, taxation becomes complicated as it appears to infringe upon individual rights. To achieve the end of security, as mentioned, however, the citizenry will require forces to provide for the common defense, foreign and domestic, and these require remuneration. Taxation will be necessary for these, as well as other extensions and institutions of the collective group – in other words, the

government. The only solution consistent with Natural Law is a flat tax, whereby *each* citizen forgoes an *equal* percentage of their labor, at a *mutually* agreed rate. In this instance, then, each individual provides for an equal share of their defense, and the government, without unequally excising the productions of any citizen, is still capable of securing the natural right of every citizen to the products of their labor, while also providing for the common defense.

Rousseau wanted to use the law to make people into what he thought they should be; in so doing, he violated their natural and inalienable rights – as are many politicians today. Those who believe in Natural Law, however, respect people as they are.

It is clear that the *right to property* is from nature and inherent because it is necessary in order that human life may be guaranteed. We must never forget – natural truth creates the law; law does not create natural truth. As it says in our *Declaration of Independence*, we have the inalienable right to our life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness, and the right to alter our governmental forms, or even abolish them, when this is no longer the case. Liberty depends upon it. ★

*This article references Frederic Bastiat’s *The Law and Property*. Christian is a Junior majoring in History and Business Administration

“...Rousseau wanted to use the law to make people into what he thought they should be; in so doing, he violated their natural and inalienable rights – as are many politicians today...”

The truth is this: among other things, every person must be able to think and eat in order to live. These functions are necessary to satisfy the organs and faculties which are required to sustain life on Earth. In order, then, to provide for this fact, people *must* work. It follows that if the products of their labor are not guaranteed, their lives are also not guaranteed, because they will be unable to provide for the

applying the fruits of his work to his needs.”

So, then, with this understanding, what effect does a correct interpretation of the origin of law have on government today?

Firstly, it means that each person has a natural right to defend their person and property. If every person has this right to defend his property, even by force, then it is a natural



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

Dear Editor,

Last week’s article by Mr. Hillman did an excellent job in explaining the history of liberal theory and its roots in the Enlightenment. However, I don’t think the article adequately explained the difference between the philosophical and the political use of the term ‘liberal’ and may have confused some readers. Liberalism is a branch of political philosophy focusing on the preservation of individual freedom by the government. Liberal political philosophers couch a significant part of their thought off Enlightenment and neoliberal thinkers, and their theories are currently put into practice by individuals we call libertarians in American politics. The liberal politicians Mr. Hillman referred to, such as Ocasio-Cortez, base their policies off Keynesian economic theory and some strains of socialism, an altogether different realm of political thought than liberalism. The policies these politicians develop focus on an increased role of the state, or a liberal use of government resources to support the economy. The philosophical backing for these two political groups are similar only in that one group’s philosophy has the word ‘liberal’ in it and the other’s policies are called ‘liberal’. As it is, arguing for a single definitional history and context for the term ‘liberal’ is misleading for readers not acquainted with political philosophy, and serves as a lesson for defining terms before making broad-stroke arguments.

Sincerely,

Elijah Tangenberg

Artist of the Week

Josiah Parlett

// senior studio art major



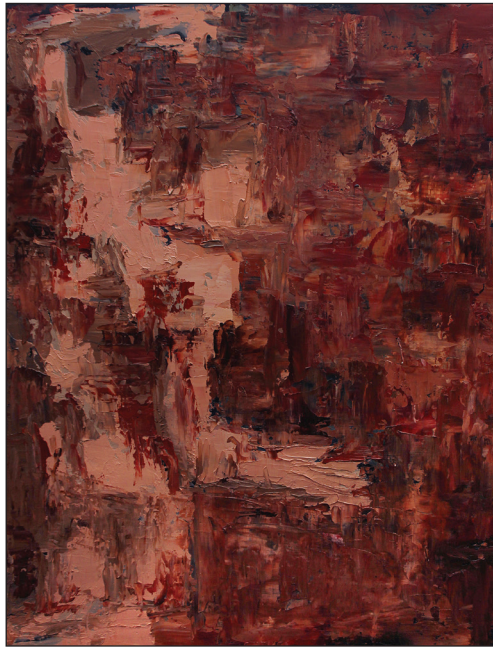
Like I am, watercolor



Want it all, oil painting



When I am Weak, watercolor



Will of Instinct, oil painting



“In the violence and chaos in the creation of the watercolors I seek peace in the madness. What I get from working with watercolor is a cooperation with the material, a give and take, I get out what I want without it being fully my responsibility. I want to understand my material, and my material to understand me. Oil paints do this to, not as easily but it has a viscosity to it and a thick color others lack. A textural feeling that even in paintings that look flat have. I want to get out what is in me on a blank canvas and view the world around me differently.

Ultimately, I want to share my thoughts and feelings with artwork, like the expressionist painters. I feel and think on the canvas even if it fails.

The haunting questions left by a violent Bacon painting fascinate me. The human form fascinates me. No other object is as recognizable to people then the body of a human.

We see faces every day and everywhere. It is no wonder most of us can't escape our familiarity with the human form. I don't know if I could ever completely abandon the human form in my paintings, even if they become unrecognizable. There is something strange that happens when we see a person where there is none. Visually the work holds vague human shapes amongst chaos.”



Clip Dirty Wings, oil painting



Sunday Morning, watercolor