



LUKE LAUER

CHANGING FACE OF SGA
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February 21, 2014 Vol. 110, No. 17



National Sacred Honor Choir Prepares for Upcoming Tour



Houghton choir members perform at chapel.

LUKE LAUER

JONATHAN HARDY

The majority of music majors were out of town for pre-tour concerts in Buffalo and Syracuse this weekend, leaving the music buildings dark and empty. "A musician learns with each performance that

which cannot be taught in rehearsal," says Dr. Brandon Johnson, director of choral activities and recent recipient of the Horne-Blanchard chair here at Houghton. These performances before the "real" tour serve as a check-

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New Associate's Degree Program in Buffalo

CARLY CONGILOSI

Houghton's educational involvement in the city of Buffalo has had a long and storied past, with new endeavors just about to get started.

For several years, the college has run the City Semester program, headed by Cameron Airhart, professor of history. The City Semester, one of Houghton's ongoing off-campus programs, is intended to take Houghton students into western New York's main city to explore, according to the web page, "living in community on the West Side of Buffalo, reading and thinking intensely about urban life and culture with others who are reading and thinking about the same things."

Soon, however, Houghton will be expanding even more into the city with Houghton Buffalo, an associate's degree program set to launch in Fall 2014. According to Dr. Mark Hijleh, the idea for Houghton Buffalo was first conceived in April of 2012. Soon, Dr. Hijleh explains, it was determined "that there were good reasons to launch a program to serve students in the Buffalo area that need and want a Christian liberal arts alternative to community college and other options, but would not be likely to consider Houghton's residential campus for the first two years of study."

In October of 2013, Dr. Scott McClelland was hired as Dean of Extension Studies and has joined with Dr. Hijleh to launch the program. Added McClelland, enrollment coordinator Aimee White has also been an integral part of the project.

According to the Houghton College website, Houghton Buffalo will offer students the opportunity to take courses in traditional subjects, including history, literature, communications, and mathematics. In addition, McClelland explained that Houghton Buffalo will also offer courses such as, "Life in the City"... [which] will enhance local students' knowledge of their area and the challenges (and great opportunities) of urban life." The credits earned at Houghton Buffalo will be transferrable to many 4-year institutions, including at the Houghton College campus itself.

In Buffalo, classes will be taught at First Presbyterian Church, near Kleinhans' Music Hall. In describing the learning environment, McClelland said that the church has two classrooms, one of which doubles as a library, another room which is divided into a computer lab and student lounge, as well as an office, and a sanctuary. McClelland also noted that the area where First

See **BUFFALO** page 3

Athletes Compete in Track and Field Championships

WYNN HORTON

This weekend, Houghton's indoor track and field team will be traveling to Bourbonnais, Illinois for the 2014 National Christian College Athletics Association (NCCAA) Indoor Track and Field Championship. Interestingly, Olivet Nazarene University, which is hosting the event, is also fielding a purple and gold team.

After a nine-hour journey, Houghton's athletes will prepare for a multitude of events including four short distance sprinting events and one hurdle event; 3 long distance races; triple, high, and long jump, and other field events such as the shot put and relays. Two rigorous and lengthy events round out the meet: the women's pentathlon (60 meter hurdles, high jump, shot put, long jump, and 800 meter sprints) and the men's heptathlon (60 meter dash, long jump,

shot put, high jump, 60 meter hurdles, pole vault, & 1000 meter sprints).

So far this season Houghton's athletes have been competing well in their events. Freshman Marshall Brady, once a local high school athlete, set a new school record in a meet this past Saturday in Ithaca. Scoring 4141 points after his final event, Brady finished tenth out of twenty-three against a field of athletes from St. John Fisher, Cortland, Cornell, and other regional universities. The week before, Brady was named as NCCAA Track and Field Student-Athlete of the Week. Another freshman, Joanna Friesen, a native of Pennsylvania, nearly broke the school record with her pentathlon score of 2279 points in five events. Friesen placed twelfth out of fifteen in her field. Junior Andrea Melhorn also shattered an old school record in

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Houghton Staff Graduate from Leadership Allegany



Past students of the program in the classroom.

WWW.LEADERSHIPALLEGANYNY.ORG

GRETCHEN REEVES

Nineteen students recently graduated from the Leadership Allegany program on February 7th, marking its fourth graduation of students. The program, co-founded by Pamela Witter in 2009 and backed by the Alfred Higher Education Group, the Allegany County Area Foundation, and Houghton Col-

lege among other organizations, is "a 10-month training program for adult professionals ... [with the] criteria that they either live, work or have a vested interest in Allegany county," as Witter described.

According to Witter, the program

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WORLD // Opening and Closing Olympic Controversies



LUKE LAUFER

The Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics will be closing Sunday night at 20:14 Sochi local time. Though they are almost finished there was a lot of controversy surrounding the Games; including the expensive cost, the construction leading up to the Games, and the Russian laws banning “homosexual propaganda.” With the estimated price tag of \$51 billion, the Sochi Winter Olympics have been the most expensive Game of all time. The previous Winter Games, 2010 Vancouver,

cost only \$1.7 billion. According to USA Today, the United States’ own 2002 Games, hosted in Salt Lake City, cost less than \$3 billion. Sochi even passes the previous budget record, held by China’s 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics which, according to Pravada News, cost \$44 billion.

The high price tag was supposed to be a show of Russian power but also, many believe, a result of corruption. In an article by Fox News, Boris Nemstove, a Russian politician, estimates that two-thirds of the \$51 billion was lost to corruption. In the same article, anti-corruption activist, Alexei Navalny, claims that over 10 of the Olympic buildings costed double what they should have. A 25-mile road and railway combination that connected the coast to the ski resort came with the price of \$9.4 billion dollars according to Fox News. Costing \$200 million per kilometer. Some speculate these investments will not pay off and Russia will face economic crisis in the near future.

Despite the large amounts of money being spent, delayed and poor construction also affected the Sochi Winter Olympics and lead to the world wide hashtag of “Sochi Problems.” Issues varied from dangerously unfinished hallways to urine-colored water coming out of faucets. Right before the

Olympics began, it even inspired a Buzzfeed article titled “Photographic Proof That Sochi Is A Godforsaken Hellscape Right Now,” which included images of grass being painted green, pavement still being laid, and poorly-placed wires and fire hoses. Perhaps the most popular image circulation was the one of two toilets next to each other without a divider.

Besides the criticism surrounding spending and construction, Russia has also received grief for its “anti-LGBT laws.” These laws which do not criminalize being gay, do detain and fine anyone promoting “nontraditional relationships.” The New York Times reports a transgender woman and former member of the Italian parliament was arrested on Sunday for holding a sign in the Olympic Park that read “Gay is OK” in Russian.

Much of the issues come not only from the government and this law, but also vigilante groups, who lure and harass gay people with the Russian government turning a blind eye. BBC showed footage of gay men being shaved, forced to drink urine, and publicly humiliated in other ways. Videos of this humiliation were then posted online. The vigilantes claim that they are targeting pedophiles, not gay people.

Putin and other Russian politicians who support the anti-propaganda law say that it is not intended to discriminate against gay people, but aims to protect children. Supporters also say it is protecting traditional relationships and promoting Russian values, instead of western liberalism. The law was quite popular in the Duma, according to Al Jazeera, it passed with a 436-to-0 vote and passed through the Russian law system without issue.

Despite these large controversies Sochi faced, the Olympics will be closing Sunday with so far no large political hiccups have affected the Olympic events. During his speech at the Game’s opening ceremonies, International Olympic Committee President, Thomas Bach, urged countries to leave politics out of the Olympics. Rule 50 of the Olympic Charter states: “No kind of demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda is permitted in any Olympic sites, venues or other areas.” Athletes have honored this and the podiums have remained protest free. The focus remains on the Games. ★

Luke is a junior art and communications major.

WORD ON THE STREET

Jon Hardy, senior



“It has enabled me to serve on college committees that I may serve on as a faculty someday if I continue on my chosen career path, so I consider that really invaluable. Other than that, since I don’t participate in many clubs on campus, SGA hasn’t done a whole lot for me. Oh and donuts.”

Andi Sidell, senior

Andi Sidell, senior



Caralyn Weisel, junior

“It’s opened my eyes to the amount of time and effort that goes into student programming and student scheduling for the semester.”



Andrew Gibson, senior



“Not much.”

Tyler Ashley, sophomore

“What’s the SGA?”



Nikki Blum, junior

“Donut days are awesome and I know that they’re involved in changing the chapel times which is exciting.”



Michael Bova, junior



“It’s given me more information on the financial dealings of the student body and it’s given me the opportunity to hear the opinions and requests of my constituents. It’s given me a better sense for what the student body desires.”

“What has the SGA done for you this year?”

Jackson Wheeler, freshman

“Well it’s definitely helped with leadership skills, budgeting time because it motivates you to get everything done before ten o’clock at night. But it’s been really good at helping me figure out how the college runs, and what students can actually do to inspire change.”



Emily Morrow, junior

“I don’t know what the SGA did this year.”



Mike Knapp, sophomore



“Send out a lot of really annoying emails, however they do offer donuts.”

Haley Day, junior

“They gave me donuts.” [Besides donuts?] “More donuts.”



Hannah Fink, junior

“I...have no idea. They have donut day, but I don’t go to that because I’m allergic to gluten so they should have gluten free donuts.”



Jason Reid, senior



“...I’m not overly involved in campus activities, but I’m always thankful for the donuts. And I’m glad they give us some form of student representation.”

Melanie Eldred, freshman

“I’m thankful for all the donuts.”



Simba Kamuriwo, senior



“Absolutely nothing...just kidding. They gave us donut day and I don’t know, I can only think of donuts. And emails about senate meetings.”

Stephanie Glick, sophomore

“Donuts and fun activities.”



CHOIR *from page 1*

up for the choir to see what work still needs to be done.

This year the College Choir will be touring from the 27th of February to the 9th of March through the mid-Atlantic states, performing in states along the east coast from NY to Virginia, ending with the concert in Carnegie Hall.

"It is part of our mission to share the Good News with people," said Dr. Johnson. "It is not enough for us to create beautiful music; we also need to share it."

Most of the performances on tour are in churches with a few concert halls dotting the schedule. Every year the choir receives multiple letters from attendees telling of how the music touched them. "On an educational side," said Johnson, "we learn the beautiful nuances of the repertoire that can only be achieved through the heightened awareness of performance." Before each concert, the choir gathers and discusses any new meanings revealed in pieces by the audience's response or the way certain voices blended to give emphasis to a different word or phrase, lending a new perspective to music the choir has been working on for months.

The flagship performance for this tour is of course the concert in Carnegie Hall. "It's huge for our visibility as a school," said 2nd year graduate student Christopher Olsen, choir manager. "Houghton faculty have performed in the small-halls in Carnegie before, but this may be the first time the Houghton name has been in the main hall."

The College Choir will be joined at Carnegie Hall by members of the Men's and Women's Choir, singers from Roberts Wesleyan, a chamber choir from Liberty University, in addition to choirs from several Christian high schools for the performance, together making up the National Sacred Honor Choir. The ensemble, comprising well over 200 people, will rehearse for four days in at Hawthorne Gospel church in northern New Jersey, spending nights at a nearby Salvation Army camp.

Graduate student Kelly Vankirk, coordinator of the National Sacred Honor Choir, spoke with me about her involvement. "It is extremely busy, but it's a huge honor to be singing such great, spiritually rich music in prestigious hall. We are bringing together Christian choirs from all over the northeast, some from even farther away. One of the goals of our time together is to help the younger singers, and ourselves, to see the context of faith and music together."

Because of the Carnegie concert, several music professors other than Dr. Johnson will be traveling with the choir and will be giving masters' classes for groups of advanced high school students before several concerts. This type of teaching serves to advertise for the college's programs and has been done to a limited extent on past tours, but never to the extent reached this year with Professors Davies, Hijleh, Hutchings, and Newbrough all traveling with the choir. ★

LEADERSHIP *from page 1*

was "based on the social change model for leadership development, which is a program UCLA came up with in the '90s." Instruction focuses on individual strengths, then progresses to group dynamics and finally civil engagement. The intensive design of the program won Leadership Allegany an award from the national education advocacy group known as the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). In addition, any graduate of the program who later enrolls at Houghton College may receive six college credits for its completion.

This group of graduates was the program's largest yet, with two yielding from Houghton College: assistant visit office coordinator Mary Jo Cronk and associate director of academic records James Hutter. As part of the program, both took surveys at the beginning of the program to determine their leadership strengths and were then sorted into groups which worked on projects together. One of the projects was the organization of an "industry day" in which a certain organization or function in Allegany was highlighted through presentations and tours given by involved professionals. Various industry days included visits to the legislative chambers in Belmont, a local prison, working traditional and organic farms at Alfred State, and an alternative learning school in Cuba. Classes would typically meet one half-day per month for an industry day, which would be supplemented by another half-day of classroom learning per month.

In addition to industry day projects, each group must also complete service projects which contribute to the betterment of Allegany County. For her project, Cronk set up a fundraiser with another organization by organizing a fly-in breakfast at the Wellsville Airport. The project both brought attention to the small, local airport and donated proceeds to the Palliative Care program at Cuba Memorial Hospital. Hutter's group chose to work with Gil's Hills Ministries east of Wellsville, NY, an organization aimed at helping local youth. The group painted well-worn areas on the property and repaired the playground as well.

Overall, both Cronk and Hutter had positive things to say about the program and its impact on their work. "Our office has also used the strengths-based training, and so it has helped me to understand a little bit about what drives people and how to best encourage them in what they're doing and come alongside [them] and work as a team," said Cronk. "The biggest lesson for me, probably, and the hardest one for me to carry out, is the fact that conflict can be useful," she added.

According to Hutter, "[the program] help[ed] me in dealing with other people. Actually, that's life. In life you deal with very different people. On this campus there are very different people, very different perspectives. How do you deal with that? How do you deal with conflict? How do you meet objectives?" He added, "It's actually very practical training, and I'd recommend it for anyone at any level." ★

ATHLETES *from page 1*

the hammer throw with a score that landed her in thirteenth place in her event. These athletes will lead the charge for Houghton in their events in Illinois.

Travelling along with the athletes and trainers will be the meet's Vice Chair Matt Dougherty, a Houghton graduate of the class of 2001, who was named men's track coach in 2010. Coach Dougherty provided solid endorsements for the swath of athletes Houghton will be bringing to the event. "As always, we are looking to improve every chance we get to compete and we look to see how competitive we can be in the team rankings. The men are fairly low this year with injuries to some key upperclassmen and some athletes who are just lacking their fitness from a year ago. The women are a good mix of new and experienced athletes. Hopefully our seniors can help our first year runners adapt well to the national championships."

Houghton's men's and women's track and field team also performed at the Empire 8 Championships in Ithaca at the beginning of February. While Ithaca ended up sweeping both the men's and women's overall titles, Houghton's athletes successfully finished in the top five in a multitude of events. Friesen placed in the 800 meter sprint, the distance medley relay (DMR), and the 4x400 meter relay, while Figueroa placed in the triple jump and 60 meter sprint events. Another female athlete, senior Leah

Williams assisted in the DMR and ranked highly in the women's mile race. For the men, a fifth position in the DMR as well as strong performances by Brady in the long, triple, and high jumps rounded out Houghton's first round of indoor championship events.

Houghton's gradual integration into the NCCAA allows for continued involvement in NCCAA championship meets as well as NCAA events. As a Christian organization, the NCCAA asks hosting universities to develop a service aspect of the event to parallel the athletic events. This year's project, sponsored by voluntary donations from participating colleges, is a partnership with an organization called Living Alternatives, a pro-life clinic and assistance program that seeks "to promote life-affirming options

and provide practical assistance, while sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed and to minister restoration to those who have been wounded by the trauma of abortion."

Houghton's track and field athletes head into this weekend's championship events with great determination. Coach Dougherty, when asked about pre-event jitters, commented, "I wouldn't say we are nervous. It's an excited anticipation to test ourselves to find out where we are. This year's national championship is as competitive as it has ever been and, as one of the smallest schools competing and the only NCAA DIII competing this year, we try and make our presence known as best we can." ★



Savannah Doviak at a track meet.

ATHLETICS.HOUGHTON.EDU

BUFFALO *from page 1*

Presbyterian Church is located is safe, which should be reassuring to prospective suburban students wary of colleges located in the city.

When asked what excites him most about the program, Dr. Hijleh explains, "This new initiative marks an historic opportunity for Houghton to bring its distinctive brand of excellence in Christian higher education to a new group of students in Buffalo. thus, it allows us to extend our mission beyond the Houghton residential campus in ways we have

not been able to do previously."

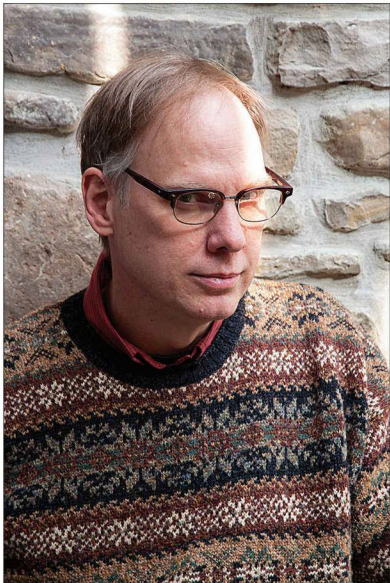
When asked if there was anything specific he wanted students to know about Houghton Buffalo, Dr. McClelland said, "As in any urban environment, there will likely be a greater diversity in our student demographics than normally available in our residential context. We hope both urban and suburban students, who otherwise could not consider our residential option, will come together and be as 'iron sharpening iron' in [Houghton Buffalo]. In our more globalized world, this dimension, I believe, is crucial to a well-rounded education." ★



Have an opinion on today's news stories?

Send a letter to the editor to: editor@houghtonstar.com

Sabbatical Stories: Professor Murphy, Art



Professor Ted Murphy. LUKE LAUER

INTERVIEW BY RACHEL WRIGHT

Q: Why did you choose to take a sabbatical this year?

A: Sabbaticals are very competitive. Not everyone who applies is awarded one. Houghton, like most colleges awards up to four sabbaticals per year. A faculty member is eligible for one after 7 years of teaching (hence the name- reflecting the 7th day of rest) this is my 3rd sabbatical in my 28+ years teaching at Houghton. No matter what year I took a sabbatical some group of students would feel a bit abandoned. I applied for a reduced load sabbatical, which is a bit different from the typical half year or year long versions most faculty elect to take. A half-year is one semester off with full pay. A full year is half pay. I extended a sabbatical over the entire year by teaching 1/2 year throughout the enter year. This gives me only a few contact hours per week on campus and the rest of the time working at my home. I did not want to leave my senior painting and drawing majors completely. This way I still have some limited contact with them in their final senior capstone studio work. I only teach. No committee work or academic advising. It has worked out very well for me. I hope my students feel the same.

Q: What are some of the projects you have worked on?

A: I stated in my application that I

wanted to concentrate on three areas of my professional work.

- 1. Studio work
- 2. Reading in my field and in literature
- 3. Reading and research in Film

I feel the best so far about the studio work. I work about 30- 50 hours each week on my paintings (they are really not strictly paintings...mixed media pieces). I average about 2 per week. The drawing phase for each piece takes about 12-18 hours. The painting and mixed media another 10. They are all 7X10 inch works. So far I have completed about 45. By September I hope to have between 75-100 from which I will exhibit about 20-25. These are far more labor intense than work I have done is many years. For the past 7-8 years my watercolor paintings could (and should) be done in about an hour. At the end of each year I had typically about 200 paintings. From which I would exhibit about 10%.

My reading has gone about as I anticipated. I have concentrated on several postmodernist writers. David Markson, David Foster Wallace, William Gaddis, George Saunders, and Borges.

I have also immersed myself in poetry- particularly 20th century Polish poetry by Wislawa Szymborska, Zbigniew Herbert, Bronislaw Maj, and Czeslaw Milosz as well as the Portuguese writer Fernando Pessoa. There are many others- Louise Gluck, Mary Oliver, Tomas Trasnstromer , John Berryman and James and Franze Wright.

I have continued my interest in Shakespeare over this sabbatical with a couple of works of criticism Shakespeare After All and Shakespeare

Creative work is unlike scholarly work in that no clear ideas can be set out as a plan.

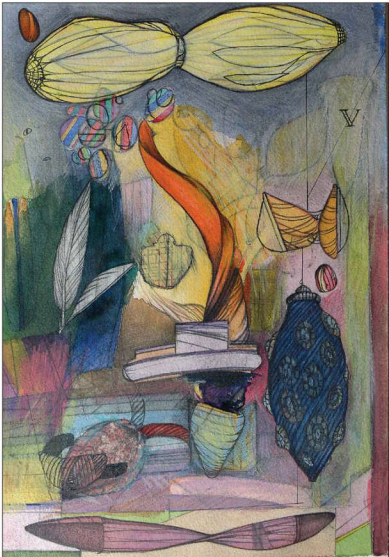
and Modern Culture by Margorie Garber, and Tony Tanner's Prefaces to Shakespeare. This and the plays themselves which I can listen as I paint.

Film has been mostly work in a few directors I have become more interested in Yasujiro Ozu, Andrei Tarkovsky, and Robert Bresson. I have also been reading in art. Works on Magritte, Balthus, Deibenkorn, Gorky, and Amy Sillman.

Q: How has it affected your work as an artist?

A: I needed time to to immerse myself in a new body of work. Creative work is unlike scholarly work in that no clear ideas can be set out as a plan. The work grows out of the working process. This time to just work and see where it leads has been very productive. I also had opportunity to see several important exhibitions is New York. The Magritte show at the MOMA and the Balthus exhibition at the MET. As well as The Art Institute of Chicago.

My sabbatical really began with my participation in the CIC (Center of Independent Colleges) Seminar at the High Museum in Atlanta where I was one of 20 faculty selected nationally meet and discuss 17th century Dutch art and patronage. This was centered on the Royal Picture Gallery of the Mauritshuis from The Hague, Netherlands, on exhibit is Atlanta,



Set Fire To Heaven. TED MURPHY



No One Expected This. TED MURPHY

(home of the Girl With A Pearl Earring, Vermeer) and 38 other works. (the Show started in San Francisco at the Young Museum, High Museum of Atlanta and concluded at the Frick Museum in New York City) This seminar was fully funded by the Kress Foundation and was a magnificent experience. This has also impacted greatly my work.

Q: Have you read/learned anything interesting during this time?

A: NO...just kidding...I've already covered this above.

Q: Do you think it has given you the time and rest you need?

A: I feel a relief from the teaching responsibility. But more so from the committee and departmental day in

and day out complications. This is all part of the job for a faculty member. Last year I was very busy with Rank and Tenure committee, Honors student work and interviews and preps, departmental hires and decisions and advising. This year my colleagues have relieved me of this and it has been very helpful. That is what we do for each other.

I am grateful to the school for this time and look forward next year to exhibiting my new work and giving a lecture on this material. Currently I have an exhibition of 10 paintings At Milligan College is Johnson City Tennessee. Some of these works will be included in my show post sabbatical. ★

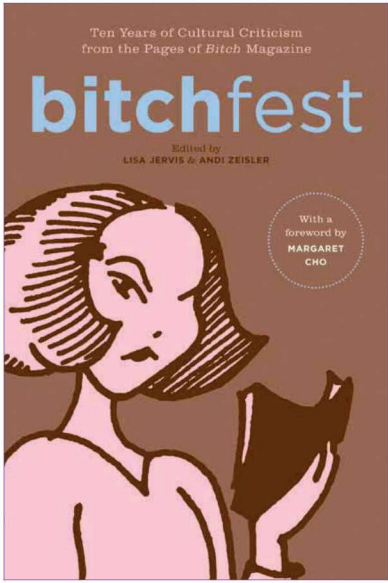


The Weight of Days. TED MURPHY



This Is The Thing. TED MURPHY

Recommended Reads: “Bitchfest” by Margaret Cho



“Bitchfest” book cover.

LYDIA WILSON

Within the pages of *Bitchfest* lie a collection of essays spanning ten years of publication in *Bitch* magazine, a glossy founded in 1996 by editors Lisa Jervis and Andi Zeisler. The essays are arranged into eight sections, covering topics such as growing up, gender identity, sex, body image, and activism, all through the love-hate lens of popular culture—and all with keen intelligence and insight. Indeed, most of the essays are penned by professors, authors, and speakers in their field, thinking critically about the way the media represents not only women, but also homosexuals, transgendered people, people of color, and those otherwise on the outskirts of society.

So, why “bitch”? As Margaret Cho explains in the book’s introduction, “a bitch is assertive, unapologetic, demanding, intimidating, intelligent, fiercely protective, in control—all very positive attributes,” and yet, the word is still used by so many to attack, insult, and hurt. These qualities are valuable

and right until they are employed by the wrong person, a woman, and suddenly they become negative and undesirable. In the pages of the *Bitchfest*, this status quo and many others are challenged and subverted.

It is for this reason that *Bitchfest* is an important read, especially for Houghton students. Not because it is sensationalist or controversial, although it can be at times. But because it, more than any textbook or testimony in any sociological or anthropological class you might take, gives a voice to those with unique and sometimes marginalized perspectives and experiences. Take, for example, the essay *Sister Outsider Headbanger: On Being a Black Feminist Metalhead*, in which Keidra Chaney talks about life as a black girl with an obsession with heavy metal. Perhaps the most piece for me personally was Danya Ruttenberg’s *Fringe Me Up, Fringe Me Down: On Getting Dressed in Jerusalem*. Ruttenberg shares her encounters as a female rabbinical student choosing to don the kippah and tzitzit, garments traditionally only worn by men. Women are not explicitly prohibited from wearing either item, and yet Ruttenberg still came up against negative reactions among her peers. I am not Jewish, and yet I could learn from Ruttenberg’s honest faith and her questions about her choices of expression. I am not black, either, and yet I could relate to Chaney’s struggles with being herself in a way that caused others consternation.

Bitchfest manages to contain a broad and sometimes contrasting range of viewpoints in a cohesive and effective manner. There are essays that hail the Spice Girls and essays that praise promiscuity alongside essays that decry the Spice Girls and defend virginity. There are even essays by men—essays about how masculinity is portrayed in the media, essays about “fratrimony” and the power of the male bond, essays about the word “like.” There are heartfelt essays about abuse and shame, and there are hilarious essays such as *Urinalysis: On Standing Up to Pee*. What they all have in common is that they are honest, they are passionate and opinionated, and they fight for the underdog. ★

The Changing Face of Student Government



LUKE LAUER

SGA Cabinet at their weekly meeting.

SARAH HUTCHINSON

The senators troop into the Wednesday SGA meeting in small groups at a time, chattering and taking their time to find their seats. It’s 10 in the evening but, besides a few yawns here and there, the group doesn’t appear to be tired. Soon the meeting begins with role, read by Andiana Siddell, vice-president of the body. Each senator responds with a “present” to their name as the conversation dies to a low murmur.

This body looks different than it did a year ago, and that’s all due to new changes in the SGA’s constitution. Last year, sensing that an inadequate number of constituencies were being represented, SGA adjusted its constitution in regards to its representation. Now, instead of only requiring a member to be a representative of a class and no more, the constitution stipulates that “Active Membership of the Senate shall be composed of three members elected by each class, one member elected by each on-campus student residence, one member elected by the varsity athletes, and one member elected by each academic area.” The main goal, after all, is to get more groups on campus represented.

The result of the changes? According to Hardy, “It’s a mixed bag right now. I think it’s given us a Senate that has a little more diversity than it has had in the past, but at the same time it’s harder to fill all of those seats.” Indeed, getting people to fill the empty seats has been a task that SGA has been undertaking all year but, for some reason or another, students have been less than keen to take on the positions.

Hardy attributes these difficulties to both low enrollment and overworked students, but he also mentions something else. Students, he says, remain largely ignorant of what SGA does, though, he adds sarcastically, “Apparently, people know that we do

Donut Day.” Jokes aside, Hardy fears “about what is it that we’re actually doing that gives value to students.” Said Hardy, “I think more than changing the structure, this is leading to a new conversation about what student government should actually be doing.”

The question of student government’s relevancy is a significant one for other reasons, particularly just as Houghton is expanding into nontraditional educational areas such as online education programs through its partnership with Indiana Wesleyan University and two-year degree programs to begin next year in Buffalo. The inclusion of these programs should introduce a new population of students, ones not located on campus, and with it becomes a problem of representing these students in student government.

Partly because of these new changes, according to Greg Bish, director of student programs, “What students need today is not what was needed in the past.” Bish has been encouraging the current cabinet to examine “progressive models” of student government on other campuses to begin modernizing student government at Houghton. A key question to ask, said Bish, in the coming weeks and months to come is “As we consider the number of residential students in addition to online, graduate, and two-year degree students, with the addition of the social media and technology of today, what is the appropriate amount of student leadership?” Hardy echoed Bish’s sentiments and added that, since the current model was formed “in the late 80s or in the 90s”, it’s about time for an update.

For now, though, with the election cycle for the next senate and cabinet well underway, it appears as if an update is still a long ways away. ★



Rockwall Glow Coffeehouse.

BRYN PEARSON

Want to write?
Send an email to:
editor@houghtonstar.com

Investing in an Intentional Future



LUKE LAUER

BEN MURPHY

I started the slow arduous ascent (or is it a descent?) along the road towards graduate school last May. Why did I begin preparing so early? Well, if you ever score below the tenth percentile mark on the math portion of a practice GRE (graduate record exam), then you'll experience a similar sense of urgent compulsion to spend the summer studying, studying, studying.

So, after countless summer hours passed in the demanding company of my "Kaplan prep" practice book, I returned to Houghton to take the horrible GRE and start my applications proper. Round about October I compiled information for specific, potential schools. I honed writing samples and personal statements, and I solicited recommendations from faculty. I paid an arm and several legs for fees that rained like

fire from the sky. I ran around campus tying up loose ends—transcripts, resumes, etc. Then, by December, I submitted my completed applications. As some of you surely know, all this stuff is hard work, and the satisfaction of clicking the send button on all those stupid electronic documents is wonderful.

What I've so far narrated is the external process of putting my name in the daunting and immense hat that is the current pool of graduate school applicants. Now I want to recall the more internal but no less excruciating process of deciding whether or not it was a good idea to apply in the first place.

I should start by emphasizing that I'm a humanities major who has applied to English programs in hopes of someday teaching in a college setting. So there's the first and biggest problem. The job market for English positions at post-secondary institutions is abysmal. We've all heard the woes of education inflation; there's no denying that academic degrees mean less now than they ever have before, and as an aspiring English "scholar," these dire conditions hit especially close to home. The message that most of the world sent me was "don't go."

Due to the above-mentioned circumstances, my decision to apply was hard earned at the price of months of fraught consideration. Though, in retrospect, I think the inner turmoil was necessary. It was only after wrestling with all the reasons not to apply that I came to realize that those reasons had nothing to do with my desire to pursue

study and employment in the field I love. Liberal arts (and Houghton specifically) played an essential role in this realization. I'll do my best to explain, but because chapel this semester is focusing on "vocation," I think I'll frame the remainder of my explanation in similar language.

Do we come to Houghton to get a job? Are we here to take the first steps up a salary ladder? Are we here for a glorious and future retirement? My hope is that the answer to these questions is a repeating "no." Though these concerns are important, they are not most important. Though they should be considered in our decisions, they should not dictate our decisions. I know we've all heard the tired catchphrases about the strengths of a liberal arts education, but I want to earnestly reiterate the belief that a place like Houghton is more about what you make of yourself than it is about what you can make in a paycheck. Though this truth may not be apparent always (what with the bombarding bad news about the economy, job market, and doom-ridden future), it is crucial to remember the value of years of hard work alongside committed peers and mentors in a deliberate and mindful community.

Now I'm going to step off my soapbox to briefly return to my personal journey. In the face of what felt like cosmic naysaying, key people at Houghton encouraged me to commit to what I care about. This support was essential because it came from caring people who appreciate the satisfaction

of investing in liberal arts. They know me, and they also know the rich complexity of enmeshing oneself in a challenging, thoughtful and holistic life.

Even if I don't get accepted this year (which is looking like a real possibility at this point, especially as I've just now received a rejection letter), I'm confident that I will someday leave a graduate school with a terminal degree in English. At that point, I may not immediately find a teaching position. At that point, I may be one of thousands of equally educated peers drifting from one job listing to another. I may be no further along in being sure about my future. But at that point I will not regret my earlier decision to use my gifts, abilities, and resources to commit things that put joy in my life.

It's probable that I'm over-simplifying by spewing platitudes that you've all heard before. It's also probable that I'm naïve, that what I'm saying doesn't apply in the least to you. Obviously, it's also true that a place like Houghton isn't the only route for you or me to attain a worthwhile future. But is it also possible that Houghton does actually provide what we need to flourish out in "the real world"? ★

Ben is a senior humanities major

Disce aut Discede / Trivializing the Sacrifice



LUKE LAUER

ANDY NELSON

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

The above passage is taken from St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians, chapter 11, verses 27-29. To give a brief summary of this passage, St. Paul is writing to the Corinthians reprimanding them for things they're doing wrong, one of which is communion.

I have attended a wide range of churches throughout the course of my life. This is not to say that I understand each and every one of their doctrines, but simply to say that I have had decent amount of exposure. I attended a Catholic school

for a little over a decade; simultaneously I attended an Assemblies of God church, followed by a nondenominational church. Interspersed in all this was a Baptist church and getting into the Vineyard movement. For a few years I also joined a Mennonite congregation and now I finally—for the time being—settle in the Wesleyan Church. One thing that is constant in all these churches is the practice of communion, also known as Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist, the breaking of bread and the divine service, all referring to the eating of the bread and drinking of the wine in the remembrance of Christ's ultimate sacrifice for our salvation.

I have always been fascinated by how different churches conduct communion. Regardless of the church you attend, this practice is pretty much guaranteed to take place within the walls of a Christian institution. And of course as with any Christian practice, it varies from church to church. Some uphold the doctrine of transubstantiation whereby the bread and wine literally transform into the flesh and blood of Christ while others uphold the doctrine of Consubstantiation whereby the blood and body of Christ are present alongside the bread and wine which remain present—think of red hot iron, where fire is joined with iron yet both retain their distinct

elements—and lastly (for the purpose of this editorial) we have the memorialists who take on a more simplistic approach and that is that the bread and wine symbolize and remind us of the sacrifice Christ made on our behalf.

Not only do churches hold differing opinions on what exactly happens to the elements during communion, they also differ in how and to whom it is administered. Some churches I have attended reserved communion exclusively for members of their particular denomination, other churches request that only those that have been baptized by immersion partake in the

Lord's supper, and others allow everyone who sets foot in their church to partake, regardless of their affiliation, commitment, age, etc.

I would like to clarify that I by no means see myself as anything other

than a layman. I have not studied the original text, nor have I had any training in biblical interpretation other than the basic introductory classes required by Houghton College. So I will not attempt to pick apart these doctrines. What I will say is that regardless of your stance, there is one common denominator amongst all these views: communion is a mystery. Whether you believe that there is a physical transformation occurring, a metaphysical change, or just plain remembering the death and resurrection, there is a com-

ponent that cannot be explained in human terms and therefore we deem it to be sacred.

What St. Paul is reprimanding the Corinthians for is not a faulty belief regarding the practice of communion. He is getting after them for trivializing the practice. If I am honest with myself, I have to confess that I have never put much thought into what I was doing when communion was served. For kids it is nothing more than a mid-service snack, and unfortunately for many adults it isn't much more either.

A few weeks ago during a Sunday morning service communion was served. I had not been feeling particularly well; I was not where I needed to be in my relationship with God and various people in my life. I knew there was a lot of sin in my life that had not been dealt with. As the pastor invited people to come receive the elements I noticed an array of people go up. The passage that I opened with struck me. If I were to get up and take these elements without examining myself I would be eating and drinking a judgment on myself because I would be trivializing what they represent.

Leaving aside the details of the various doctrines, we take communion for the purpose of commemorating the most sacred act, the death and resurrection of Christ. To go through these motions of eating the bread and drinking the wine without fully understanding their meaning is to in essence mock the sacrifice Christ made by trivializing this sacred act. ★

Andy is a 2013 Houghton graduate

Regardless of your stance, there is one common denominator amongst all these views: communion is a mystery.

Is Theology Useless?



LUKE LAUER

TERENCE PAIGE

The website of Solomon’s Porch states: “You will not find statements of what our community believes on this site. Belief is a dynamic lived reality.” Instead, they list “dreams,” which include lots of very nice things like beauty, art, justice, mercy, and truth. Even “innovation .. in order to bring glory to God.” But you will find nothing about monotheism, the trinity, or the gospel.

This feeling has long been common among laypeople—something which perhaps reflects as much on the bad attitudes of their pastors as of the people—but what I find more disturbing is the increasing trend toward this feeling among Christian students who are called to be lovers of learn-

ing as well as lovers of things pertaining to the kingdom. I am stunned every year to discover students about to graduate, having never taken a single upper-level theology or Bible class, announcing to me that they intend to enter into ministry, missions or even Bible translation. Some of these seem to think it a positive virtue to have never been contaminated by the academic study of theology or Bible before they serve the world in Christ’s name. Yet to think one is fit to minister on the basis of Sunday-school training, Bible reading and zeal is tantamount to believing one can be an emergency-room doctor after having a first-aid class.

Does it really matter, after all? I believe this anti-theological education sentiment is driven in part by the belief that, in the end, what really counts is simply loving people for God, not communicating doctrines. As Peter Rollins wrote, “Orthodoxy ... is a way of being in the world rather than a means of believing things about the world.” However, this is a false dichotomy. One cannot escape theology, for theology simply means what we believe about God and his relationship to the world. As J. I. Packer used to tell his students: “Everyone has a theology. The only question is—is it a good theology, or a bad theology?” One has only to peruse the Emergent Village blog to see lots of both among people who claim to be doing neither.

This attitude exists not only among “emerging” Christians; it is to be found here in Houghton, and among many younger Christians. What is perhaps more disturbing, however, is the increasing trend among some to view even

evangelism as superfluous next to loving friendships, community development (here or in the two-thirds world), aid work, etc. “I don’t care if they ever hear ‘the gospel’ from me” I have heard more than one person say. The intent is that the object of their good works will see the gospel in their deeds. The answer is: no they won’t. I can say this having been raised in a bona fide “nonchristian” family, with no Bible, no religious training, no church, and no Christian family or friends. We don’t infer theology from your good-works mimes. You have to actually tell us the gospel. Jesus proclaimed the gospel to his audience too, and ordered his disciples to proclaim the kingdom and to make disciples (Mark 1:14-15; 6:7-13; Matt 28:18-20), although Israel already had known God’s Word for over a millenium.

I realize that this current emphasis on social action and loving neighbor is a reaction to the weaknesses of previous generations. And as a corrective, it is welcome and a part of God’s will. But we must be careful lest in correcting the past we also fail to learn from it, and end up creating new errors.

Exactly one hundred years ago another Christian movement was at the height of its popularity, and like many trends today, it de-emphasized traditional theology and emphasized intervening to change the world for justice and mercy. It was called the Social Gospel. Its adherents accomplished many worthwhile and noble things for society, including advancing trade union rights, advocating for women’s rights, limiting child labor and prostitution. But in the end, its adherents had so weakened the

gospel half of the social gospel by various compromises, that they were unable to distinguish their cause anymore from nationalism and democracy. In the U.S., they urged men to kill Germans to advance the kingdom of God. And after the war, their social progressivism survived in various political organizations, but only at the cost of eliminating even more remnants of traditional Christianity. The authority of the scriptures, the deity of Christ, the atonement, and the traditions of the church, were all trodden under in the name of progress, and faith in science subtly replaced the old faith. There was no longer much Christ, or much gospel, to transform or to claim people’s allegiance, and many churches that bought into it declined. The movement had killed itself spiritually.

My point is not, of course, that social action or loving neighbor is bad. My point is that theology matters. And one cannot escape the consequences of one’s theological beliefs. In the New Testament, Saint Paul expected ordinary believers to think theologically and addressed open letters with profound theological arguments to congregations that were ninety percent illiterate. Even Jesus took three years to train his so-called “unlearned” disciples before sending them out. We should take note and be willing to learn if we wish to be Christ’s ambassadors. ★

Dr. Paige is a professor of New Testament



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.

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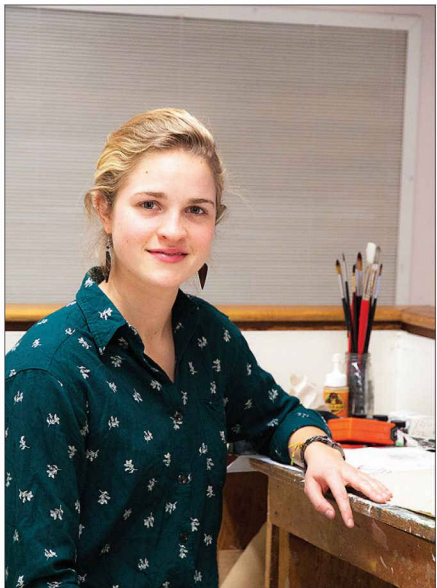
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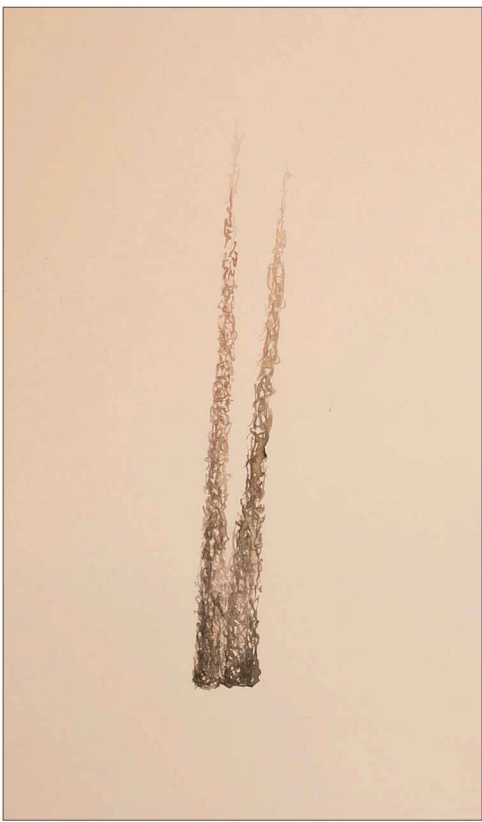
Jory Kauffman //senior art and writing major
“Simply, I create; because I can, I must.”



LUKE LAUER

Titles and Media

- The Ditch, ink
- Spires, ink
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“Nature is a haunted house – but Art a house that tries to be haunted.” *Emily Dickenson*

Sudoku

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