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## Carousel Day: 2012-13 RA Applicants Complete First Round of Hiring Process

by BEKAH HALL

As part of Resident Life's continuing hiring process for next year's Resident Assistants (RAs), approximately 60 applicants spent last Saturday morning managing money, catching lovers in the act, and resolving roommate conflicts. "Carousel Day," so named because participants rotate through multiple activities, places RA applicants in various scenarios relating to dorm life while Resident Life staff evaluate participants' performances. The day allows students to demonstrate their interpersonal skills and management abilities in action, an important part of the RA selection process.

Much of the day's events centered on role playing. During the activity "Behind Closed Doors," applicants were placed in a situation where they caught a "student" (acted by current RAs) in the midst of various acts such as smoking or canoodling with a member of the opposite sex. The "Values, Goals, and Outcomes" activity tested applicants' abilities to mediate between and promote unity among floor members by asking them to provide solutions for hypothetical roommate conflicts and create floor events. Applicants were asked to



Gabe Jacobsen addresses next year's RA applicants on Carousel Day.

demonstrate their money and time management skills in the "Time Market Place" scenario by deciding what items they would purchase based on perceived needs. During the "Leaderless Group" activity, groups of applicants decided what characteristics would best serve a certain floor with its specific needs, allowing students to demonstrate how well they worked together and how well they perceived needs. Throughout

the day, Resident Directors (RDs), Assistant Resident Directors (ARDs), as well as a handful of RAs who will not be returning next year evaluated the applicants' progress.

While there are approximately 60 RA applicants, there are only 37 RA spots. Gabe Jacobsen, Director of Resident Life and Housing, explained that the Resident Life staff cannot realistically interview such a large number of students; Carousel Day helps ARDs and RDs decide which students will be asked to continue on in the application process. As students interact with each other, react to situations they will find in their job as an RA, and make decisions in the "moment," evaluators look for characteristics that will be essential for the RA position. Jacobsen explained that they are "looking for students that set good relational boundaries, have a high level of investment...have the ability to interact with others well, and have a lot of natural skills that might be good for roles where you have to set policy guidelines but also work with students in a developmental role." Kelsey Shaw, ARD of Gillette Hall, said, "We look for students who are good at relating with others, who are sensitive to others' needs, who have a good attitude about Houghton and college life, students who have a passion for the Lord and serving Him, and we look for those who are able to be leaders among their peers."

While there are usually 37 RA spots on campus, this number may decrease next year. Jacobsen explained that as enrollment has been down, consolidating and cutting the number of RAs will save money; by potentially leaving a floor empty, for example, expenses such as heating can be saved. The topic is still being discussed and no decisions have yet been made.

The RDs are currently conducting interviews with RA applicants; decisions will be announced February 3. ★

## Upcoming Gadfly Panel: Sex and Relationships

CHRIS HARTLINE

Next Thursday night, the Gadfly Society will host a panel discussion on sex and relationships. The discussion will include insights from Professors Kristina LaCelle-Peterson, religion; Michael Lastoria, psychology; Ben Lipscomb, philosophy; and Michael Walters, Christian ministries; and senior Elisa Shearer. Gadfly member Alicia Gardner, junior, stated that the rationale for holding this event was the fact that "sexuality and relationships is something that we deal with as young adults, and have a lot of unanswered questions when it comes to meshing dating relationships/sexuality, our faith, and the authoritative guidelines or ideals."

Gardner added, "we are hoping to accomplish a promotion of healthy discussion on said topics, and a place to face these difficult and unanswered questions." The shift in topic from simply relationships to relationships and sex was a result of the three-part series on sex in the Star last semester. President Zeke Mientkiewicz, senior, stated that "we wanted to have a discussion about sexuality, because after reading the Star articles, especially Elisa's we realized that this is a topic that isn't discussed as much as it could and should be on campus."

Shearer said, "I'm glad that Gadfly was able to get such an esteemed group of professors, and I'm excited that discussion is continuing -- hooray for public discourse!"

Mientkiewicz added that "several of the organizers felt that the Houghton community guided its students merely by outlining certain unacceptable behaviors and that many conversations concerning relationships, the reason for our morals, and the appropriateness (or lack thereof) of behaviors between hand-holding and actual intercourse were neglected."

Lastoria, who recently published an in-depth study of Christian college students and sex, stated that there are two broad topics that will be discussed. "The first has to do with principles for building a relationship, including identifying a person you can live with long term. The second has to do with sexual behavior and basically asks 'if sexual intercourse is 'out of bounds' is everything else out of bounds' and principles for sexual decision making."

When asked about his goals for the discussion, Mientkiewicz said that "I hope that we will have offered the Houghton community a chance to begin discussing its sexuality in a healthy and positive manner...I hope that this discussion will encourage the Houghton community room to discuss these matters in a kind and trusting environment."

The event will take place from 7 to 9 p.m. January 26 in Chamberlain room 125. Refreshments will be provided. ★

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

by GORDON BROWN

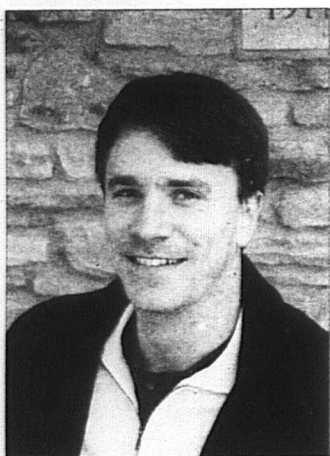
This past Monday marked Martin Luther King Day, celebrating the great civil rights leader's life and actions.

Born in 1929 to a middle-class family in Memphis, Tennessee, King was, from his birth, immersed in the early civil rights movement. His father, Martin Luther King Sr. was, in addition to his work as a prominent Baptist minister, both the head of the Atlanta chapter of the NAACP a dedicated activist against Jim Crow laws, and instilled in his son values of equality, human dignity, and a staunch rejection of apathy in the face of systemic injustice. The younger King followed in his father's footsteps, becoming the pastor of a church in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1954. A year later, King became deeply involved in the historic Montgomery Bus Boycott, helping lead the movement after Claudette Colvin and, a few months later, her more famous counterpart Rosa Parks, refused to give up their bus seats for white passengers. While, after over a year of boycotting the bus system, a district court eventually created a ruling ending segregation on the city's public transit, King was both arrested and his house was bombed because

of his involvement in the bus boycott. Despite this, King's commitment to the civil rights movement only increased, and in 1957 he became the first president of the Southern Christian Leadership Council, an organization formed for the coordination of black churches in combating segregation and racism. Heavily influenced by Gandhi, Tolstoy, Thoreau, and Bayard Rustin (an early advocate of gay rights), King utilized techniques of nonviolent protest and civil disobedience, organizing marches, rallies, and sit-ins across the south. King further led the iconic "March on Washington" in 1963, calling for an end not only to racial segregation, but listing such demands as better minimum wage, protection for civil rights workers and protestors from excessive force at the hands of the police, and laws serving as protection from racial discrimination in the workplace. Resulting from these campaigns was the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (the same year King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize) and, a year later, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, effectively outlawing discriminatory practices in voting (such as literacy test requirements), as well as dissolving segregation laws in schools,

See MLK DAY page 3

## POLITICS / The Republican Primary: Going Forward



ANDREA PACHECO

by CHRIS HARTLINE

A mere two and a half weeks after voting commenced in Iowa, the Republican Primary is, for all intents and purposes, over. After one caucus and one primary, Mitt Romney, the prohibitive favorite since his failed attempt at the nomination in 2008, has the nomination basically locked. Tomorrow's South Carolina primary, where Romney has a double digit lead in most polls, will be the final nail in the coffin of Conservative opposition to the wealthy former governor of Massachusetts. The Florida primary will follow January 31 where Romney's 22-point lead is all but insurmountable. It will be off to the races from there.

How did we get to this point? There are two factors to keep in mind. First, the Republican Party has historically nominated the next candidate in line. In 1976, Ronald Reagan challenged President Ford in the primary and eventually bowed out at the convention. When 1980

came around, it was Reagan's turn to be the party's standard bearer. Similarly, when John McCain fought a bitter primary battle against George W. Bush in 2000 and received the second most delegates, it was presumed (rightly so) that 2008 would be his turn. Now it is Romney's turn. The 2008 runner-up had to have his inevitable time in the spotlight.

Second, the Republican challengers to Romney's inevitability are incredibly weak. Michelle Bachmann and Herman Cain, who have both dropped out of the race, were never serious candidates. Newt Gingrich is propped up by significant name recognition but weighed down by a staggering amount of baggage. His three marriages and very public infidelity aside, he was fined \$300,000 for ethics violations, forced out of his position as Speaker of the House and paid \$1.8 million by Freddie Mac while it was causing the housing crisis of 2008. Former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum is a culture warrior, arguing vehemently the importance of Christian values in the American political process; this strategy works in a primary state like Iowa but fails elsewhere.

Former Utah Governor and Ambassador to China Jon Huntsman, who announced Monday that he was dropping out of the race and endorsing Mitt Romney, was viewed—wrongly, in my opinion—as a moderate and never given the time of day. Some view 2012 as the year of the Paul—Ron Paul, that is. They argue that he is the right voice for America, that he can beat Barack Obama, and that he can enact the reforms he's promised. The naiveté is stunning. Even if you agree with some of Paul's unrealistic and often irrational policy positions, as Alec Baldwin of all people stated, "he is a poor messenger."

Cindy Ross Scappe, the Associate Editor of South Carolina's largest newspaper *The State*, succinctly described why Paul is not a viable candidate. Ironically, she made a statement in an article defending *The State's* endorsement of Huntsman. "Ron Paul embraces the worst positions of the far right and the far left: no social safety net, unregulated markets, an isolationist foreign policy, and no moral standards. He is the candidate for those who refuse to accept that they are part of a society and can't see how much their vision of a crippled government would hurt all of us, themselves included." Enough said.

When more formidable Republican candidates, such as Chris Christie, Mitch Daniels, and Jeb Bush, decided not to run, the path for Romney became clear: don't screw up badly and the nomination is yours. In this, he has succeeded. His campaign has been disciplined, well-funded, and well-organized—all necessary components of a successful presidential campaign. But back to Huntsman. Some of you may be aware of my involvement with the Huntsman campaign so take what I say with a grain of salt.

The failure of the Republican electorate to even consider Huntsman as a viable candidate is a harbinger of failures to come. Illustrious Conservative commentators such as George Will noted that Huntsman has the most Conservative record of any of the candidates with the possible exception of Rick Perry. His tax reform and jobs proposal was endorsed by the *Wall Street Journal*, otherwise known as the Conservative gospel. He was the only candidate who offered a financial reform plan which sought to reduce the size of banks which have been deemed "too

big to fail," six financial institutions which control 66% of American GDP—about \$9 trillion. His record is more Conservative, his proposals are more bold, yet he was never seriously considered by the Republican primary electorate.

The reason? Republican voters are angry. They want a candidate who will be a conduit for their anger and stick it to President Obama. Huntsman is level-headed with a moderate temperament. He doesn't say that Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke has committed treason for keeping interest rates artificially low (Perry). He doesn't say that as President he would teach black people the importance of a pay check rather than food stamps (Gingrich). As an aside, about half of food stamp recipients are white. He doesn't compare homosexuality to pedophilia and bestiality (Santorum). He isn't obsessed with an Orwellian fear of government as an aggressor with the CIA Director acting as a modern-day Moriarty pulling the strings behind the scenes (Paul). And he doesn't contort himself to fall in line with every Conservative policy no matter his previous positions (Romney).

The Republican Party needs to be careful. Anger and vindictiveness may be cathartic, but they do not win elections. Candidates like Huntsman who can defend Conservative principles in a rational, level-headed way while refraining from denigrating opponents to the point of ignominy, are ones who can become great leaders. President Obama's policies have failed. His vision for America is not in step with the majority of Americans. But if the Republican Party continues in this vain, they may squander their opportunity to take back the White House. ★

## U.S. CITIZEN SENTENCED TO DEATH IN IRAN

by CHRIS CLARK

A former U.S. marine has been sentenced to death in the Islamic Republic of Iran for reasons that remain unclear. According to Iran's state-owned news network Press TV, Amir Mirzaei Hekmati has been convicted of espionage charges by Tehran's Revolution Court claiming that Hekmati was on a mission from the CIA "to infiltrate Iran's intelligence apparatus in efforts to implicate the Islamic Republic in sponsoring terrorism." The State Department has vehemently denied these claims. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said, "Allegations that Mr. Hekmati either worked for, or was sent to Iran by the CIA, are simply untrue. The Iranian regime has a history of falsely accusing people of being spies, of eliciting forced confessions, and of holding innocent Americans for political reasons."

On December 18, Iranian television aired a confession by Hekmati in which he does not contest the charges. Many have pointed out that this confession may have been given under duress as Iran has been known to utilize torture methods in the past, most notably in 2009 when detaining American hikers Sarah Shourd, Shane Bauer, and Josh Fattal, who were detained on similar charges and only released in 2011. The video of this confession is available on several locations on YouTube in Persian. The English language transcription of this confession is available on the English language Tehran Times Web site.

Hekmati is a 28-year-old Arizona-born U.S. citizen who served in the armed forces from 2001 to 2005, including deployment in Iraq and time in the military language institute in Monterey, California. Hekmati is of Iranian descent and served as an Arabic translator during his time in the armed forces. His father claims that

Hekmati entered Iran in August 2011 in order to visit his grandmothers. Hekmati is reported to have been arrested shortly after arriving.

Hekmati is the first American citizen to be given the death sentence in Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

One recent and disturbing development has been a supposed link between Hekmati and online video game developer Kuma Games. Kuma Games is a free distributor of episodic first person shooter (FPS) games. These short games provide realistic video game interpretations of the news and real life military operations, most notably the final game episode in the KUMA/War series: *The Death of Osama bin Laden*.

In 2005, Kuma Games released "Assault on Iran," an episode which seeks to offer players "the most plausible scenario to delaying or destroying Iran's nuclear arms capabilities," according to the

company's Web site. In 2007, Kuma's CEO Keith Halper told video game blog Gamasutra that the game was downloaded "hundreds of thousands of times" in Iran. In Hekmati's confession in the *Tehran Times* he purportedly stated that he worked with Kuma representing the CIA and said, "This computer company was receiving money from the CIA to [produce] and design and distribute for free special movies and games with the aim of manipulating public opinion in the Middle East. The goal of the company in question was to convince the people of Iran and the people of the entire world that whatever the U.S. does in other countries is a good measure."

Hekmati's future remains unclear, though State Department support is unwavering with Victoria Nuland who said, "We maintain, as we have from the beginning, that these charges against him are a fabrication." ★

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**MLK DAY** from page 1

public facilities, and in the workplace.


Not satisfied with these victories, King began to focus his attentions not simply on the task of attacking racism and bigotry, but began to expand his efforts to advocating on behalf of the poor and the exploited, even going so far as to call for economic reform. He said, "True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar...it comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring." Further, King became an increasingly outspoken critic of the U.S.'s involvement in the Vietnam War, claiming that America was hypocritically supporting the Diem regime encapsulating the antithesis of

American values, claiming "...This is a little known fact, these people declared themselves independent in 1945, they quoted our Declaration of Independence in their document of freedom...But instead the United States came and started supporting a man named Diem, who turned out to be one of the most ruthless dictators in the history of the world. He set out to silence all opposition, people were brutally murdered merely because they raised their voices...." Indeed, in 1968, King led the organization of the "Poor People's Campaign," aimed at addressing and combating problems of economic injustice, and in demanding government support for communities suffering from poverty. Later that year, King traveled to Memphis, Tennessee, to voice support for

a strike conducted by garbage workers, delivering his famous "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech the day before his assassination on the balcony of his room in the Lorraine Motel. A small-time criminal named James Earl Ray, caught attempting to leave Heathrow airport, initially confessed to the murder of King; however, eventually recanted and claimed to be innocent — even gaining support from the King family.

Despite King's untimely death at the age of 39, his work lives on. King's campaigns have been cited as an influence on the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, and even today the philosophy of nonviolent civil disobedience championed by King have been adopted countless protests today, from the nonviolent

demonstrations outside the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle in 1999, to the contemporary Occupy Movements, claiming inspiration from the sit-ins of the 1960s. While it cannot be denied that there is still much to be done in achieving King's dream for equality and human dignity, regardless of race or social standing, perhaps we may take comfort in King's final sentiment. "We don't have to argue with anybody. We don't have to curse and go around acting bad with our words...we just need to go around to these stores, and to these massive industries in our country, and say, 'God sent us by here, to say to you that you're not treating His children right.'" ★

**IN THE NEWS**


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For over a decade, we have spent millions of hours building the largest encyclopedia in human history. Right now, the U.S. Congress is considering legislation that could fatally damage the free and open Internet. For 24 hours, to save ourselves, we are blacking out Wikipedia. [www.hide-my-ip.com](http://www.hide-my-ip.com)

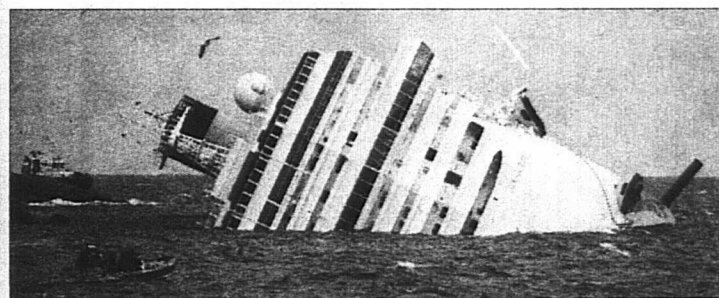
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**POPULAR WEB SITES SHUT DOWN IN PROTEST (ABOVE)** | Wikipedia and other popular Web sites blacked out Wednesday in protest to the proposed SOPA and PIPA bills before Congress. The Web sites returned Thursday.

**OBAMA REJECTS KEYSTONE PIPELINE (RIGHT)** | President Obama rejected a Canadian firm's application for a permit to build an oil pipeline from Canada to Texas. Obama claimed there was not enough time to review the project.

**SUNKEN ITALIAN CRUISE SHIP DEATH TOLL RISES** | Eleven people have been declared dead, with almost two dozen still missing, after last Friday's Costa Concordia disaster. The vessel had been carrying about 4200 people on board.



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The Gadfly Society presents:

# Sex & Relationships

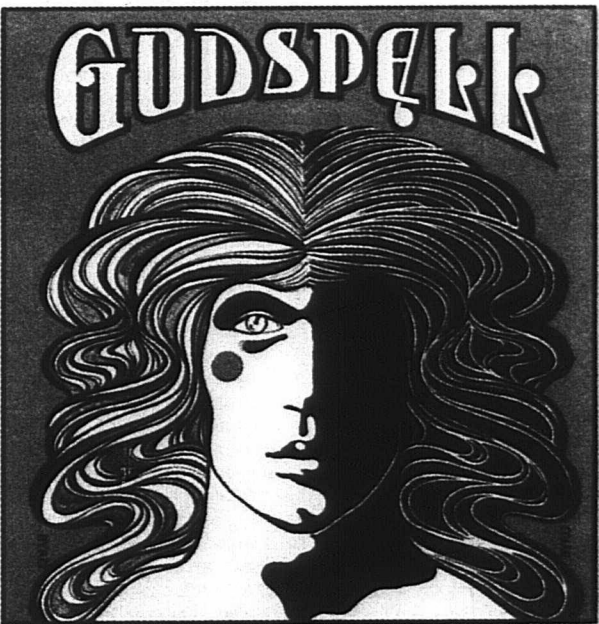
Thursday  
Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> 2012  
7-9pm ChC 125  
(Coffee + Tea)

With Panelist:

- ✶ Ms. Elisa Shearer
- ✶ Dr. LaCelle-Peterson
- ✶ Dr. Lastoria
- ✶ Dr. Lipscomb, B.
- ✶ Dr. Walters

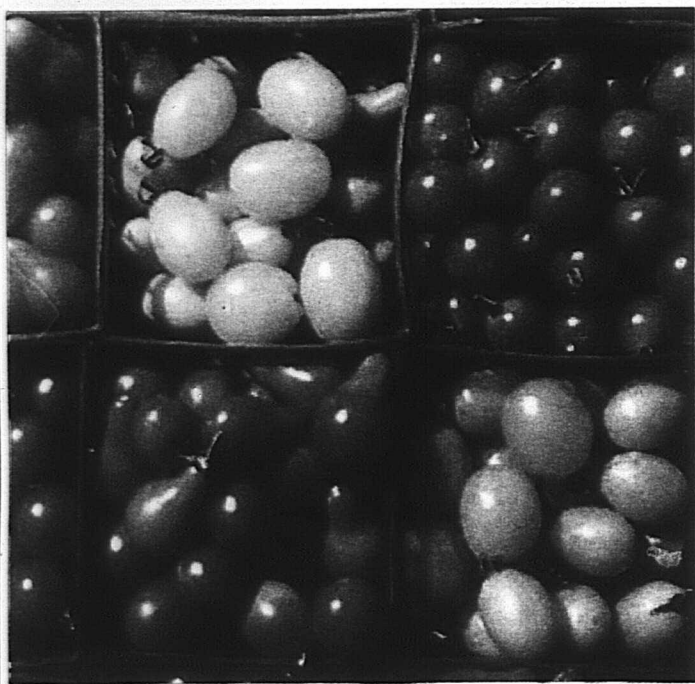
Jan. 26, 27 & 28  
Recital Hall  
Tickets: \$1, sold in the CC

# GODSPELL



Presented by Houghton Musical Theater Players

## Presenting: THE FOOD COLUMN



WWW.DAVIDSANGER.COM

by BRAD MEYERS

More than any of life's other short-lived pleasures, the diversion and gratification brought by food reigns supreme in my hedonistic ventures. Both vice and necessity, stressor and relaxant, food has become a double-edged sword of sorts. At one extreme, the effects of malnutrition or overeating can bring about a quick death, poor appearance, and negative self-image. On the other end of this spectrum, one can find favorable physical health, a prolonged lifespan, and positive self-image. Without making a laundry list of the biological and psychological factors that produce these example conditions, food nevertheless retains a pivotal part of each person's life that extends from physical health to social functioning.

To illustrate this point with a bit more detail, imagine a cinnamon roll. As an enjoyable mid-morning coffee date snack, this five-bites-sized pastry may be delicately glazed with a simple powdered sugar and milk concoction and savored with a cup of coffee or tea in a choice café or breakfast joint, seated alone, with one or two others, or an entire group of friends. Depending on your experience or particular gustatory preferences, this image may be something close to foreign. Instead, that cinnamon roll may fill the majority of a 10-inch plate, balance half a batch of cream cheese frosting on its top, and be quickly devoured piece by piece, its conqueror not forgetting an extra pat of butter for each forkful, sinking further into a favorite recliner watching the final minutes of a late-night infomercial. Perhaps neither image perfectly characterizes your experience with food. Although, I will ashamedly admit to a lack of willpower and high level of ambivalence in matters of healthy self-control that makes both these

situations all too close to reality.

Aside from matters of personal health, our food habits and choices raise even greater issues of morality. Although humans are physiologically omnivorous, is the killing of animals justified? Regardless of the issues of veganism and vegetarianism, we can further question the means of obtaining and preparing any food we eat, meatless or moo-ing. As I walk into a favorite restaurant, am I supporting unsustainable, environmentally harmful farming and food production, an unnecessary expenditure of natural resources needed for transportation, unfair trade, and/or unjustly low wages for those persons involved in this massive assembly line of menu options? A prime example of this mistakenly hipster philosophy is coffee. Even in Java 101, the coffee is advertised as 100% organic and fair trade. Instead of dismissing these statements as fad-conforming practices, every coffee drinker in the Campus Center basement can support policies of social justice and environmental sustainability. Yet, these choices should not be limited to the dictates of convenience and others' decisions. Each bite of breakfast in the morning has become a highly personal as well as socially, politically, economically, and morally weighted choice.

As a food column becomes a more permanent fixture in the Star, the amusement and utility of recipe sharing, restaurant reviews, and other mouthwatering musings should not be read without a critical eye. With a growing understanding of the role of food in daily life, culture, and the health of our planet, perhaps less food will end on the dish room conveyor belt, vegetarians and vegans will not be dismissed as misguided tree-huggers or anachronistic hippies, and a recipe for "bananas foster" will appear objectively ridiculous in a February issue of the newspaper.



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### THROWBACK REVIEW:

## Dog Day Afternoon

by SALLY MURPHY

As the hype and excitement of the cinematically brilliant "Godfather II" was just beginning to die down across America, Al Pacino and John Cazale were not done showing the world what could be done on the silver screen. The two took their talents from the world of mafia and Italian childhoods and channeled them into a film which has, over the years, received less attention that it truly deserves. That film was "Dog Day Afternoon," released in 1975 and directed by Sidney Lumet.

"Dog Day Afternoon" is the true story of a bank heist gone wrong in Brooklyn just a few years before the making of the movie. Three young men, inexperienced in the world of crime, attempt to rob the Chase Manhattan Bank armed with a few semi-automatics and their own willpower. Barely three minutes in, one of them begs to be acquitted and leaves. The remaining two continue with their plan only to discover that the bank has barely any cash and before they can make their exit, they find themselves trapped in a police blockade. From there the plot spirals into a ridiculous 10-hour stand-off between the two criminals, their hostages, and the police waiting outside.

The plot itself is almost unbelievable. In fact, if it were not for the documented footage of the actual heist and the interviews which can still be read, one would hardly believe the details of the film. The characters, the twists, the friendship that begins to

grow between the intruders and their hostages -- it all seems the work of fiction...except, even while watching it, one knows it is the stuff of the absurd only fact can produce.

What makes the film such a worthwhile watch, however, is how real it actually feels. Lumet knew he was working with some incredible actors. It was not on accident that he chose Pacino and Cazale to once again work together; their chemistry was unprecedented. Lumet therefore encouraged all those in the small main cast to act on intuition. There was a highly-appraised screenplay which was not ignored, of course, but the style and intonation was to be their own. Lumet even suggested they wear their own clothes. This raw, real quality is what makes the film. The humor in the scenes stem from the clumsiness found in everyday life; the knowledge that the heartbreak for each character was real causes emotional strain. And, most impressively, the weight of horrific suspense is undeniably a result of the knowledge that lives are not spared in the real world. This film does not shy away from the fact that real people make mistakes.

"Dog Day Afternoon" is funny, thrilling and pensive and has some very unexpected twists. Such beautiful filming, dynamite acting, and impeccable writing should never be passed by. It should stand as a reminder of the extraordinary in the every day. It should be remembered as the great film that it is. ★

# POCKET VINYL: EIGHTH NOTES AND PAINTS

by BEN MURPHY

Throughout 13 tracks, Pocket Vinyl's "Monster's Talking" presents a musical richness that runs the gambit of everything from loose and freewheeling to somber and reflective. The group, comprised of married Houghton graduates Eric Stevenson, '08, and Elizabeth Jancewicz, '09, is unusual in that, during each gig, while Stevenson plays and sings, Jancewicz completes a new painting to be auctioned off to the highest bidder. The result is dynamic, robust keyboard riffs which are met, matched, and enhanced by imaginative, lyrical, visual art. However, the brilliance of the album is not the ways in which the two art forms meet, but rather the place in which they meet.

Pocket Vinyl's sophomore release is a spatial experience. The opening track "Quiet Epiphany" feels literally like a jumping-off point. The first lines, "We birthed a strong and distinct fume/My hands they feel as big as this room," are immediately echoed by a rippling harp which blends a fleet-footed effervescence. And as the song moves from these first airy arpeggio pluckings to a forceful orchestral swell -- cymbals and all -- the track implies movement -- specifically movement upwards. Instead of "diving into" the album, the cliché is reversed and the listener finds him or herself floating into the strange and imaginative stratosphere in which Stevenson and Jancewicz have crafted their work.

Following this initial "lift-off," the second track "Birds and Fish" features the first of four tracks in which Jancewicz speaks over Stevenson's piano. The first is about the subject of her paintings, the second is about the process of her paintings ("The Color Yellow"), the third about things she likes to paint ("Creepy Little Monsters"), and the fourth about the reception and philosophy of the band



The Pocket Vinyl duo, comprised of Houghton grads Elizabeth Jancewicz and Eric Stevenson, is swiftly gaining headway as they tour across the states. Their second and most recent release is "Monster's Talking."

("Encouragement"). These spoken word sections are interesting as insight and crucial as a testament to the dual elements (piano and painting) which mold the creative world Pocket Vinyl inhabits.

While Jancewicz's interviews reinforce the group's fascinating fusion, Stevenson's lyrics further blur the lines between the two artistic mediums. The song, "I Hear Colors" begins, "I listen to the colors run/I hear dyes rather than diction." And in addition to admitting aural synesthesia, Stevenson's poetry often lends itself to structural or compositional sensibilities. The lines "A spiral climbs up the side of its back/Wraps around the corner and picks up the slack" ("Saloon Song") bring an M.C Escher illusion to the mind's eye whereas "The mountain peaks are all sprinkled with bun-

kers/And they're dressed in a sunshine that's intrinsically contemplating" ("My Brother's Time") speaks about light in a strikingly impressionistic language. A close listen reveals that Stevenson sees little distinction between his piano and his wife's canvas.

"Saloon Song" encapsulates much of what Pocket Vinyl is about. The chorus line, "I feel sorry for you if your piano's never been out of tune," is sung over a driving ragtime piano. This song (which, according to Stevenson, was written on an out of tune piano) is a celebration of the creative energy and ethereal plane of artistry where listeners can become seers. And it is fair to mention that this ethos is not simply happy and carefree. "I Once Kissed A Woman Simply for Her Lips" and "Foster Child" both present sad and difficult stories.

Yet these tracks too float into the Pocket Vinyl cloud. Black and grey are colors too.

This is an album made by two artists who, as Jancewicz says in "Encouragement," are "doing what they love." Their music is about hearing color and seeing music. It is about breaking free from a world where lines divide and rising to a space where lines blur and swirl to form monsters laughing, monster crying: "Monster's Talking." ★

## BASKETBALL UPDATE

by TAMMY RIVERS

With 11 games left in the season and a current record of 7-8, the men's basketball team is well on its way toward qualifying to compete in the American Midwest Conference (AMC). The AMC, established in 1949, is an affiliate of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and is of Division II title. With regards to the AMC, the team currently has 0 wins and 1 loss. There are a total of 10 games left to go to make it to the Conference. If the Conference Tournament is won, the team will qualify to compete at the national level. Including Houghton College, there are six college basketball teams that are eligible to attend the Conference: Daemen (NY), Wilberforce (OH), Point Park (PA), Roberts Wesleyan (NY), and Fisher (MA). Of these six teams, four will make it to the Conference. From there, one will make it to Nationals. Houghton must win six more games in order to qualify to compete in the Conference.

The team members' behavior both on and off the court is imperative to their success as working as a team. Furthermore, they have a larger roster this year than they have had in the past. With a total of 18 players, eight new to the team this year and four playing considerable time, each member brings many diverse and important skills to the team.

Inexperience is one weakness that the team is working on to improve, and junior Mark O'Brien, point guard and shooting guard, stated that the team is still getting comfortable playing with one another. Each member brings different talents to the court, and it is necessary to mold those abilities in a way that contributes most to the team. This is much easier said than done, especially since several players are required to play different roles at the college level than they have in the past. But according to O'Brien, the team has excelled specifically in this area throughout the season. He said the members have gotten to know each other better -- both as people and as individual players who each uniquely contribute to the team.

In addition to growing as a team, Coach Hannan stated that improvements have also been made in terms of playing defensively. The team is currently working on improving their offensive efficiency. The overarching goal for the season is to compete at the AMC. The next home game, played against Daemen College, is 6 p.m. Tuesday. ★

## SPORTS RECAP

### MEN'S BASKETBALL:

TUE 1/10

vs Walsh Univ. - L 45-78

TUE 1/17

vs Point Park Univ. - L 70-91

Season Record:

7-9

UPCOMING GAMES:

SAT 1/21

at Wilberforce Univ. @ 4PM

TUE 1/24

vs Daemen College @ 6PM

THU 1/26

at Roberts Wesleyan @ 8PM

### WOMEN'S BASKETBALL:

TUE 1/10

vs Walsh Univ. - L 70-74

SAT 1/14

at Carlow Univ. - W 54-51

TUE 1/17

at Point Park Univ. - L 50-65

Season Record: 10-6

UPCOMING GAMES:

SAT 1/21

at Wilberforce Univ. @ 2PM

TUE 1/24

vs Daemen College @ 8PM

THU 1/26

at Roberts Wesleyan @ 6PM

All information from  
<http://athletics.houghton.edu/>

## ATHLETE PROFILE: MARK O'BRIEN



by DEWAYNE MOORE  
and ERIN CARR

Junior Mark O'Brien, captain and point guard on the men's basketball team, was an easy choice for Coach Hannan to recommend as an outstanding athlete. With little hesitation, Hannan described O'Brien as "an exemplary student athlete in every sense of the word."

O'Brien is a business major from Seven Hills, Ohio. As a starting guard on the court, he is one of the obvious leaders, evident from his statistics (he is averaging over 8 points, almost 2.5 assists, and although he is not one of the taller players on the team he is still averaging 2.8 rebounds per game) as well as his teammates' esteem.

"Mark is always the first person to encourage the other players on the team. He is a hard worker, and I am thankful for him as a teammate, captain, and friend," said freshman guard Luke Khachadourian.

Off the court O'Brien has excelled in his academic work and is the manager of the Five Bites student-run store at Shenawana. As an active business major he is also involved in the Houghton Student Investment Group.

Hannan said, "Mark O'Brien is the type of person that others want to be around because he makes you a better person and genuinely cares about the well-being of everyone. As a coach, I could not ask for more out of a student athlete like Mark O'Brien -- he is a pleasure to coach, and I know I have learned at least as much from him as he has from me."

# Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Prettily Wrapped Parcels



by MEGAN SPECKSGOOR

Now you are all intelligent, inquisitive, and perceptive students so I am completely aware that none of your jaws will drop when I say that Christmas consumerism is rampant. This is not breaking news. However, I want to talk about a related day that usually gets most of its attention within a collective view of the holiday season. I wish to talk about the day when millions of Americans were interrupted mid-pie digestion at times in the early morning only active to procrastinating college students, insomniacs, that guy from Owl City, and citizens on the other side of the world -- the annual anarchy known affectionately as "Black Friday." While many people argue that Black Friday is a necessary spree to benefit our nation's economy, a convenient time to snag cheap deals on Christmas presents, or simply a chance to bond with friends as they maneuver strenuously through crazed and sleep deprived consumerists armed with cash, covetousness, and legal stimulants (coffee), they often do not reflect on the consequences or the connotations of their actions.

It is possible for a shopper to be

civilized, courteous, and self-controlled even in the thick of designer jungles or survival of the fittest, every man for themselves, *when did we sign up for a full contact sport?* chaos in the electronics department. It is possible to conduct oneself with dignity in situations like these. I am not accusing all Black Friday attendees of "Lord of the Flies" primitivism, but when we are honest with ourselves we have to admit that the events of the day can easily get and have easily gotten quickly out of control. In past years Black Friday has instigated numerous violent acts and ransacks, police intervention and resistance to the police, pepper-spraying, and intense hostility. Some shopkeepers have even closed their stores decisively because they feared the extreme physicality of an approaching crowd. Perhaps the most poignant example though is that of Jdimytai Damour, the Walmart worker who was trampled to death in Long Island in 2008 when an impatient throng burst through the supermarket's doors just before the scheduled opening time. When customers were told they had to clear the area because of the incident, many complained about the inconvenience of Damour's death. Now I realize that death by Black Friday is incredibly rare, but there is no reason why it should be anything other than inconceivable. We are human beings who possess logic, a sense of morality, and some degree of decency, and a big red seductive sale sign should not be the full moon that prompts us uncontrollably to devolve into barbarism.

Now it must be said that the majority of shoppers who have ventured out on Black Friday are not animalistic aggressors. However, even if we are not throwing punches or getting in heated territorial arguments over positions in line, I can't help but think that there is something terribly

paradoxical about preaching gratefulness for all of the blessings in our lives on Thanksgiving and then going out the next morning to acquire heaps of things we do not really need. On Friday, were we really as satisfied with what we have as we pretended to be in a circle around the dinner table the night before? Even if we do not vocally adhere to the American proverb of "shop till you drop" and "enough is never enough," what are we communicating when we recite "Give us this day our daily bread" on Thursday and then shove and wrestle to obtain luxuries on Friday? When we say "daily bread" do we really mean our humble necessities or the lavish desires of a whim? And how badly do we need, or should I say want them? What are we willing to do? Even if we do not leave Black Friday co-attendees with black eyes, we are still perpetuating the epidemic of materialism in our society and the insatiable hunger for stuff, some of which is really no better than brand name, worthless distractions.

Even if we conduct ourselves properly inside shopping centers on Black Friday, there is an overwhelming indication of our priorities and that of our peers. What are we willing to stand in line for, and what does this say about our values? How many people do you know who will camp outside of Best Buy eagerly for 12 hours, but will

not take the time and effort to stand in line to vote in a presidential election, or to give blood, or (insert important/noble cause here)?

What are we willing to stand in line for, and what does this say about our values? How many people do you know who will camp outside of Best Buy for 12 hours, but will not take the time to stand in line to vote in a presidential election?

How many people sneer at the Occupy movements not because they know what the protests are about and disprove of their ideals, but because they can't think of a cause worth being stationary and patient for long periods of time, opinions which they will formulate and forget as they twiddle their thumbs to

maintain blood circulation during their sixth hour in front of Target.

In high school I braved the Walmart parking lot on Black Friday before the store opened, armed with a video camera, so that I could document the stampede to follow and interview several customers in the meantime. I asked them basic questions about what time they woke up, how often they had waited this long for something they care about, what they were going to buy, and, most importantly, why they wanted it so badly. Once, just once, I wanted someone to say, "I don't really know. It's kind of ridiculous when you think about it." Not surprisingly, I was left disappointed.

Megan is a junior English and writing major

## The Penultimate Word / You Should Care About Super PACs



by ELISA SHEARER

The new potentially-sort-of-boring-topic-about-which-we-should-educate-ourselves (this is the first election I'm paying attention to and I'm finding a lot of these things) is the issue of Super PACs and their effect on the current election.

To summarize, Political Action Committees (PACs) have been around for a while. They are organizations that raise money to use toward elections, usually television commercials -- they are limited to collecting small amounts of money from individuals, political parties, and other PACs -- and the stipulation was that they could only accept \$5000 per person per year, which meant that (at least in theory) candidates' support would be semi-related to the amount of supporters donating to them.

In 2010, however, it became legal for some organizations to receive unlimited donations from corporations and unions: organizations which accept these unlimited donations are called "super PACs." They are like PACs, but much more evil. While PACs forced candidates to build a large support base to earn a substantial

amount of money, a few millionaire individuals or corporations can fund a candidate's entire ad campaign. Super PACs are devastating to the essence of democracy: Why should congressional and presidential candidates care more about the votes of single constituents than the needs of unions and corporations when campaigns can be made or broken by union and corporate funding?

Super PACs allow campaigns to distance themselves from negative ad campaigns while reaping the benefits from commercials slandering political opponents -- Mitt Romney's PAC (the idiotically named "Restoring Our Future" -- okay, one might restore *hope* for the future, but not the future itself) spent \$3 million running negative campaigns against Newt Gingrich, effectively killing his campaign.

Super PACs allow corporations and unions to spend huge amounts of money on elections -- billions, in the 2010 mid-term election -- and that directly translates into influence on government decisions. If you're imagining large men in suits grinning evilly while photographing themselves with dollar bills coming out of their ears, keep imagining it: there's a picture of Mitt Romney that looks exactly like that.

Super PACs are a key factor in the commercialization of the political process. Since the late 90s, the money involved in elections (adjusted for inflation) has increased at an alarming rate. The amount of money that went into the 2008 election (\$1 billion, 86 million) was more than twice that of the 1996 election (599 million dollars, adjusted for inflation) -- Barack Obama's 2008 campaign alone spent more than was spent in 1996 (\$799 million).

Super PACs do not have to report the amount of money they receive, or how

they spend it. A candidate's super PAC can fund ridiculous amounts of illogical and negative commercials without having to pin the candidate's name on the commercials at all. A candidate's super PAC can also donate money to other PACs, effectively buying the good will of other politicians. Recent Supreme Court decisions deem this legal.

The Colbert Report flaunted the troubling legalities of Super PACs in last Thursday's episode, when Stephen Colbert's Super PAC (Americans for a Better Tomorrow, Tomorrow) was transferred from Colbert to Jon Stewart as Colbert announced his fake intention to run for president. Colbert is not supposed to coordinate

with the super PAC, his lawyer said on the show, but he could remain business partners with Stewart and the staff of his PAC didn't have to change, even though they clearly knew everything about his election strategy.

Super PACs are the final step in making political campaigns entirely about money and slander. The political scene becomes a game of who-can-find-the-most-loopholes, with politicians focusing their energies on how to betray the spirit of the law without breaking the letter of it, which seems quite bad indeed.

Elisa is a senior English and psychology major

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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK / The Nature of Responsibility



by CHRIS HARTLINE

In the January 2012 edition of *Vanity Fair*, Christopher Hitchens — possibly the greatest intellectual of the last 30 years — addressed the issue of death from the perspective of one currently experiencing it (he was recently diagnosed with esophageal cancer and died December 15). He stated that there were only two things keeping him from fatalism and resignation: “a wife who would not hear of me talking in this boring and useless way, and various friends who also spoke freely.” Not even Hitchens — the great atheist, wordsmith, luminary — was able to exist without partaking in society and relationship.

During a conversation I had with him last semester, President of the Washington Institute and author of “The Fabric of Faithfulness” Dr. Steven Garber quoted Vaclav Havel, the recently deceased President of Czechoslovakia, who said that “the secret of man is the secret of his responsibility.” I began thinking about the elusive nature of responsibility. In many ways, it seems as though its meaning has remained a mystery in our culture — or, more nefariously, been

purposefully subverted to emphasize the supposed victory of reason over emotion in the Modern and Postmodern ages.

At the core of the idea of responsibility — truly at the core of humanity itself — is the importance of understanding our place within society and relationships. We, as a culture, have a tendency to equate responsibility with independence. We see responsibility as living on our own, buying a car, paying a mortgage, etc., but true responsibility necessitates actively engaging with both our emotions and the values that our emotions articulate. As New York Times columnist David Brooks discussed in his book “The Social Animal,” “Your unconscious, that inner extrovert, wants you to reach outward and connect... your unconscious wants to entangle you in the thick web of relations that are the essence of human flourishing.”

Brooks underscores the fact that the dichotomy of reason and emotion, particularly the supposed victory of reason over emotion, is a false one. We view emotion as an untamed beast, unable to be controlled or even understood, but Brooks states that “Reason and emotion are not separate and opposed. Reason is nestled upon emotion and dependent upon it. Emotion assigns value to things, and reason can only make choices on the basis of

those valuations. The human mind can be pragmatic because deep down it is romantic.” Far from being outside the realm of reason or understanding, emotion is the very foundation of reason, organizing the principles and value structures of our lives like an architect drawing blueprints for a building. Our emotions, which guide our subconscious, seek to be in relationships. We are, as Aristotle called us, social animals.

Even the ancients understood this concept. Aristotle, writing in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, also said that “Anyone who either cannot lead the common life or is so self-sufficient as not to need to, and therefore does not partake of society, is either a beast or a god.” In the ancient poem “Inferno,” Dante and Virgil traverse the levels of hell, passing through those which contain souls guilty of the sins of lust, gluttony, murder, theft, and falsehood. At the final level reside sinners

guilty of disloyalty to kin, country, guests, and lords. To understand why Dante reserves the final level of hell, where Satan also resides, with the most gruesome of punishments, we must realize that Aristotle’s writings were, in many ways, the foundation of Dante’s thought. Disloyalty is the worst of all sins in Dante’s conception because it is the destruction of relationships which

are at the core of humanity. It is, in essence, a perversion of humanity itself.

Havel, reflecting on his time as a playwright, said, “it is far harder to store a play away in your desk drawer than it is poetry or prose. Once written, a play is only half done, and it is never complete and itself until it has been performed in a theatre.” The parallels to Brooks’ work are enlightening. Writing a play, like living an independent, solitary life, is a wholly irrational, unfinished, and unfulfilling exercise. Only in its engagement with society at large, the carrying out of its ideas in a physical and social manner, is theater — and life — consummated. In this principle we find the true nature of responsibility.

True responsibility is understanding the benefit we can receive from and the good we can infuse into our community, whether it be a family, a city, or a church, and doing the work necessary to maintain and build up that community. It is understanding the foundational role of our emotions and letting them guide our paths and order our value structures. The micro and macro problems we face as a society and as a country are complex and divergent, but at the core of many is a lost understanding of responsibility. The key to future solutions may lie in the resurgence of this understanding.

The secret of man is the secret of his responsibility.

*Chris is a senior political science and history major*

At the core  
of the idea of  
responsibility --  
truly at the core of  
humanity itself --  
is the importance  
of understanding  
our place within  
society

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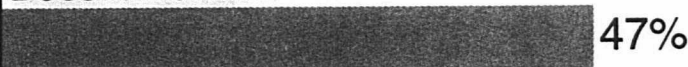
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**How do you feel about  
upperclassmen being able  
to take classes outside of  
their majors as pass/fail?**

**Does it matter?**



**I am vehemently against it.**



**It is a great idea!**



out of 58 votes



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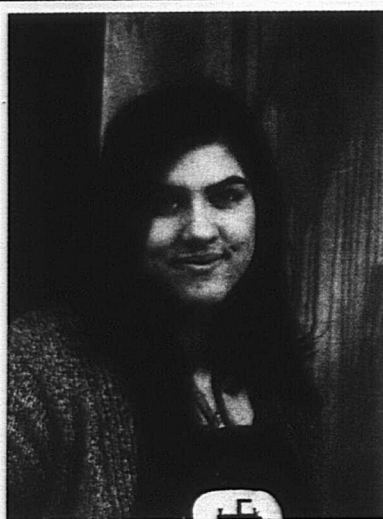
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## ARTIST OF THE WEEK

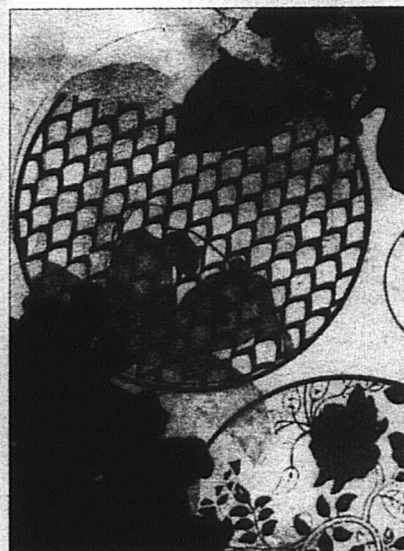
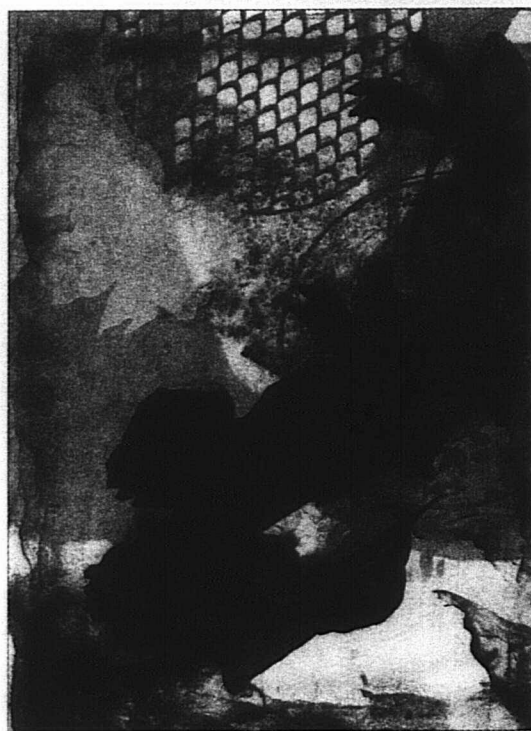


ANDREA PACHECO

JOYCE  
TAYLOR

I am a senior studio art major with a concentration in painting and printmaking, however it is printmaking that has captured my heart and is where I am focusing most of my artistic energies. There is nothing like it in the world of art. This work here is from a series I recently completed that alludes to the novel 1Q84 by Haruki Murakami, my current favorite read. In the novel, the main characters find that they are no longer in the Japan they once knew, their new world has two moons and is a parallel to their beloved 1984. My imagery relates -- but is not limited -- to this world.

*Clockwise from left: "Waiting patiently for her imaginary ripples to settle down before she speaks again"; "A place where hearts know only sadness"; "Even if we could turn back, we'd probably never end up where we started"; "The pine windbreak; dark & heavy"; Lithography with monotype and screen printing.*



3			2					
	9	7	3	6				
	4				5			
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					1			8

## SUDOKU

To win a free Java drink, bring your finished puzzle, clearly marked with your full name and CPO, to the Star office in the basement of the Campus Center (deadline: WED 1/25 by 6PM)

12/9 Crossword Solution:

S	P	A	S	M	A	B	C	C	O	D
P	A	R	T	I	L	A	H	C	A	P
A	R	I	A	S	E	D	O	A	P	A
R	A	L	P	H	I	E	R	U	D	O
					H	A	L	H	E	L
W	E	U	P	E	S	O	T	I	P	O
H	U	N	K		U	M	B	O	E	L
I	R	A	N		M	O	N	D	O	E
T	O	P	E	R	G	O	O	S	A	L
E	S	T	E	E	M	B	R	I	G	E
					D	I	B	S	E	R
M	I	R	A	C	L	E	P	R	I	M
U	V	U	L	A	L	E	E	N	I	G
G	A	L	O	P	I	L	L	C	L	E
N	E	E			E	E	T	H	Y	E

Last week's sudoku winner was EVAN YEONG! Your Java card will be sent to you through campus mail.