

THE HOUGHTON S · T · A · R

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Academic Assessment (part one)

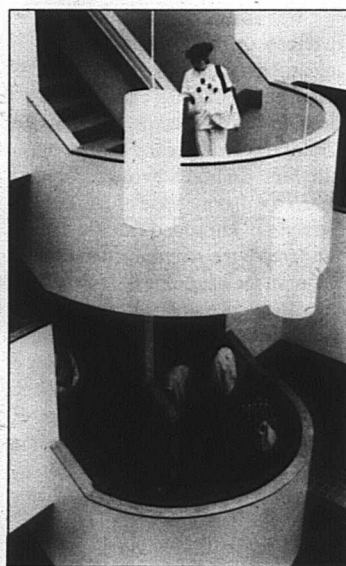
by Dave Wheeler

As the 1989-1990 academic year draws to a close, Houghton is enthusiastically preparing for next year. New programs have moved from the minds of their proponents to reality, while others have passed away, some more quietly than others—a scenario typical of the end of each academic year. This week the *Star* takes a closer look at this scenario. Following is Part One of a report of Houghton's six academic divisions—where they stand and where they're going.

HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Dr. Daryl Stevenson, in his first year as history and social science division chair, is proud of his division, which claims 273 students (25% of total enrollment) as majors, and 301 as minors. "I'm pleased about this," Stevenson remarked. "The class ratios are very healthy."

As the home of three of the four most populous programs on campus (business, psychology, and history), the division has often found itself embroiled in activity. Controversy was raised this year when the proposed social work major was dropped. There has been significant expansion within the division, however, as evidenced by the new international studies major, recently



(C. Daniels)

accepted by the state education authorities.

According to Stevenson, the international studies program was initiated several years ago and pushed along primarily by retired history professor Dr. Katherine Lindley.

Dr. David Benedict, the faculty advisor for international studies majors, will be joined by an as-yet-unnamed director, a position currently administered by Lindley and Director of International Relations David Pollock. The director's major respon-

sibility will be the coordination of students' overseas experiences. Since "the major will require no new courses," Stevenson explained, "no new staff members are required. All the courses are already in place."

Of the total of 48 required credit hours, the 30 required hours of interdisciplinary courses (six hours each of history, political science, economics, and anthropology/sociology; three hours of cross-cultural communication; and three hours of related courses outside the division, such as world religions, or a foreign language) constitute the "backbone" of the major. Twelve more hours will be devoted to a concentration in one of the areas within the discipline, the equivalent of a minor. The final six hours, termed by Stevenson as the major's "capstone", consist of a semester's "field experience" in an international setting.

In addition to this major, Houghton has a fairly new minor in intercultural relations. According to Stevenson, this option exists for students who "don't want to go the 48-hour route."

The future of political science is less definite. But although "any kind of setting of dates is a bit premature," Stevenson claims that there has been discussion about adding a political science major. The demand for the major has grown in recent years, and there are currently 29 declared majors, with an additional 10 to 15 students believed to be considering the program. Stevenson stated that "it makes sense" to add

continued on page 2 →

NEWS

the major; he cited the number of interested students and the fact that Houghton's sister colleges of comparable size have the major. "It's a stable, traditional major that we don't have," he remarked with some regret. "But to have a major, there should be a minimum of two faculty members." Benedict is currently the sole political science professor.

The social work minor appears destined to follow its corresponding major into history, Stevenson said regretfully. "It had been my hope to maintain this minor, but I don't know if we have the numbers to justify it (replacing the resigning Dr. Larry Ortiz with a full-time faculty member)." For example, only one person has enrolled in Introduction to Social Work. Of the eight current minors, three are graduating and most of the others are transferring to colleges which offer a social work major.

New this year was the accounting major, an outgrowth of the business department. There are currently eleven declared majors and 20 declared minors, and Stevenson stated that this figure is growing. "It probably won't level off," said Stevenson. "More than 20 prospective students who have declared an interest in accounting are on our 'accepted' list. In a year from now, I fully believe that I'll have more than eleven majors to report."

LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

This year has been one of growth for the languages and litera-

ture division as well, characterized primarily by the growing interest in theater-related courses. "Interest in theater has bloomed here," remarked division chair Dr. Sue Crider. "For example, there were 55 people auditioning for *Our Town* this year."

Houghton does not currently offer a theater minor, although it does offer enough courses to encompass a minor; but it is possible to take a 15-hour communication minor with a theater emphasis. According to Crider, new theater-related courses should be offered next year. Special Topics: Reader's Theater is scheduled for in the spring, and an independent study course involving directing is in the works, having been initiated by sophomore Adam English.

Ironically enough for a school that recently dropped its German major, Houghton's beginning and intermediate German classes have been, in Crider's words, "packed out." Crider reported that the college may hire Mrs. Gudrun Stevenson, German instructor and the wife of Dr. Daryl Stevenson; but added that she does not foresee the reintroduction of the major in the near future.

The major structural change in the division is the shuffling of general education requirements. Principles of Writing and Literature of the Western World, once four-hour courses, now consist of three hours each. Emerging in the wake of the two dropped credit hours is a new course called Library Research. This course, to be taught in the fall by Profs. Douglas Gaerte and William Greenway, will acquaint students with the MLA, APA, and

Chicago paper formats. According to Crider, "students won't meet anything in the library that they won't know how to research."

Spanish instructor José Velazquez has received a grant for his work in implementing such projects as the current computer link between Houghton and a Wesleyan school in Puerto Rico. Opportunities to spend semesters or breaks in foreign locales like Puerto Rico and Spain enhance a foreign language education. "Some students complain about the language requirements," said Crider, "which reminds me of an old joke: if someone knows three languages, he's trilingual; if he knows two languages, he's bilingual; if he knows one language, he's American. . . ." Crider lauded the study of different languages and cultures as "giving the student a broadening of horizons, a sense of thinking globally—of not being insulated on our hill in the Genesee Valley." ★

A Word to the Wise

"Trying is a great thing in the Lord's sight, whether it works or not."

Dr. Wilson Greatbatch, pacemaker pioneer, encouraging ambitious research at small colleges. Greatbatch was a featured speaker at the Paine Science Building's twentieth anniversary commemoration April 17.

"I'm pouring my heart out into my poetry."

Bloop, bloop, bloop."

Text of "An Untitled Love Poem" by **Thomas James Woods**, included in this semester's *Lantern*.

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And in Other News...

by Kenneth Cole and John Chong

Lithuania

While the UPI wire lauds the latest Soviet proposals in Lithuania as improvements, the small European republic is in a real bind. Now that Moscow has cut back drastically on gas and oil shipments, Lithuanian Deputy Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas seems to see the situation as a dead end. With only four out of five natural gas pipelines in operation, it is estimated that the republic can only meet 16% of its energy needs. This supply is enough to keep only Lithuania's most essential industries going.

Moscow's latest proposal, according to the Bush administration, is "flexible." The Kremlin proposed that Lithuania freeze its declaration of independence during negotiations with Moscow. There has been no immediate action from Lithuania.

Since the U.S. is basically watching the events in Lithuania without action--the Bush administration is reluctant to "weaken" Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev--Lithuania has stated that it deplors the "betrayal" of the Lithuanian people" by the U.S. Such failure to support Lithuania's quest for independence may send discouraging signals to other states desiring independence.

If the U.S. does attempt to interfere in the region, many (including, presumably, the Soviets) will see such action as beyond the realm of its jurisdiction. U.S. interference could also weaken the U.S.-Soviet relations that have been built up over recent months.

Beirut

A delegate of the Red Cross International Committee arrived in Beirut from Switzerland Wednesday

after hearing reports of the possible release of two Swiss Red Cross workers captured last year in Lebanon. On Tuesday, Moslem sources indicated that the hostages could be freed in three days.

On Wednesday, however, a pro-Iranian fundamentalist leader in Beirut urged all groups holding Western hostages in Lebanon to NOT release them. This leader told the Voice of People radio that Washington responded to the release of U.S. teacher Robert Polhill with "proof of bad intention" because the U.S. House of Representatives adopted a resolution recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital. This same leader has indicated that another American hostage will be freed soon, however.

Nicaragua

Violeta Chamorro was sworn in Wednesday as the new Nicaraguan president, ending ten years of Sandinista rule. Chamorro pledged to oversee the disbanding of the *contras* and the suspension of the draft. ★

Before he thanked his producer, he thanked his creator.



Academy Student Film Award winner Antonio Zarro made *Bird in a Cage* at Regent University. He had his priorities straight, as do all our graduate students of Communication and the Arts. Seeking God as their source, they apply hands on learning to a master plan for life. Life at the pinnacle of professionalism. For details and our free video viewbook, call 1-800-952-8000.

Regent University
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A Christian university in Virginia Beach, Va., offering graduate degrees from five colleges and possessing America's only accredited Bible-based law school.

NEWS

Senior Honors Announced

An H.C. Public Release

Academic Dean Clarence Bence announced the honor students of the class of 1990 at a special reception in their honor on Thursday, April 19. At Commencement (May 14), four seniors will graduate summa cum laude, while 24% of the 238-member class will qualify for honors.

The 1990 valedictorian is Michael Gish, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Gish of Mount Joy, Pennsylvania. Gish will receive a B.S. in biology and a minor in chemistry with a 3.942 cumulative grade point average.

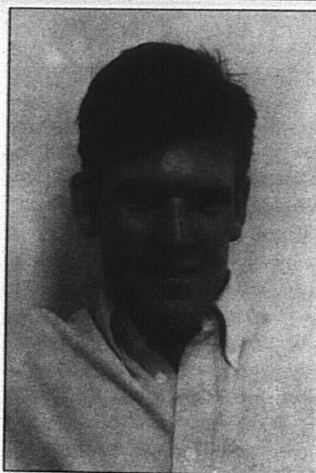
Gish has been named to *Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities* and is a member of the NAIA, NCCAA and ADIDAS All-American Scholar-Athlete soccer teams. He has played soccer at Houghton all four years, and was a captain this year. He has also been a class senator and parliamentarian on the Student Senate cabinet.

Gish has been accepted at the medical school of the University of Pennsylvania and will begin studies in the fall.

Kara Christensen, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Larry Christensen of Houghton, is the salutatorian. Christensen will receive a B.A. in psychology and a minor in chemistry, with a grade point average of 3.861.

An Academic All-American through her participation on the women's varsity volleyball team, Christensen has played three years and served this year as captain. Christensen is also a member of the NCCAA women's volleyball team.

Christensen has received a \$500 award from Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Board for her psychological services



▲ Michael Gish (top) and Kara Christensen (above)

internship with the Olean public school system. She plans to work in the social work field, particularly in child psychology and development. Eventually she plans to pursue master's and doctoral degrees. ★

Senate Decisions 4/10

by Stephen Virkler

☞ A majority of students preferred the 15-21 meal plan over the current 21 meal plan in the recent Senate poll. Senate has therefore sent a recommendation of the 15-21 plan to the Financial Affairs and Student Development Councils.

☞ Senate voted to retrieve the office space allocated for an information booth due to uncertainty over quantity of space needed and actual use of the space.

People Are Chemicals, Too!

An H.C. Public Release

Dr. Irmgard K. Howard, associate professor of chemistry at Houghton College, has just returned from a lecture tour of the Mid-South.

As a National Tour Speaker for the American Chemical Society, the world's largest professional scientific organization, Dr. Howard addressed local ACS sections of Shreveport, Louisiana; Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia; University of Central Arkansas, Conway; and Kilgore College, Kilgore, Texas. Her topic was "People are Chemicals, Too! A Biochemist's Approach to the Public's Fear of Chemicals." Her talks were designed to help chemists and other scientists to communicate more clearly with the public.

Howard holds that chemists should demystify their discipline for laypeople. "All of us make chemical decisions, whether or not we know any chemistry," Howard explained. "This world is made of chemicals, and we are made of chemicals as well. The more chemistry we can learn, the more intelligent our chemical choices can be. It is vital for chemists to give the public the background information necessary for making responsible chemical choices. Biochemistry, or the chemistry of our bodies, is a great place to start the communication." ★

☞ Senate unanimously voted to support Lisa Strand's proposal for a rape-awareness lecture in the fall. The University of Buffalo Anti-Rape Task Force and Prof. Brian Sayers have agreed to speak at this lecture.

☞ Radiance, the Houghton College imaginative fiction club, has been approved as an official campus organization. Randy Hoffman is the first president of the fledgling club, which was active this year on an unofficial basis.

Breakdown of Communication Perspective: Dr. Larry Ortiz

by Sarah Kye

As students anticipate the end of this academic year, Drs. Larry and Jeanne Ortiz are preparing for their departure from Houghton as well. After reflecting on the events of the past few weeks concerning the administration's decision to drop the proposed social work major, Dr. Larry Ortiz had several comments to make based on his experiences.

Dr. Ortiz has been a part of Houghton College for seven years. Upon moving to the main campus from Buffalo, he felt that the faculty and administration were committed to develop a social work program. The institution, however, did not follow through and act upon this commitment.

He is not leaving Houghton full of bitterness, however. Although he feels betrayed in several respects, he also said that, "I've been very thankful for the opportunity to teach here, and I've learned from it." Ortiz expressed gratitude for the help he received from colleagues. "Some of the most wonderful people that walk the earth, as far as I'm concerned, are here," he stated. He also remarked that it has been a tremendous privilege to work with the students here.

Ortiz commented on several of what he sees as Houghton's weaknesses. "Houghton is currently a deeply divided community," he observed. The divisions, according to Ortiz, seem to fall between those who fear a trend toward liberalism and those who advocate for liberal reforms in the college.

Exacerbating the division of the community is the lack of dialogue among students, faculty, and the administration, according to Ortiz. This communication gap leads to the formation of factions and the prevalence of rumors and misinformation

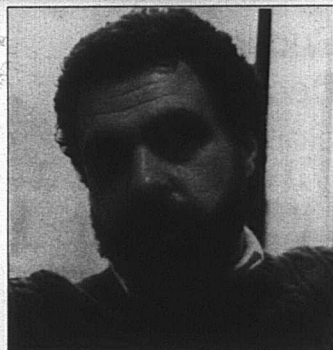
spread through this process. Ortiz found this dialogue to be most lacking in administrative decisions, noting that "reasons given [by the administration] for actions have at best been confusing, if not downright misleading."

Ortiz reported that many comments he had made were misinterpreted by the administration due to the lack of dialogue. When recruitment of minority students and faculty was being discussed, he suggested that Houghton's community standards should be assessed for cultural bias. Instead of generating discussion, he was accused of pushing his own "liberal" agenda. "I'm sorry we can only look at things so myopically," commented Ortiz.

Ortiz criticized the way that the recent decision to terminate the social work major was carried through. Due to rumors that Ortiz was leaving, which he had not confirmed, at least one member of the Academic Cabinet decided to vote to cut the major. Ortiz commented that, at the time of the decision, he had interviewed for jobs elsewhere, but remained dedicated to seeing a social work major come to a completion.

The lack of dialogue and the false presentation of facts abounding recently on campus are serious problems for Ortiz. Without dialogue between faculty and administration, the institution cannot expect students to dialogue with one another constructively over such issues. "We are models for the students," he asserted.

Ortiz urged accountability among all sectors of the Houghton community, and encouraged students to ask "the hard questions," saying, "I hope that those of you who have known me will see that I have been able to model in my life asking hard questions of



L. ROCHA

myself, others, and God . . . It is because of my love for God that I feel I can ask hard questions of Him. Asking hard questions is not a sign of disloyalty; it is a sign of love and freedom."

The Ortizes will be moving to San Antonio, Texas. Larry Ortiz will be an associate professor at the Warden School of Social Service of Our Lady of the Lake University, teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in addition to directing the undergraduate social work program. Jeanne Ortiz is also looking forward to pursuing job opportunities in the area. ★

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SPORTS

Sudden Death Decides Golf Victors

by Doug Wood

Dan Hartman, Nate and Matt Adomowicz, and Scott Ricketts combined to make par on a sudden-death hole to win the Powers Golf Tournament Saturday over the second-place team of Tom Kirschner, Brad Zarges, Jeff Humbert, and Brad Starkweather.

The two teams were tied at 3-under-par after completing 18 holes at Six S golf course in Angelica when they teed off on a sudden-death playoff hole to decide the winner. Hartman's team had two solid drives, a chip, and a putt to successfully par the hole, while the Kirschner team bogeyed for their first time that afternoon.

Jeff Szymanski, Rick Lyman, Tom McCumsky, and Ron Sullivan gained third place at 2-under-par. The Longest Drive Award went to Tom McCumsky, while Chris Morris won the prize for Closest to the Pin. The award for the Highest Percentage of Shots Used went to Mike Woodard. Chanel Massey, Jeri Merrill, and Shelly Pahl won the award for Highest Team Score.

At the end of the afternoon, the twelve participating teams of four returned to the Powers House to celebrate the successful tournament with a festive chicken barbecue and awards ceremony. ★

CORRECTION

In last issues article entitled "Gray Areas: Biological Ethics," Dr. Donald Munro's name is replaced by that of Dr. Frederick Shannon throughout. Dr. Charles Detwiler's name is spelled incorrectly, as well. The *Star* regrets the errors.

The Hoffman Cinematographic Vertex

by Randy Hoffman

The Hunt For Red October
(PG) ***1/2

Recommendation: Chase it down.

Approval: Aye, captain.

Capsule Comment: The plot moves along inexorably, with nary a thread left to trail in the water; Connery and his fellows give us a rousing, old-time suspense adventure before they say *do zvidanya*.

There isn't much not to like here, although superfluous profanity is most annoying and there are a few poor special effects to set your teeth on edge if you've an eye for that sort of thing. Overall, this film is really refreshing because it sets all pretensions aside and strives to be only one thing: an action adventure thriller. In this regard it resembles *Die Hard*: in neither film do you consciously reject the "one-man gang" hero as is easy enough to do with many other films; in neither film do you reject the constant spin from crisis to crisis; and in neither film does the predictability detract from your enjoyment of the movie. Why? Because of the "Mousetrap" effect.

Any of you remember the board game "Mousetrap?" Whenever a certain person landed on a certain space, somebody else got to turn a crank, which dumped out a ball,

which rolled down a track, which tripped a swing, etc., etc., until the trap came down on the helpless gamepiece. The *internal logic* of the film is consistent, you see: one gets caught up in the motion of the cinematic gears and the sheer inescapability of them drags you along for the ride.

Well, it has something to do with how fine the teeth are in those gears. One big jam-up and one's suspension of disbelief can go right out the window. This sort of *faux pas* killed *The Dead Pool* (the last Dirty Harry movie, if you recall). In *The Dead Pool*, after about twenty minutes the realization sank in that this wasn't kosher. It didn't follow the same rules that the earlier films had kept to. It was dark and morbid; and, by Becket, it wasn't righteous enough.

Red October makes no such mistake. It keeps you in suspense until you figure out who the good guys are, and then it heaps on more suspense and more righteousness until you can cheer lustily when the good guys win.

Sean Connery is very, very good in this film.

Hint, hint.

Oops. Well, if I've spoiled it for you, go read the book. I have yet to read it myself.

Ouch! Ouch! Okay, I'm sorry! Ow! Back, you clothbound philistines!

Goodbye!! ★

CAMP TRIANGLE

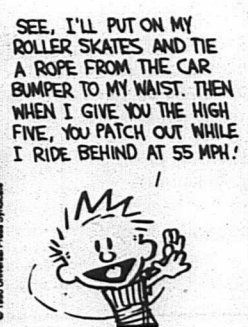
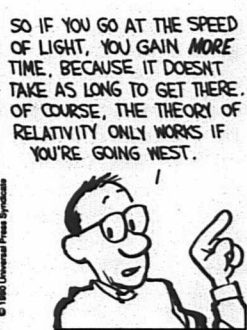
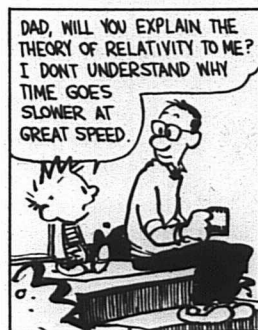
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-LDW

Calvin and Hobbes

by Bill Watterson



OPINION

To the Houghton community:

I'd like to share with you some of my thoughts as I sat reflecting on Earth Day one evening.

Earth Day 1990 was established as a day for us to focus our thoughts on the environment or, a word I prefer, the creation. It was to cause us to think about our earth and the way we care for it.

The environment is my passion. I can't imagine a world without woods and running streams and wild meadows, without robins and owls and insects and raccoons and deer. I can't imagine a world where I can't escape the sounds of traffic or the sight of houses. I love the creation. And when I look or listen or smell or touch what has been made, I can't help but feel the presence of the Creator.

It pains me to see the creation being destroyed—our air and water polluted, the land being filled up for hundreds of years with our wastes, the litter on the ground. And what pains me even more is people's seeming indifference to how their actions and their lifestyle are damaging the creation and each other.

Jesus' words come to mind: "Love God with your whole heart... and love your neighbor as yourself." I wonder, am I loving my neighbors next door when I drive my car and thus pollute their air? Am I loving my neighbor in New York State or my neighbor in 2050 when I leave my lights on or overheat my house or use an electric appliance when a manual

one would work as well? My neighbors elsewhere have to deal with the air and water pollution that come as a result of my energy consumption, and my neighbor in the future will lack fossil fuels because I've used them all. Am I loving my neighbor in South America when I participate in and accept a throw-away, consuming culture? There aren't enough resources in the world for everyone to live the American lifestyle, rooted in others' poverty.

I want to love God. And since I want to love God I want to care for what God cares for. Through Jesus, God showed us what He cares for: He cares for each of us. Jesus loved those around Him, and He commanded us to do likewise—to love our neighbor. Can I destroy the earth and still be loving my neighbor? I think not. Caring for the earth and loving my neighbor are intertwined.

I don't want to become a fanatic who is consumed with outward actions, though. Rather I want my outward actions to result naturally from my inner foundation. I want my entire life, actions as well as beliefs, to be rooted in and to be a reflection of a love of God and a desire to live the way of life Jesus showed us. And so I want to love my neighbor and care for the creation. I want to be aware of how my actions affect others. I want, as the banner in the Campus Center says, to celebrate Earth Day every day.

Sincerely,
Theresa Hoffmann

The Star does not, as a general rule, accept anonymous contributions, operating under the belief that contributors should be willing to be associated with the opinions they express. Due to the self-revelatory nature of the following letter, however, the Star has made an exception for the contributor's protection.

LDW

Dear Editor:

I think that the opinion section should hear from a person whose lifestyle has been so openly discussed in previous issues. Yes, I am a homosexual male and a student at Houghton. If that shocks you, then WAKE UP!! I don't care if you think that I'm in sin or not. I am just another student with goals and dreams like the rest of you. I am not looking for your acceptance or approval of who I am. I just ask that any further discussion of homosexuality have a little bit more thought behind it.

I have never been any kind of activist. When I read the April 9 issue I was ready for some protesting of my own. Here is my first and final statement of protest: Shut the ____ up because the words that come from your mouths are distorted by a foot that wears a shoe called "homophobia"!!!

T.G.P.

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The Houghton Star is a weekly student publication; its focus is on events, issues, and ideas which significantly affect the Houghton College community. Letters (signed) are encouraged and accepted for publication; however, they must not constitute a personal attack, they must be submitted by noon on Tuesday, and they should be no longer than two double-spaced pages. The editor reserves the right to edit all contributions.

Dear Editor and students:

John Morris has written some interesting things about God, truth, and Christian ethics. Since John was my roommate for the first semester of our sophomore year, his letter caused me to think back to how people tend to change during their time at Houghton. That his opinions on the matter are blatantly unbiblical, and that he has, by expressing them, publicly placed himself with "the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars" is simply undisputable (Rev. 21:8). Rather, I wish to encourage the students of Houghton College to question why a person would defend such sin *in the name of Christ*.

I am a witness that John did not always espouse such views. Nor, by any means, is he the only student I have known to change his views during his stay at Houghton. What causes this? I do not believe we can assume that people who fall away at Houghton would have done the same had they not come to Houghton. After all, if one is going to rebel against the Gospel of Jesus Christ then why not simply renounce Christianity? Why whine about proof-texting and then babble about direct conflicts with "the main message of the rest of the Bible" that any person able to read knows are imaginary? To quote Ayn Rand, "Mistakes this big are never made by accident."

The reason John can get away with openly stating such unintelligible nonsense is that his premises are legitimized in college classrooms. Observe John's assertion "that the Bible and God and religion and truth are paradoxical. . . they don't make simple sense." Compare this to what you are taught about the clarity (or lack of it) of God's revelation to man. Think about how often the accusation "simplistic" is used, without exegetical argument or evidence, against those who are prepared to accept that the universe was created in six literal

days, or that New Testament directives on gender roles are authoritative. Ask yourself how often you are told that "the Bible is not a textbook" (what straw man ever said that it was?) when you express doubt about being more committed to the results of modern historical scholarship than the propositional information contained in God's Word. John has been a good student.

David Lennon and Barry MacTarnaghan both wrote detailed arguments responding to John. Why bother? Why spend the time rationally refuting someone who insists that the truth is "paradoxical"? John ruled out honest debate at the beginning of his letter. How can intellectual argument occur without foundational common ground, without some method of resolution other than an elitist sneer and a hypocritical accusation that you "fear to abandon the smooth and familiar in search of the difficult and elusive truth"? And how can you expect to get a Christian education at an institution where you are expected to question your faith—where appeals to the authority of Scripture are considered illegitimate?

Most of you are on a college campus. In fact, you are living in the theological equivalent of a sensory deprivation tank. Can you stay here four years without suffering hallucinations? It is not intellectual argumentation upon which your survival depends, but spiritual endurance. For intellectual argumentation is useless in facing a fundamentally dishonest opponent. When you came here you thought that faith and learning would be integrated. You were deceived. Faith is only permitted what crumbs from Learning's table. And Learning is only getting hungrier. But if you complain about this, woe is you. You will be considered close-minded for thinking that Christians should believe that the Bible is true. You may believe the "main message" if you must as long as it is not based on any specific texts. For that is much too simple. You need to learn to grapple with complexity. You're

unwilling to be challenged.

The truth is, of course, that "conservative" Bible-believing Christians are quite willing to be challenged by God's Word, but not by stupid assertions that presuppose God is incapable of expressing Himself in writing. If God exists, then any attempt to know the world without taking Him into account is an act of futility. Learning is impossible apart from a faith, and learning the truth is impossible apart from the true Faith. If anyone wants to *really* grapple with the difficult problems involved in God's revelation and Human experience (as opposed to invoking them to justify perversion), I recommend John Frame's *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1987). I realize no one has time to read in college, but it might be a wise investment.

Sincerely,

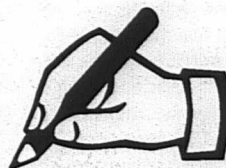
Mark Horne ('89)

Dear Editor:

I'd like to respond to my friend Mark Horne's opinions: *In the name of Christ*, I implore Mark and all of us to listen and love. Drawing lines between yourself and others (especially Christians) will perpetuate division and misunderstanding. I maintain my position (which may be misguided, since I'm finite and fallible) that the kind of Christianity so painfully espoused in Mark's letter has little to do with the God of Jesus Christ, whose main message, as I see it, has to do with unconditional love and acceptance.

Sincerely,

John Morris



OPINION

To everyone at Houghton:

Before I leave this campus to finish my social work major at Buffalo State, I have some thoughts I need to express to all of you. First, I would like to thank all of you who helped make my two years here, and especially my last two months here, memorable and even enjoyable. My special thanks go out to each person who kept me from being bitter and made me smile during the past few frustrating weeks. But, most importantly, I have a challenge for each individual involved in Houghton College.

The first thing I did when I visited Houghton was buy a sweat-shirt from the campus store. Houghton's emblem stated that we were "Founded on the Rock—Christ Jesus." During my two years here, I have begun to doubt the sincerity of that statement. Now, I'm not discussing breaking the Pledge or skipping chapel, because I'm as guilty of that as are many students. What I am discussing is forgiveness, honesty, and love.

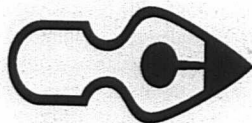
Those of you who know me know that I am a liberal—to put it mildly. I, admittedly, am a feminist, a socialist, and a whole hoard of other "non-Christian" things. But whether you agree with my views or not, I've listened to you. I haven't condemned those who are fundamentalist, although I'm not. Why then do people condemn my choice of theological positions? If we loved one another as Christ commands, we wouldn't care what denominational convictions separated us. And, if we forgave as Christ forgives, we wouldn't try to define "sinners," as some of us have been doing in recent Star letters in the past weeks. Like it or not, morality cannot be defined in six rules or less. It is the attitude of the heart that makes or breaks the person; only Christ sees what is in our hearts. If this is true, what right have we to judge the acts of others? We don't, so let's stop doing it.

As for honesty, let me remind those in authority that dishonesty

includes deliberate deceit. Deceit for me includes being misinformed about the status of my major and being placated instead of really listened to. Please learn to be honest with students—often, we're more mature than you think. And let's all remember that unfounded facts are not the whole truth—I've never heard as many stories about the status of the social work major flying unfounded around this campus.

Finally, let me remind myself, as I remind all of you, that we need to love. Love can be difficult, even painful when we have been wronged. In spite of all the rejection I have felt on this campus—rejection of myself, of various ethnic groups, of homosexuals, of AIDS victims, of the disenfranchised—I still love Houghton. Even through the rejection of my major, I still love Houghton. I criticize not from hatred or bitterness, but from love. Houghton has many strong points and many resources to make it grow; complacency, however, renders these points worthless. Before it's too late, learn how to forgive, how to be honest, and how to love. Establish yourself on the Rock of Christ, Houghton, not the rock of academics, legalism, or finances. Ten years from now, I hope this school is a flourishing Christian institution (hopefully with a social work major!), but, right now, Houghton is far from that. I'm leaving Houghton to pursue my obligations to social work, myself, and my Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer God. Hopefully, in the future, others can stay at Houghton to do the same. Good-bye, and love and peace to all of you.

Sarah Kye

**To the Houghton Community:**

I have just spent the past hour rereading the articles that Mark Shiner has written for his column "Rant" and the controversies that have appeared following his comments in "Gay Men Swim" (February 23). I do not wish to muddy the water further by adding my own opinion on the subject, but rather to look at the way that most of us respond to Mark and his column in general.

I feel that all of the responses I have observed are missing one fundamental point in Mark's arguments. I believe that Mark is not commenting upon whether homosexuality or atheism is immoral. My impression is that he wishes to remind us that we are called to love all people, whether they are saved or not. Mark is calling us to remember the fact that we are not to condemn others.

The lesson I feel we need to learn and practice is that we are all fallen (sinners) and it is only by the grace of God that we have come to the point of belief. Before that we were as trapped in our own sins, which may not seem as bad as homosexuality, and because of that we were condemned to hell (so goes mainline evangelical theology—remember the four spiritual laws).

The thought that I wish to leave with you is that we are called to love unconditionally. "For God so loved the world [not only those who are good enough] that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16 RSV). Jesus had as his friends the outcasts and people who were considered sinners. He ate with the tax-collectors. By being a Christian we are attempting to be like Christ, living like he did, and loving the unloved!

David N. Walker III

Dear Dave:

I was very excited to read about the environmental issues which were recently brought up in the *Star* (and on Current Issues Day). It helped me to realize that each of us at Houghton *can* do our part in helping to save the environment, and that it often doesn't require a tremendous amount of effort.

For example, I was reading a magazine which discussed the huge amounts of paper (and, therefore, trees) which are wasted on sending junk mail to people who do not even read it (41% of our mail is never even opened). The interesting thing is that by writing one letter, we can stop our names from being sold to mailing companies and thereby reduce our junk mail significantly. If only 100,000 people put a stop to their junk mail, we would be able to save 150,000 trees a year!

So, since Earth Day was just last Sunday, and the Houghton community is trying to decrease the amount of harm that it does to the environment, I was wondering if you could print the following address. My hope is that those who are environmentally concerned will write a letter to stop unwanted junk mail from being sent to them, and in this way, take one small step towards protecting our trees. Every little bit helps when it comes to saving our environment.

Thanks for your concern and cooperation! (And by the way, Happy Earth Day!!!)

DMA Mail Preference Service
11 West 42nd Street
Box 3861
New York, NY 10163

Rebecca L. Schenk
Buffalo Campus

Rant

Guested this week by
Judy Cobb

I ate lunch with a trustee last Friday. It was an interesting experience—you should try it sometime. The following is a general idea of what we talked about.

The first question he asked me was, "What don't you like about Houghton?" No comment from the five seniors at the table. Then, "What do you like about Houghton?" Again, no comment.

Then he turned to me and asked about my future plans. I told him that I'll be working with a church in Buffalo. He asked how much they were paying me. When I responded, "Nothing," and told him that I was going to find a job doing some menial task, he asked why I had bothered to come to college.

He later responded to information about a woman's future job with the government by saying that she (and all of us) should work in industry so that we could pay taxes to support the government.

When I mentioned the lack of woman faculty members, he responded, "My wife has never had to work . . . she's raised our children . . . I've provided well for her." What about the lack of minority faculty members? He explained that it is very hard to bring minorities to Houghton because they like to stick with their own kind. (That old herding instinct, you know. Would he like to be the only white man in a ghetto?)

He then turned the conversation to business. He told us of his growing business and his success. He owns two airplanes and a helicopter—he flew to this meeting privately—wouldn't we all like to have our own plane?

The conversation slowly died, its death the result of people having nothing in common.

Are all the trustees like this? Are they conservative business people with little compassion for women, minorities, the poor, and Houghton College students, and with no interest in radical Christianity? I certainly hope not. . .



*A Few of My More Positive
Thoughts About Houghton
College at the Moment . . .*

- ... people smile
- ... Big Al conversations
- ... Clean restrooms
- ... walking the creek
- ... getaways to the truck stop
- ... Letchworth in full color
- ... professors who have classes outside
- ... Big Al's warm chocolate chip cookies
- ... celebration
- ... God loves us

by Jenna Gieser

service / sār - vās / n. employment as a servant.

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Lamenting Loaded Labels

by L. David Wheeler



Page 5A of last Tuesday's *USA Today* contained a full-page advertisement sponsored by Planned Parenthood. The ad was a denunciation of AT&T, which apparently stopped supporting the family planning organization after "twenty-five years of philanthropic support." The ad's copy berates AT&T for this "shameful episode" of giving in to "anti-choice extremists." The headline, which takes up nearly half the page, reads: "CAVING IN TO EXTREMISTS, AT&T HANGS UP ON PLANNED PARENTHOOD."

"Extremist" is often a loaded word, similar to "liberal" and "conservative" in that it has lost virtually all meaning in recent years—thrown out into a sea of rhetoric to describe whomever one disagrees with. A true extremist position on abortion, in my reasoning, is exhibited by the misguided types who commit the hateful act of bombing clinics. According to the *USA Today* ad, however, I am an extremist simply by not supporting Planned Parenthood, or simply by opposing abortion. I have become a fanatic without really doing much of anything.

Whether or not I actually am an extremist, however, is irrelevant; what's important for the propagandists is that people believe me to be an extremist—and that's easily done: just repeat it enough and people will readily believe it. Why is it so important that Planned Parenthood's opponents be similarly labeled? Because when a label is put upon an individual (or group), it is far easier to discount and ignore her (their) words. A candidate or lobbyist addressing the women's rights issue sensitively and intelligently is labeled by her opponents as a "radical feminist"—and thereby delegated to the back corner of the American political spectrum, no longer a threat. She has been successfully stigmatized by wearing a media label.

I believe that most of us loathe wearing such labels. Most of us, I assume, wish to be treated as individuals with opinions and agendas peculiar to ourselves. Labels degrade us by stripping us of our faces and inserting a blotter-pad brand across the remaining void. We're no longer people; we're "environmental extremists," "liberals," "reactionaries," "Reaganites," "simplistic reasoners," or whatever. I don't know of anybody that likes to be known chiefly by his label—someone may joyfully wear the name "Republican" or "Democrat," but he probably wouldn't be happy if that was all he was perceived as. We need to be known for *who* we are rather than *what* we are.

If we desire freedom from external labels, however, we should obviously follow Christ's directive in Matthew 7:12 and refrain from labeling others. We should refuse to make ignorant assumptions about people based on our limited input. I am weary of hearing people call Mark Shiner a radical or a cynic or whatever—I believe that it's far more productive to read what he (or anybody) writes and listen to what he (or anybody) says and judge the opinions. I'm weary of denominational battles, political mudslinging, and racist speech. I was also vaguely annoyed (though I knew it was inevitable) when someone noted the "TODOS UN PUEBLO" pin I was wearing on Earth Day (and thereabouts) and implied that I was advocating a one-world, streamlined, Antichrist-type governmental system (fortunately, the insinuation was made by a friend, and we were able to discuss it).

Some have suggested that the *Star's* editorials be simpler and clearer. So here's my point: Labels bug me. They probably bug you too. Let's stop using them. ★