

Will  
Port



News 1

Feature: *Gulf Port 3*

Arts 5

Opinion 6

Comics 8

## Protests Inspire Administrative Action

In an interview last Wednesday, Academic Dean Ron Oakerson confirmed that the massive response of the Houghton community to the dismissal of Dr. Bradley Beach moved him to ask for an independent review of the decision.

"I fully realize that I am far from infallible," said Oakerson, who is responsible for all of the faculty employment decisions on campus. "Given all of the negative reactions, I thought it would be appropriate if the decision [was] reviewed." Since the decision to eliminate Dr. Beach's position was made by Oakerson and President Chamberlain, the Board of Trustees will make the final judgment.

On March 30, trustees Harriett Olson, David Babb, and Brent Russett, all of the Board's Academic Affairs Committee, will visit campus to make inquiries. They will have access to all of the information used by Drs. Oakerson and Chamberlain in making the original retrenchment, and it is expected that they will

also meet with the Faculty Affairs Committee, the chair of the Religion and Philosophy Department, the Program Coordinator of Philosophy, and Dr. Beach himself. The committee will make a recommendation to the Board's Executive Committee, which will make the ultimate decision soon after the campus visit.

The appropriate avenue for student contribution to the discussion has not yet been determined, but Oakerson assured that student input would be admitted. The Board is already aware of the community's response to Beach's dismissal; at their last meeting, faculty representative Dr. John Tyson told the Board, "many students are upset at the prospect of [Dr. Beach's] departure, and more than six hundred of them have signed a petition requesting his retention."

Student and faculty responses to the upcoming review are tentative and mixed.

Dr. Stephen Woolsey commented, "I guess on some level I'm hopeful that the subcommittee is meeting; I'm hopeful that all voices will be heard." Many are discouraged, however, by the slow response of our administration. Dr. Cameron Airhart noted, "March thirtieth strikes me as a little late for a decision that was taken in October. It just goes on forever." Some students' hopes have been diminished by the delay. One senior commented, "I'm glad they're taking us seriously... I don't really expect anything to happen, but it's nice to know they're listening." Perhaps Dr. Airhart best summed up the sentiment of a campus weary of controversy when he said, "I just want Brad back: I don't really care how it happens." ♦

-Elizabeth Overhauser  
Staff Writer

## Blue Hands Of Hope

The pandemic of HIV/AIDS is one we have all heard of, and most of us have seen its effects whether on TV, in the news or in our own friends, family and community. Outside of abstinence, there seems to be very little to prevent the spread of this plague-like disease. We all know that HIV/AIDS has no known cure, but many people are not aware that there is a way for people suffering from this viral infection to ease their pain. Anti-retroviral medications (ARVs) are being made available to people across the globe and have had astonishing success. Simply put, they slow down the deterioration of the body's immune system and allow "normal" activities to continue. Muscle decay and susceptibility to disease are drastically reduced. This allows people to live longer and fuller lives, giving hope for a future that isn't so dark.

This may seem like a "quick fix," but prices for ARVs are high enough to make them unavailable to many. It only costs a dollar a day

to treat one person; however, if you consider that many people make less than a dollar a day, this is a high price to pay and utterly impossible in many cases. Most ARVs are produced in India, but they are exported to countries like the U.S. and several in Europe, where people can afford them. Drugs imported from India to the west are far cheaper than ARVs made in the U.S. In fact, in a list produced by WHO of over a hundred manufacturers, only six were found in the U.S. These medications are widely used in the U.S., which means that most of us never see an American who looks like a "typical" AIDS patient.

It is important to keep in mind that ARVs are not a good solution to HIV/AIDS, and they certainly won't stop the spread of it. They are not a cure, but they can lessen the misery of people with HIV and should be available to all people. While walking through the basement of the Campus Center, you may have seen a wall mottled with blue hands on which names

ranged from Bob Dylan to Bill Clinton (Jesus made it on the wall four times). This wasn't a Sunday school project, nor did it spring from an art major's rejected portfolio. Each hand represents a day of treatment for one person living with HIV/AIDS. In donations to World Hope International, Houghton students raised \$675 dollars over the period of a week, providing two people with treatment for a year. Though this may seem like a small number, fundraisers such as the blue hands idea developed by Kate Hoogerhyde (Houghton Junior) function amongst various groups around the world to help provide HIV/AIDS patients with better lives. Thanks to the efforts of the Houghton College student body, this year two people will have this opportunity. ♦

-Aaron Adkins  
Staff Writer



# The Paradox Of The Holy Land

Living in the United States, one can easily forget how old the world is. When I began my journey to the Holy Land, I fully expected to be overwhelmed by the age and history of Israel; and, I was, but I also discovered something very different.

Our group of forty Houghton students, family members, friends, and staff members flew into Tel Aviv after almost twenty-four hours of traveling and very little sleep. This first view of Israel seemed to have nothing to do with the thousands of years of faith history bound up in the land and people. Israel's capital is a modern city, built in the early twentieth century, not a hotbed of religious conflict.

As we traveled along the Via Maris, "the way of the sea," up the western coast of Israel, the millennia of cultures, peoples, religions, and wars became more and more evident. That first day we saw the ancient palace of Roman governors at Caesarea, and Megiddo, the purported site of Armageddon. From the peak of Mt. Carmel, the site of Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal, we could look out over the vast plains of Western Israel, and we ended the day in Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee.

We spent our second day visiting the cities of Cana and Nazareth. This was our first encounter with the historical Israel bound in a very modern culture. Cana and Nazareth are large, prosperous cities where pilgrims can find churches commemorating the miracles of Jesus tucked away on side streets. The modern city very nearly overwhelmed any sense of the history of the city.

I had not expected to be much impacted by the modern state and culture of Israel. All I could think about was visiting the same places where Jesus had lived and done his ministry. Yet, driving through the Israeli countryside, seeing the breathtaking beauty of the green and

rocky hills and walking through the streets of these ancient and modern cities, suddenly Israel became not simply the home of Jesus but the home of millions of Jews, Muslims, Christians, and many more faiths. Seeing signs in both Hebrew and Arabic, passing through the Arab part of Nazareth into the Jewish section and visiting the Christian holy sites, bring new life to the stories of conflicts and ancestral divisions among these people.

In the United States, diversity is celebrated. In Israel, diversity is a complicated issue. The population of Jerusalem is more evenly distributed among different religions than the other regions of Israel, yet there is no place in Israel more fraught with conflict.

Walking the streets of Old Jerusalem was one of the most powerful experiences of my life. The atmosphere is heavy with faith, hope, anticipation, history and conflict. Walking next to and on the Temple Mount, the central area of Old Jerusalem, I could almost feel palpable grief and anger of the Jewish people and the depths of their desire for the restoration of their temple.

In the midst of this tense anticipation and expectation, we saw the places Jesus lived and died. We walked in churches over 1500 years old, the smoke of centuries of candles and incense burned by faithful pilgrims staining the ceilings. The steps leading down into the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem were so worn I was afraid to slip. The cracks and niches of the Western Wall overflow with the prayers and desires of the Jewish people. Along the Via Dolorosa, the traditional road Jesus walked on the way to Calvary, a road now bursting with shops and street vendors, faithful Catholic pilgrims still make their slow way, carrying a large cross and praying the Stations of the Cross.

St. Peter in Gallicantu, the ancient site of the house of Caiaphas and the location of Peter's

three denials of Christ, was one of the most peaceful spots that we visited in Jerusalem. The church is new, but the lowest level is made up of the dungeons from the high priest's house, the very dungeons that held the night of his arrest. The church is surrounded by a garden, a small oasis of peace and quiet amidst the frantic pace of the city. While at St. Peter in Gallicantu, I was struck by the way God can take the most violent conflict and make peace. This place had seen Jesus Christ imprisoned the night before his execution, betrayed by one of his closest friends and disciples. Hatred and conflict were in the very stones of that church and garden, yet it was one of the few places I actually felt peaceful. There is no hatred that Christ cannot turn to love, no conflict that he cannot turn to peace.

The beauty of Israel, as diverse as its people, ranges from fertile green hills and wide plains to desolate desert mountains, but there is a cohesiveness to the topography that does not exist among the people. The severe poverty that suddenly appears 100 yards after passing through the checkpoint into Palestine sheds new light on a conflict that is often presented as one sided by the American media.

Yet, Israel has always been central to God's plan of redemption. This is evident in the multitude of churches that have been erected on any site remotely connected to the story of Jesus. Christian, Jewish, and Muslim pilgrims flock to the Holy Land because it is a land where God's hand can be seen on every hillside and every street block. Israel is captivating because the faith of the people of Israel, however conflicting, and their hope for the redemption of their land, as well as the thousands of years of the history of God's work. ♦

-Laura Kristoffersen  
Staff Writer





# Gulf Port, Mississippi: Spring 2006

Six months after Hurricane Katrina put it on national news, the area around Gulfport, Mississippi is still overwhelmingly a mess. The inland town that survived the surges of water and 180 mph winds is still a patchwork of the blue tarp roofs that FEMA and Samaritan's Purse put up as a temporary relief measure, and the coast for miles in either direction is still obscured by tangles of abandoned wreckage. Branches of the scraggly trees which survived the high winds along the coastal road are weirdly festooned with loops of what looked like shredded bedclothes. Piles of garbage, some with poignantly personal fragments like smashed hand mirrors and tattered children's books, still overflow into the streets.

A few of the chain stores are beginning to straggle back. (The Waffle House has reopened in a new location and has become a stop off place for relief crews.) but the majority of the lots along the main strip are empty, some with pieces of their signs still hanging in strips on eerie skeleton frames. Those that have been replaced are mostly advertisements for building supplies and roofing companies, although there was also an enormous poster of Billy Graham, and, curiously enough, engagement rings.

Agencies like World Hope have had groups of volunteers come through continually since the storm. Sometimes as many as a hundred volunteers a week bunk on air mattresses in curtained-off corners of the Little Rock Baptist Church in Gulfport. The mission brings together people from all kinds of backgrounds. Our student group from Houghton spent the week of February break working with mid-western construction workers and self-described hillbilly flatlanders from Maryland. Every day teams go out to install new shingles and gut moldy ceilings and walls. The cases are less urgent than the first weeks after the storm when volunteers were cutting fallen trees away from doorways using chainsaws so that FEMA could get close enough to inspect the damage, but the work is steady and shows no sign of slowing.

Lisa Moran, whose family of five has been sharing a tiny FEMA trailer with an unreliable toilet since the week after the storm, tells me that she is still finding pieces of her grandmother's silverware in lots more than a block away. "The cleanup has been slow," says Moran, surveying

the blocks near the ocean where most of the lots are still empty, but she shrugs her shoulders when I ask her why. "It will probably never get back to the way it was before. I'm guessing it'll take two or three years before it even feels normal again."

The people here will not forget quickly. Some lost everything. Some, like the hitchhiker we met outside of town, have had to leave their families with relatives until the prohibitively high cost of rent caused by the demand for housing stabilizes. This stranger came back to the area to earn the money to rebuild his own house by rebuilding other places. Living in the aftermath of this kind of disaster creates all kinds of ironies. For some, however, the extent of their loss has created a kind of resilience. They seem to have the sense that living in a hurricane zone is just one of the risks of being human in a world where so many elements are out of our control.

"I thank God every day I wake up," Nate Hawthorne told a group of World Hope volunteers in a discussion of the inevitable next hurricane season at a barbeque hosted by his brother to celebrate his new World Hope roof. "I've seen people die right in front of me, standing there one minute, dead the next, and when He comes to get you, you can't say 'no, I ain't going.'" "As long as my daughters are fine, nothing else matters," agreed his cousin who called himself Phat.

Six months after hurricane Katrina, the town of Gulfport, Mississippi turned out to celebrate Mardi Gras. Beach chairs were set up on the patches of boardwalk that survived the high winds. Floats from New Orleans drove slowly down the coastal road, filled with cheering people. There is something strangely daring about throwing Mardi Gras beads onto roadsides that are still cluttered with rubble. There will always be those who, for the sake of family or sense of place or the sheer thrill of living on the edge, will decide that the beauty is worth the risk. For them, the shiny plastic mixed with the trash is a symbol of the gamble that is an inherent part of existence, whether or not we come face to face with it in the aftermath of a storm. ♦

-Kelsey Harro  
Managing Editor



## THE STAR STAFF

EDITOR IN CHIEF  
Christine DiFonzo

MANAGING EDITOR  
Kelsey Harro

DESIGN EDITOR  
Allison Brown

BUSINESS MANAGER  
Victoria Kempton

ADVISOR  
Prof. Dave Perkins

COPY EDITOR  
Rosaline Kelada-Sedra

REWRITE  
Laura Kristofferson

STAFF WRITERS  
Emily Furman  
Aaron Adkins  
Lindsay Yandon

COLUMNISTS  
Stephen Sorensen  
Adam Sukhia

COMIC ARTISTS  
Andrew Davis  
Joseph Freeman  
Greg Kamprath

HEADING DESIGN  
Victoria Kempton



Photos courtesy of Ryan Musser, Kelsey Harro, and Hannah Bae.

## today's music

*A Conversation With David Stith*

*David Stith lives in Houghton and works for the college as a graphic designer, but more importantly he is an artist, both visual and musical. His beautiful songs are wonderfully crafted and texturally rich. I recently had the opportunity to visit David at his home to find out a little more about his vocation.*

Ascending the brick stairs and ducking beneath some branches, I make my way to David's front door. He welcomes me in, offers me a drink, and soon we sit in the open space of a living room. The house smells like burnt banana bread, which I spot on a saucer on the end table. Next to the doorway, a keyboard leans against a grand piano. He takes out a guitar to strum while I get my notepad. It is natural, habitual, like someone biting his fingernails.

"So when did you start recording your music?", I ask. Pausing, he twirls a tiny cup that once held coffee trying to gather every drop. "I moved to a tiny basement apartment in Brooklyn to live with my friend Timmy. Upstairs, Alex Talavera, a musician and art teacher, lived with his wife, and both Timmy and Alex often recorded in the basement where I lived. The basement doubled as a recording studio and mini art gallery (M.O.D.F.A. - "Museum of Disembodied Folk Art) where Alex kept his work."

The flower-patterned couch David sits on seems appropriate for the house, and somehow the oversized stuffed Scooby resting on top of it does as well. Crossing his legs, still wearing his brown dress clothes from work, he continues.

"After job hunting for a month and a half, I finally got a job at Starbucks. I had about two weeks before I started. For those two weeks in spring, the sun was shining, the weather was gorgeous, and I was in the basement recording. While Timmy took local English classes and Alex taught art classes, I worked towards having a new song to play for them every evening when they came home - so, a song a day. Those songs turned into *Ichabod & Apple*, my first album"

While I adjust the green swivel rocker I sit on, he again begins plucking at the guitar, a bandaid between the strings to change the sound. "It seems that no matter how rich the environment, not just anyone can sit around and record an album. What led you to music and gave you the foundation to create it?"

"As far as bands and music go, I guess I've always listened to alternative things like Beck, Radiohead, Bjork. But I really love to listen to my friends, Timothy Dick, Alex's band, Bogs Visionary Orchestra, Shara Worden, Sufjan

Stevens. But as for my foundation, I grew up with music. As my dad (Prof. Gary Stith) spent a lot of time after school in band and orchestra rehearsals, I was there too, playing with legos or drawing in the back of the auditorium. The richness and warmth of orchestral music means a lot to me. I used to play trumpet and was always a bit of a music snob. My dad would play a Mahler, and I was the one pinching my nose at it."

I glance around the house to see china cabinets, a long dining room table and a book shelf of board games, illuminated, glowing in a dark room. "But I guess I really recognized I could create music when I played with Wendla, a German film maker who lived upstairs for a while. She was always singing and was getting ready to move back to Hamburg, Germany and wanted a record of the songs she'd written while in NYC. So I played guitar for her and did some layering"

He gets up to play these old songs tucked away somewhere on his computer next to the grand piano. Sitting at the bench he smiles, "I love listening to these. But the moment I really knew what I was doing was worthwhile was when I gave my first CD to Shara, whose opinion I regard highly. After not hearing back from her for a while I felt discouraged until one day she called and left sort of a detached message filled with awkward pauses, sniffles, and her saying my name with a soft amazement. She was really moved I guess. It's a message I saved for a long time. The type of message that makes you understand what it is all about. The ability to move people. The ability to create emotion, honest feeling. I was afraid that I had made something really ugly - I thought for sure that she would be embarrassed by what she heard, but it connected somehow."

The bay window behind me is actually made up of a series of small windows. The shades all pulled at different levels. Outside it is growing dark, the sun slipping behind the bare trees.

"The role of the artist is not to manipulate the audience to feel something but to make them truly feel it. Some praise choruses, for example, are crafted to evoke emotion-- to flex the feel

muscle. For instance, if a worship leader says 'really think about it,' they don't want you to think about it; they want you to feel something that may not be there. They want you to create emotion. I have always been offended by that. For so many Christians, God disappears when the feel muscle gets worn out, and it's no wonder! The artist, as well as the worship leader, the preacher ought not to find their purposefulness in the emotions they generate. It's just not an honest gauge. It's like packing a used car full of saw dust. It'll purr like a kitten for a while, but you're really manipulating the situation-- that's no good for anybody."

When you listen to his work or even have a conversation with him, there is a sense of honesty. David has the ability to put himself fully into his music and his life in general; that authenticity is easy to recognize. I thank him, gather my things and step out onto the porch in the night. "That Scooby better make it into the article," he says as I leave.

"Don't worry; it will." ♦

David has music online at <http://campus.houghton.edu/webs/employees/dstith/>.

-Adam Sukhia  
Columnist

*Houghton Abroad***Houghton in London:  
First Year Honors Program**

Photograph by Clara Giebel, on Houghton's First Year Honors Program in London, Spring 2006. This shot pictures a late afternoon in Trafalgar's Square.



## Faculty Book Review

### Jeremias Gotthelf, *Die schwarze Spinne*

Jeremias Gotthelf is not widely known among English readers, but, together with Gottfried Keller and Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, he was one of the three giants of 19th century Swiss-German literature. Gotthelf's fiction describes the rustic world of the Swiss peasantry, with its highly conservative, rural village life that was challenged by the waves of liberalism and capitalism sweeping Europe in the mid-1800s. While he pokes gentle fun at his subjects, the edge of Gotthelf's satire is always blunted by a deep and obvious affection for them and their way of life. A Protestant pastor, Gotthelf often dealt with moral issues and the struggle of good against evil.

A prime example is Gotthelf's novella *Die schwarze Spinne* (*The Black Spider*), his best-known work of short fiction. In it, a feudal lord gives his subjects one month to complete the impossible task of moving 100 trees, roots and all, from a nearby mountain and transplanting them to shade his newly-built castle. Already exhausted from building the castle, the villagers despair of carrying out the command. One evening, as they are lamenting their fate, a stranger approaches and offers to help them transplant the trees. His price: an

unbaptized child. The villagers are horrified by what they rightly recognize as a deal with the devil. But their situation is hopeless, and finally a particularly audacious woman from among them, Christine, persuades the rest to accept the proffered bargain, and she seals the deal by permitting the devil himself to plant a kiss upon her cheek.

The trees--much to the lord's amazement--are successfully transplanted, and when the devil does not appear to demand payment, the villagers begin to breathe easier. They even begin to hope that they can outwit the devil. When the time comes for a new baby to be born, they summon the local priest, who hastens over, carrying holy water and the sacrament, and baptizes the baby immediately upon birth. But a strange mark appears on Christine's cheek, upon the very spot of the devil's kiss, and it gradually grows larger, darker, and more painful as it takes on a distinct shape: the bulging image of a spider. Another new baby is born; the villagers again pull off the same scheme; and that evening Christine, in an agony of pain, collapses to the ground, as the boil on her cheek bursts. Thousands of black spiders crawl out and spread throughout the village, where their poisonous bites kill all the

region's cattle.

Again, a woman becomes pregnant. Again, the boil appears and grows on Christine's cheek, more painful now than ever. Desperate, she and the other villagers plot to delay the priest's arrival at the birth and deliver up the newborn child. At the last possible moment, as Christine is about to hand over the child to the devil, the brave priest intervenes, saving the child through baptism. His dying act, as he protects the child, is to drive off the devil with holy water. He splashes Christine as well, who shrivels up and herself turns into a giant, black spider. Over the next weeks, the spider terrorizes the villagers, killing them off one by one, appearing from nowhere, attacking even their funeral processions. The villagers wonder whether there is any way to end the plague....

I can't, of course, tell you how the story ends. Unfortunately, tracking down an affordable English translation is not very easy. So, if you want to know whether the good guys win, I recommend Prof. Hussey's German class.

-Dr. Peter Meilaender  
Professor of Political Science

## CELEBRATE SPRING: 7 Films For Rainy Days

Spring is here. The river is up and raging, perfect weather for a canoe trip down the gorgeous Genesee. The ground is soaked, perfect weather for "mudding" (a revered Allegheny County tradition) and for Woodstock-style football games. There are a countless number of spring rituals to carry on, and I was contemplating this the other night, as the rain came down hard outside and I threw Quentin Tarantino's *Jackie Brown* on after a long hike through the woods with my black lab. So what I would like to propose in my column this week is 7 films for those rainy days when you're looking for that perfect movie to match that mood you're in: restless, wet, and happy as all get out.

First off, I'll throw a quick list up (for you skimmers) and then I'll go into a little more detail:

- 1) *DREAMS* - Akira Kurosawa
- 2) *JACKIE BROWN* - Quentin Tarantino
- 3) *THE QUIET MAN* - John Ford
- 4) *WALACE & GROMIT: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* - Nick Park
- 5) *MY FAIR LADY* - George Cukor
- 6) *MANHATTAN MURDER MYSTERY* - Woody Allen
- 7) *A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT* - Robert Redford

Starting off with *Dreams*, a collection of

eight shorts by the master Japanese director, Akira Kurosawa. The pageantry and landscape in these shorts is stunning, and Kurosawa has a way of capturing that childlike amazement and mystery that the natural world holds for the young at heart. If you like Japanese films and are a fan of animation, I would recommend all the work of Hayao Miyazaki, my favorite animator. His films include *Spirited Away*, *Kiki's Delivery Service*, and *Castle in the Sky*.

When you think of Quentin Tarantino, you might think of the gratuitous violence of *Reservoir Dogs* or *Kill Bill*. *Jackie Brown* is one of Tarantino's fine films that has been overlooked by critics and audiences alike. Patient, heartfelt, and subtle, it reminds me of *Punch Drunk Love* and boasts a number of fantastic performances by Samuel L. Jackson, Robert DeNiro, and the blakploitation queen of the 70's and 80's, Pam Grier.

John Ford, like Tarantino, is not the kind of filmmaker that you associate with a romance like *The Quiet Man*. (He usually directs Westerns). Set in the Irish countryside, it is the tender love story of a washed-up American boxer, played by John Wayne, and a spirited Irish country girl, played by Maureen O'Hara. The chemistry between these two actors is more undeniable than Brad n' Angelina.

For all fans of the earlier Wallace & Gromit shorts, like *The Wrong Trousers*, this new feature-length film from Nick Park is a real treat. Packed with lots of dry, British humor and lots of visual surprises from this seasoned animator, this new movie is a perfect spring flick.

My all-time favorite musical is *My Fair Lady*. Audrey Hepburn's outfits and Rex Harrison's "ultimate bachelor" character are unforgettable.

Of course, I had to throw in a Woody Allen film. I included this particular choice because it is light-hearted, fun, and has a great mystery plot that keeps you going right to the end. There is also a great nod in the film to the great noir films, like *Double Indemnity* and *Lady from Shanghai*.

The last film on my list, *A River Runs Through It*, is a moving picture about family and growing up in a wild, untamed world. It also utilizes the beautiful landscape of Montana and is beautifully acted by Craig Shaeffer and Brad Pitt and directed by Robert Redford.

I hope that these films will bring you joy this spring. ♦

-Beave Sorensen  
Columnist



# Houghton Opera Gets Urban Makeover

Every spring, the Houghton College music department performs its annual Opera Theatre. However, this year the workshop production will undergo some radical changes, due in part to its new guest director, Kay Castaldo. Ms. Castaldo is an internationally recognized stage director, having worked with such renowned opera companies as the Opera Company of Philadelphia, the Pittsburgh Opera, and the Indianapolis Opera. In addition, she has directed four commissioned works for Greek National Television. However, she doesn't take her transition to the Houghton stage lightly. "I have to feel a calling before I'll go work anywhere", she says. "Whether it's the Metropolitan Opera or Houghton College, I need to know that God wants me to be there."

Castaldo is the opera's first guest director in recent memory that is also a professing Christian, a difference that has been easily noticed by this year's opera cast. Sophomore Andrew Silbert says, "Working with Ms. Castaldo is a lot of fun. She has a very clear idea of what she wants and is very good at explaining how she wants it to be done." Other students have said that they respond better to her gentle compliments than the criticism of their former directors and welcome her insight as a Christian director.

In this year's performance, Castaldo will direct scenes from three operas: Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, and Wagner's *Die Walküre*. These three choices are not accidental; Castaldo chose each for a specific reason: "I want the students to find the directness and content of opera and apply it to their own lives," she says.

Mozart's *The Magic Flute* is a story of a young prince, Tamino, who must pass through three tasks and overcome the advances of the sinister Queen of the Night in order to claim the love of the beautiful princess, Pamina. Castaldo equates the hero's journey of Tamino with the journey that all young men and women go through. "This story is the story of a young person, the story of a soul," says Castaldo. "It's about the journey that a young man or woman goes through to find out about themselves." It is her hope that in acting out the trials of the

young hero, the students will learn something about their own lives and see the similarities between the young people in Mozart's story and the young people of the 21st century. To help students make these connections, Castaldo has staged the opera with a modern, urban twist. Instead of period costumes, chorus members will be dressed as homeless people, the kind-hearted King Sarastro will be portrayed as the owner and operator of a soup kitchen, and the evil Queen of the Night (along with her three Ladies in waiting) will be peddlers of all the unsavory temptations young people would find on the streets (including sex, drugs, and alcohol).

If *The Magic Flute* is a story of triumph over life's adversity, Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* is a tale of what can happen if you make the wrong choices. Inspired by a series of lithographs by William Hogarth, *The Rake's Progress* tells the story of Tom Rakewell, a lazy young man who wants all of the pleasures of life without the work those pleasures entail. Unknowingly, Tom makes a deal with the devil for all the things that he desires, but it doesn't make him truly happy. He then tries to prove he is above such

ideals as happiness and love by abandoning his fiancée Anne and marrying the circus' bearded lady. The devil eventually calls for payment from Tom and strikes him instantly insane to the point where he can't recognize himself or his former love and dies in an asylum. Similar to the difficult messages that Jesus' parables taught, Castaldo believes that the lessons learned from such a story will be well worth the students' extra effort. "Above all," she says, "I want these students to understand how to proceed through the trials of young adulthood with character."

Castaldo has a similar goal for the audience. In a time where opera is fading away from younger audiences, she wishes to introduce the listeners to a type of music that has been popular for centuries. "Opera was the pop music of its time," she says. "It's not just for rich people in New York; it's for everyone. It still has a popular appeal. I want the audience to understand that these [operas] are for us here and now, as well." The Houghton College Opera Theatre productions will be March 30th, 31st, and April 1st at 8:00 PM. ♦

-Matt Guerassio  
Guest Writer

## In Review: Philip Jenkins

Anyone unfamiliar with current Christian demographics on a global scale must have been in for quite the shocker last Tuesday night, the first meeting in the 2006 Houghton College Chamberlain Lecture Series. Philip Jenkins, author of the highly lauded book *The Next Christendom* (along with some 19 other books published in 23 years), graced Houghton with his presence. He talked about how the empire is striking back, but...it isn't Star Wars. Instead, do you remember all those "heathen nations" that were colonized back in Western Civ class? Well, Jenkins was here to say that the heathen are heathen no more, and instead, the Southern part of the world (no, not the Southern States of America) is where Christianity is fastest growing and almost shockingly vivacious. "We have been living in very dramatic times," he stated soberly. "Christianity can die in a community. It does not have a [geographic] core...but as it dies in one area, it grows in another...Even as it dies in one area, it grows next door." Apparently, next door is Africa, as Jenkins went on to show how Christianity has exploded across the global South and is now moving from there back into the apparently dying Christian North. While he showed particular favour to quoting numbers, even those less mathematically inclined were able to garner new and increased understanding. Anyone with attachments to Nigeria was quite pleased, too, as, "not to seem obsessive, but..." that country was mentioned quite a bit, including in relation to Venus...

While the Houghton bubble may make

it difficult at times to see how a Christianity emerging as far away as outside New York (let alone the Western world!) might have any relevance to those of us on campus, Jenkins showed that it does indeed affect Christians in wide varieties of disciplines and localities. "It is above all a religion of poverty," he stated, "especially in Africa. It is also a women's movement, or it is nothing." Not only that, but the dynamics of this Christianity are already beginning to affect politics through things such as immigration, which will be key to understanding future politics. When asked what he believes Christians in the North should be doing, Jenkins said that we need first to "be changing our language and self-conception," and also stated that the Global North has "two great weapons" with which we ought to help our fellow Christians in the South—money and political influence. He was also a great fan of things such as medicinal aid and those things which will partner with and empower Southern Christians in their own lands and not "cream off their leaders" by bringing them to the West. Those interested in more in depth information on this emerging Christianity and its effects on people such as ourselves here at Houghton would do well to read *The Next Christendom*. No one should miss out on this new scene in the play of Christianity, for as Jenkins said, "We live in very interesting times in the history of Christianity, [and] I am delighted to be alive to see it." ♦

-Heather Hill  
Guest Writer

• • • • •  
• THE STAR IS ALWAYS •  
• IN NEED OF WRITERS: •  
• ONE TIME •  
• CONTRIBUTIONS •  
• ARE ALWAYS WELCOME. •  
• PLEASE EMAIL THE •  
• EDITOR AT •  
• STAR@HOUGHTON.EDU •  
• • • • •



## In Review: The United States Navy Band

On Saturday, March 11, Houghton College was honored to host The US Navy Band as part of the Artist's Series. As the Navy's premier musical representative in Washington, D.C., the sixty-two members of the band are all excellent musicians, and together have earned the reputation of "The World's Finest". The top musicians of the Navy participate in many national events, such as the 55th Presidential Inaugural in 2005, the 2004 State Funeral for President Reagan, the 2001 "United in Memory" memorial service at the Pentagon, the 1999 Veterans of Foreign Wars 100th Anniversary celebration, the 1995 Korean War Veterans Memorial celebration, and the 1991 Desert Storm Victory Celebrations in Washington and New York. They have also appeared at the 2004 Norwegian Military Tattoo in Oslo and the Festival International de Musiques Militaires de Quebec in Quebec City. They have also had celebrity appearances, such as Ernest Borgnine, Tony Curtis, and Gregory Peck. In the program, they held the position that "The Navy Band occupies a position of national prominence as both a service tradition and a distinguished musical organization."

The band was led by Captain Ralph M. Gambone as the conductor, with Chief Musician

Karl Hovey as the narrator. The concert began with a ceremonious rendition of our national anthem, in which the audience participated. As the audience settled down, ready to be entertained, they were treated with the lively, fast-paced music of "Belford's Carnival March". Next came the well-known "Marriage of Figaro Overture". The "Tre Canzone Italiana" featured Master Chief Musician Roger L. Behrend on the euphonium, where the light-hearted music was accompanied by fast and fancy finger work. Next was my favorite piece, the "Malaguena-Extreme and Variations", featuring the Navy Band Trombone Section, portraying with piece with the Spanish influence very distinctly showing through. Chief Musician John L. Fisher made his Houghton debut in "Satchmo, Brother Ray and Bobby 'D'" starting off with his Louis Armstrong rendition of "Hello, Dolly". He then proceeded to thrill the audience with "Georgia on My Mind" and "Maggie's Back in Town". The first half of the program was finished with "Stars Wars Trilogy" which many of our Houghton students enjoyed.

After the intermission, the Band reopened with "Washington Post March", the infamous John Philip Sousa piece. Chief Musician John

L. Fisher again proved his performance skills by coming back during "Chairman and the Board". Among his songs in this section were "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" and "Jump and Jive" which also featured a saxophone solo. In "New York, New York", a special audience member got a very personal performance. Says sophomore Laura Ware, "He was an excellent performer, and the way he interacted with me and others was a great display of how comfortable he was with his audience." As the performance came to an end, "Songs of Sailor and Sea" reminded us of the oceans, with the instrumentals forming captivating illusions of the sea. "Armed Forces on Parade" gave the audience a chance to show their national and family pride as they stood to represent family in the military during each of the five branches' individual themes. The program was finished with "God Bless the USA", sung again by Chief Musician John L. Fisher. As the audience stood, they were proud of the high quality of music that the US Navy Band provided, and honored to be reminded of the great country in which we live. ♦

-Emily Furman  
Staff Writer



## What's The Big Deal?

Before we left for February break, the *Star* ran a front page article by Adam Carman regarding the legitimacy of our very own Citgo in Houghton. Shortly thereafter, we all noticed the orange fact sheets of the opposition, titled "Citgo Rocks" floating around the Campus Center. By now, even those who did not read Carmen's original article are aware of the outcry of public opinion, opposition, and alternatives. Carmen's original article complained against the Citgo station and introduced a petition for change to Mobil. The reasons were varied. Primarily, Carmen claimed that we have gas alternatives that do not support the communist government of Venezuela under the rule of Hugo Chavez.

Carman stated, "Those organizing the petition are committed to the idea that American citizens should not have to indirectly support a hostile foreign power, regardless of partisanship."

Price came into heavy play in Carman's article as well. He claimed that prices are unwarrantedly high at the Citgo, compared to other alternative gas stations. "Every Tuesday gas sales at the Houghton Citgo represents the typical charge per gallon at Mobil stations in surrounding areas," declared Carman.

Carman's article was met with a swift response from those that felt his accusations and plan were harsh and ill-researched. Students

who quickly and officially jumped on board were Inti Martinez, Chelsea Kinsman, and Jeremy Clifton. The fact sheet was sponsored by the Houghton Coalition for Truth, Evangelicals for Social Action, Jeff Spear, and Ted Murphy. It was compiled by Martinez as a list of reasons Citgo is not the problem and Mobil a poor alternative. The last bullet point urged the campus to become aware of the issue and act. The sheet stated that hiring Mobil could create problems similar to those Carman hoped to crush with Citgo's removal. Chelsea Kinsman reflected that, "Mobil is pretty much the most despicable oil company there is--both for its price-gouging and its nonchalance about the environment."

The most popular name being tossed around campus lately is Kwik Fill. Students on both sides of the argument feel that this option is best because it is U.S. owned, gives the best prices, is reportedly reliable, and uses moral and politically correct methods. Martinez went as far as to say that the opposition would not have been quite as strong if the petition had originally suggested a Kwik Fill rather than a Mobil.

Some consider the Chavez article to be less of an issue than it has been made. Jeff Spear was of the opinion that Venezuela should not be of utmost concern when we have not taken a look at the problems we, the U.S., face from other countries. "It is fascinating that we are

calling Venezuela anathema when other nations have a more direct, negative influence on the U.S. Colombia ships tons of cocaine into the States every year. Mexico appears to be a fertile trading ground for the export of narcotics, and the border between them and us is somewhat porous...Isn't that a more clear and present danger than little Venezuela and their big-mouthed dictator?"

Carmen's article has struck at the heart of the deeper issue of political action and student activism on campus. Some believe an encouraging example of political action has been shown on our campus.

Ted Murphy stated, "Students should be involved with political issues... This petition is certainly something Adam is free to circulate, just as we are free to ask people not to sign it." Over the past couple of weeks it seems as though a common ground has developed between the two sides. Carmen stated last week that, "Under advice from several people, including some not originally on my side, I am going to change the requested switch from Mobil to Kwik Fill. This, I think, will satisfy the desire of many, myself included, not to support either governments like Venezuela's or terror-based organizations in the Middle East."

Here, a voice has been heard, been challenged, and our campus has heard both sides. Appropriate action and compromise will hopefully be underway. ♦

-Lindsay Yandon  
Staff Writer

# Comics

## The Camp Wrath Songbook



## Stroke of Thursday

by Andrew Davis



## Guest Comic

by Alison Young

