



Apologist Joe Boot Issues Provocative Challenge to Campus

By Rebekah Miller

On Monday, Houghton College welcomed Rev. Joe Boot as this semester's CLEW speaker. As the Executive Director of Ravi Zacharias International Ministries in Canada, Boot has traveled to over 20 countries to defend the gospel in the midst of what he sees as a pluralistic and fragmented culture.

Rev. Boot spoke about what he considered to be the important aspects of the Christian faith as it relates to culture and apologetics. In the morning discourses, he expounded upon the gospel and its call to Christians to "claim and defend Christian faith in a modern world." In the evenings, Boot took on the task of answering cultural claims made against Christianity by

prominent figures who do not claim the Christian faith. In addition, he illustrated the practical application of apologetics in the individual lives of modern Christians.

In his introductory lecture, Rev. Joe Boot spoke to a nearly-full chapel about the New Testament mandate for all Christians. Referencing Matthew 4:12-23, Boot expounded upon the story of the calling of the disciples. Christ calls Peter, Andrew, James and John to not only follow him but to also become fishers of men. As a fisher of men, the Christian is called to be able to both preach the good news and to defend his/her faith to others in the face of criticism. This apologetic mandate, also referenced in 1 Peter 3:15, stands in the face of what Boot called our "post-Christian context."

Instead of compromising the Christian faith to fit into the current humanist mold, Christians are called to follow the cross of Christ—a symbol and fact that to this day remains polarizing and "intensely divisive."

Following the cross of Christ also includes confronting head on the challenges and conditions of the world today. One of these challenges Boot called attention to was the existentialism and skepticism which, according to Boot, results from modern day philosophy. Yet the situations and challenges faced by the early apostles are, in Boots eyes, strikingly similar to the difficulties faced today.

The hope for Christians lies not in a withdrawal from the world. By viewing God as an immovable reference point, and through the unadulterated teachings

of the inerrant and applicable Bible, Christians are given a solid foundation off of which to live and teach.

Later that night, around 200 students and faculty attended the second lecture, to hear Rev. Boot's response to a recently published book by Richard Dawkins entitled *The God Delusion*. While confessing this lecture was not a specific defense against Dawkin's book, Boot used scripture and arguments from leading theological figures such as Alister McGrath to combat a new cultural conception of God as a delusion. He systematically poked holes in Dawkin's arguments while at the same time asserting that absolute truth that can only be found within the confines of Christianity: "No matter how hard we try, there really is no

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Committee Formed to Spend SPF Funds Donated to Library

By Joel VanderWeele

After receiving twenty thousand dollars for books in 2005, the College Library has now organized a committee to appropriately use the funds. The money was allocated from the Student Government Association's Special Project Fund (SPF) after a proposal was made by then-president Jason Shambach.

SGA's official statement of intent for the SPF appears on the application form as follows: "The Student Project Fund

shall be used for substantial, on-campus projects as desired by the student body. These projects should have the potential to impact the entire student body." The SPF has been connected to many recent important donations. According to Commissioner of Communications of the SGA Executive Cabinet, Elyse Drum, "The lights down at the track were donated by the SGA, [and] the SPF made the coffee shop possible." Most recently, the SGA donated roughly eighty thousand dollars to the Campus Center renovations, which was initially

about a third of the cost of the whole project. According to Drum, "we [the SGA] take ideas from the students at any time; ideas from as small as a swing set on campus to Campus Center renovations."

Brad Wilber, the current Acting Library Director, who worked with Shambach on the proposal, explained that when "Jason put forward the proposal for money for the library, it was accepted." The SGA granted the library a one-time gift of twenty thousand dollars for new books, no strings attached. Because

no stipulations were given with the money, many decisions needed to be made before the money could be spent. Drum, who also works in the library processing new books, claimed that "only about 200 dollars have been used so far."

"It's been sitting in our coffers, waiting for us to decide what to do... It's true that we should've gotten right to it, but other things just got in the way," Wilbur explained. "If someone had said, 'you need to spend this by

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WORLD OUT THERE

By Thomas Lerew

Presidential Campaign Update

After four caucus or primary elections, there is still no definitive front-runner in either party for nominees to this fall's presidential contest. The first caucus of this election was on January 3rd in the state of Iowa. Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee won the Republican side while Illinois Senator Barack Obama won the Democratic side. Little attention was paid to the Wyoming contest where former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney claimed victory for the Republicans but Democrats pushed their caucus to March 8. The following week, the action moved to New Hampshire for the first actual primary election where Senator Hillary Clinton picked up the Democratic nod and Senator John McCain the Republican. Just this past Tuesday, Senator Hillary Clinton won the state of Michigan for the Democrats and Governor Mitt Romney for the Republicans. Primaries in Nevada are scheduled for January 19, South Carolina for January 26 and Florida on January 29. Pundits then expect that the 12 states to have primaries on February 5 (appropriately dubbed "Super Tuesday") will provide a significantly clearer picture of who the nominees this November will be.

Violence Continues in Kenya

More than 300 people have died across the east African nation of Kenya after a vote count in the country's presidential election sparked conflict. The tribal tensions following the December 27 contest have crippled the democratic government into near civil war. Recently, President Mwai Kibaki told his opponent Raila Odinga that he was willing to share power. After days of negotiations between the two candidates and their political parties, a compromise has not been reached and it is feared that the violence will continue.

Iran-U.S. Naval Showdown

Last week, Iranian naval "fast boats" moved rapidly towards three U.S. naval ships in the Strait of Hormuz and dropped numerous white boxes in the water before leaving the area. Navy officials quickly determined that the boxes were not dangerous but aren't certain as to what they were. Audio tapes of radio transmission during the incident contain threatening comments made towards the American ships. Upon further review, however, the Pentagon admits that it cannot confirm that the transmissions received came from the Iranian speed boats. The matter continues to be hotly debated between those who feel that the Navy didn't respond aggressively enough and those who believe the boats never posed a threat to the U.S. naval ships.

Bush on Tour to Middle East

President Bush began a tour of the last week Middle East as a follow up to the multi-nation peace talks in Annapolis last fall. The presidential visits are supposed to focus on strengthening U.S. ties, particularly with Turkey, and on the continuing conflict between Palestine and Israel. Significant progress has recently been made on both fronts. Turkish relations had been strained when Iraqi insurgents began hitting Turkish targets yet the U.S. refused to permit Turkey to get involved.

Al-Qaeda Emerging in Pakistan

The Pentagon recently addressed the emergence of al-Qaeda's presence in Pakistan. American intelligence is noticing increasing activity by al-Qaeda operatives particularly since the time leading up to the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Authorities believe the country is becoming a central command center for the global terrorist organization. Pakistan is also struggling to control militant groups that it has had friendly relations with since the 1980's.

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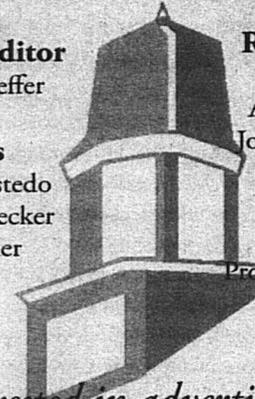
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Art Review: Margaret Olney-McBride Exhibit in Ortliip Gallery

By Stefan Zoller

Francis Bacon described his paintings as having the immediacy of a quick sketch while simultaneously possessing the scale and seriousness of an old master painting. While stylistically different from his work, Margaret Olney-McBride's paintings achieve a similar feat.

Twelve landscapes recently on display in the Ortliip Gallery showed a painter caught between representation and abstraction. She balances the two skillfully and convincingly, employing swift, angular brushstrokes, which suggest form rather than describe it. A duality is found within these active, even violent, brushstrokes depicting quiet, peaceful landscapes. It is evident that Olney-McBride could choose to meticulously render every rock and blade of grass if she wanted to; yet instead of putting the medium in a stranglehold, she allows the paint to be paint.

Olney-McBride's paint is thinned to an almost watercolor-like consistency which, in some areas, is built up layer upon layer, giving a luminous quality to the paint. Other areas are left relatively bare, leaving only a probing line or wash of subtle color. Both of these



Olney-McBride's "Shore Site"

Photo by Stefan Zoller

factors (the thinness of the paint and the bare sections of canvas) provide a coolness to the paintings, even when reds, pinks, and oranges are used. In *November Lake* and *Across Potomac*, this quality is further emphasized by the use of blues and purples, creating in both works an appropriately icy appearance and mood.

In her paintings depicting hilltop villages in the south of France, Olney-McBride sculpts rooftops and hillsides using a loose geometric hatching

reminiscent of Cezanne. The clusters of angular roofs held up by sturdy, pale walls assertively demonstrate her abilities as an abstract painter. This skill is displayed again, though in a different manner, in *Shore Site*, perhaps the most abstract work in the show. It is painted with quick dabs of paint, which, in combination with its small scale, gives the piece a precious intimacy. *Shore Site* succeeds in paying homage to the work of the Impressionists as well as to the non-representational work of Philip

Guston, while at the same time retaining its own strength and originality.

The painting *Blue Ridge Window* is another highlight of the show. Flat planes of grey-blue frame a serene view of a hillside, creating multiple frames within the picture. A strong diagonal in the left third of the painting along with a small brown road keep the eye moving between the soft, playful landscape and the rigid blocks of color which form the window frames. Yet the blocks of grey-blue relate to the landscape: upon closer inspection, they reveal active brushwork more blatantly used in the landscape.

Blue Ridge Window is the boldest example of the relationship between the natural and the human-made, a theme which permeates most of Olney-McBride's work. Sometimes she allows the viewer to observe the natural from within the confines of a building or vehicle, whereas in others, the human-made is seen from the outside—in and amongst its natural surroundings. *Still Life with Bear Foot Fern* even displays the natural (fern, fish, fruit) in an unnatural setting. Olney-McBride shows us the beauty in both, and the complementary relationship which can exist between them. 

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the end of the year' it would have happened, but it didn't. We've entirely changed the composition of the people working with this, but it's going to happen, and I'm excited about that."

A committee has now been assembled, and the general plan is to add the SPF funds to the existing budget that each department gets for new books each year. Jokingly referred to as the Allocate Student Project funds Equitably Now

(ASPEN), the committee includes two library resource workers, two academic faculty members, and two students.

"We don't really have the manpower to process that many books right away... it needs to be a gradual increase."

According to Wilber, who sits on the committee, "[The committee] is ultimately responsible to SGA, and with Elyse [Drum] and Kirby [Runyon] being in the room, the students will be able to have a voice... As long as the students come out of the project satisfied, it will be a success."

Another difficulty attached with

buying new books is that the space in the library is limited. According to Wilber, "We've expanded in every direction we can." Drum noted, "We don't really have the space or the manpower to process that many books right away. It needs to be a gradual increase...from September to December of 2007, the library added 778 new titles (not including copies and added volumes) and 98 children's books." Accommodating an additional twenty thousand dollars of books will undoubtedly put a strain on the staff.

Wilber is less concerned about the increase in books. "The departments who get the allotments might not spend all of the money at the same

time... I don't see it causing a sudden influx; I see it as more of an incremental increase." Also, although he is "extremely honored and grateful" that the library has been granted this gift by SGA, Wilber pointed out that "when you sit down to divvy up twenty thousand dollars, it does not go as far as you think."

"There was nothing keeping us from doing it before, we were just slow making the decision to actually do it," Wilbur admitted, "but it's now going to happen." Each book that is purchased from the SPF money will have a "Donated by the SGA" stamp on the front plate. 



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escaping the truth.”

He then examined the problem of today's Christianity as it is used as a 'drug' or 'hobby' for those who misunderstand the basic concepts of the faith. Christianity is not a therapy for those who cannot handle the world, but instead, it is a "worldview that is able to confront the real existence of evil." Contradiction and mystery make up the human condition. Yet Christianity recognizes the great achievements of humanity as well as its horrific distortion of its original nature. The choice, then, according to Boot, is between following the assertions of today without facing the real questions of life and God or choosing to listen to the Ecclesiastical preacher and remember our creator in the days of our youth.

Tuesday morning, over 200 students, faculty and staff listened to Rev. Joe Boot's continuation of Monday morning's lecture. Boot focused on Jesus, whom he referred to as the centerpiece of Christianity. He presented Jesus as both a historical and biblical figure. Jesus' life story could be ascertained from various sources outside of the Biblical cannon. Yet his life was entirely different from any of the prophets or priests of other religions, such as Islam or Buddhism. "Is there anything to compare with the claims of Christ?"

Boot argued that conversation is essential to apologetics. Just as God "genuinely interacts" with us, he said, we too must engage others.

In an effort to understand Christ, Boot argues the West "brings Jesus down" by attempting to place Christ comfortably within an accepted schema. This deconstruction has created a meaninglessness that can only be remedied through Christ and the claims he makes about his own divinity. Thus the challenge lies in communicating Christ to others as more than a fact or historical figure but one who delivers new meaning and truth.

On Tuesday night, Boot set out to answer the question, "How do we as

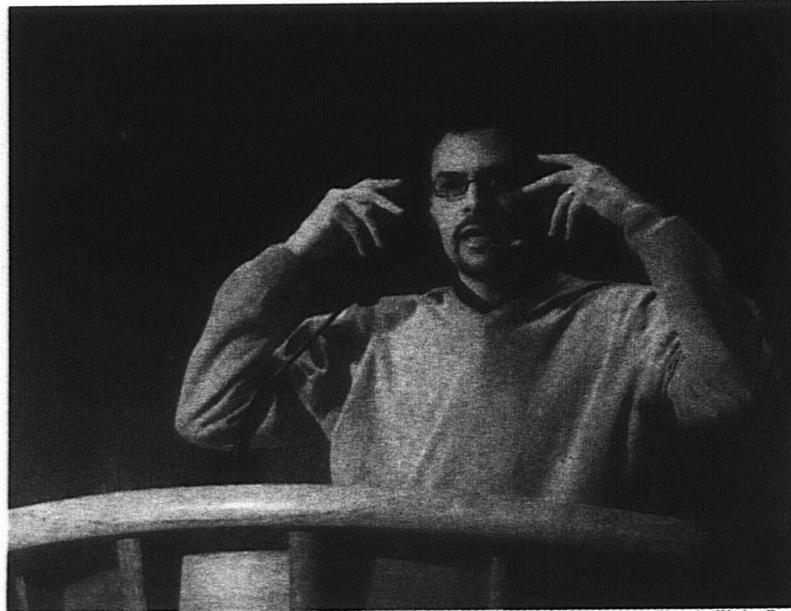


Photo by Wesley Dean

Boot spoke passionately on a variety of topics related to Christian apologetics.

Christians live our faith in the public sphere?" Drawing from 1 Corinthians 13, Boot challenged this smaller audience of a little over 140 persons to mature in their faith, to, as Paul writes, "put childish ways behind" them. Boot argued for a comprehensive Christianity, saying that God permeated all parts of society, from the political sphere to each individual family, and that "there is no aspect of life that is not under God." Boot argued that the connections between the Christian religion and society have always been there.

The problem today is that we no longer recognize them because of culture's regression into a state of infancy. The key to social change, argues Boot, is through the reawakening of Christianity in the grassroots of society--the family, schools, and civic involvement. While he admits that clashes are inevitable between Christianity and education, law, politics and culture, the Christian's first duty is to God rather than human authority. He ended the night challenging his audience to find a vision for the future—one that is

"willing and ready to obey God, rather than men."

Boot took the opportunity on Wednesday morning to further emphasize the importance of apologetics in today's world. He argued that one of the most important aspects of apologetics is conversation. Just as God "genuinely interacts" and "engages in a two way conversation" with us, so also we must engage in conversation outside of the confines of the church. For Boot, conversations serve two purposes: they help clean up misunderstandings between people as well as expose the motives and biases of the parties involved.

After he incited his audience to "spread the word that sex is on the menu for Wednesday night," over 200 people attended his last discourse, which focused mainly on the view of sex historically and in today's culture. Boot traced the roots of the popular view of sex from Biblical and Hellenistic cultures through the Victorian era up to today's "sex-soaked culture." He argued that while sexual activity within marriage is positively endorsed everywhere in the Bible, we are in a culture that celebrates the "base, the vulgar and the lewd" by advocating sex outside of marriage. "In

refusing to worship the God of creation human beings start to worship not God, but their own genitals." And thus, by becoming anti-God, one "inevitably becomes the anti-human."

Boot concluded both his lecture series and Wednesday's night address with the issue of homosexuality. Boot argued that while no one denies the Biblical stance against homosexuality, the church has become lax in its stance towards the "homoerotic world view" in an effort to cater to culture and fill the sanctuary on Sunday morning. As a result of an attempt to androgenize the Adam found in Genesis, the distinction between men and women is lost. Thus, "the law of God is completely ignored for sentimentality and tolerance." In addition, legalization of gay marriage would destroy the institution of marriage and reorder society as a whole.

Several questions followed the already long-running discourse. Questions were asked concerning the role of the church in governmental legislature, the mission of apologetics towards both the non-believer and misguided Christian, as well as the loss of distinctions between men and women in today's culture. In answer to these questions, Boot again emphasized the importance of a grass-roots faith that "grappled with the immediate," spoke adamantly against the Emerging Church Movement, and stressed for a second time that night the importance of a separate male and female identity.

Student response to this year's CLEW speaker was generally positive. Junior Kyle Vitale, who attended the Monday and Wednesday sessions, remarked that out of all the CLEWs he had attended, Rev. Joe Boot was "the best speaker by far, hands down." While Ryan Musser, also a junior, found Monday's chapel "unengaging and inaccessible" he thought that "the four other sessions [he] went to were great." First year student, Timothy Rudl agreed, saying the lectures "progressed to become extremely meaningful" and that Boot was "powerful" "thought provoking" and "rewarding." 



First Annual *Star* Christmas Party Reports Record Attendance

From the Editors

Here at the *Star*, we don't like to toot our own horn. But we take very seriously our charge to cover significant events on campus; and a few days before the conclusion of the fall semester, one of the most significant events to take place since the founding of Houghton College was witnessed. We are happy to report that the First Annual *Houghton Star* Christmas Party was a smashing success.

The party was the brainchild of editor-in-chief William Airhart. What began with a night of carnal interactions between Airhart's imagination and intellect soon blossomed into the booming baby that would become known as the First Annual *Houghton Star* Christmas Party (FAHSCP). Knowing that brilliant ideas are seldom conceived by one's self, Airhart soon enlisted fellow editor Jason Fisher's help. Fisher's position was that of Advertising Manager to the FAHSCP because of his extensive networking skills and past party experience. "There really wasn't anyone better qualified to fill that role, and Jason did an excellent job," gushed Airhart. "I am fully satisfied by Jason's work."

Fisher's first task was to find a convenient place to publish an ad for the party. In a stroke of genius, he quickly contacted William Airhart, editor-in-chief of the *Houghton Star*, a weekly publication distributed throughout the Houghton community. "We were happy to run Fisher's ad free of charge," said Airhart. Fisher concurred. "I'm not sure that the First Annual *Houghton Star* Christmas Party would have been such a success without the cooperation of the *Houghton Star*. That ad really boosted attendance," said Fisher.

A campus-wide e-mail was also sent out that was read by at least 6% of recipients which is "pretty good" for a campus-wide e-mail, according to Fisher. A media blitz on the day of the FAHSCP included Airhart,

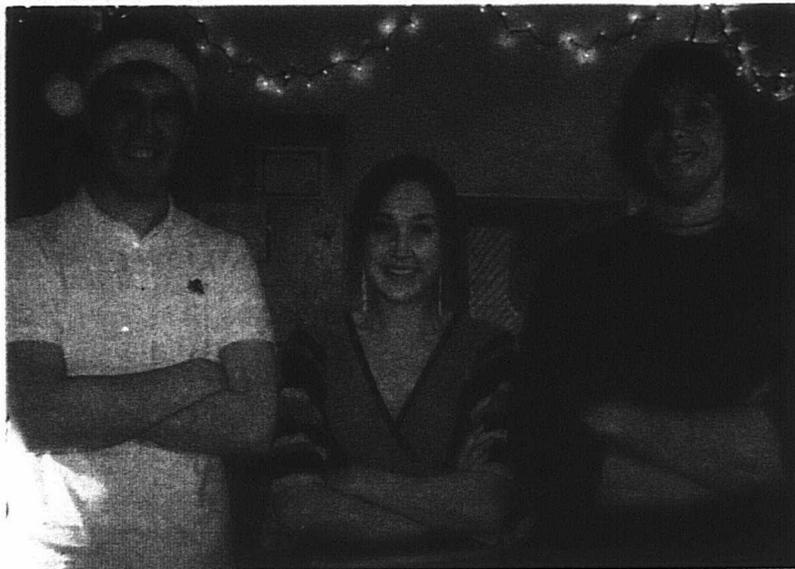


Photo by Wesley Dean

Will, Kat and Jason can't wait to invite the entire campus to another party.

Fisher, a giant inflatable Santa Claus, and Tim Bastedo (commentary editor of the *Houghton Star*) handing out candy canes at the base of the cafeteria stairs as students exited from dinner. However, this tactic proved to be less successful than anticipated. "It was really odd. We were being treated like those guys on a city street who try to hand you ads for something useless," Bastedo lamented. Fisher agreed, commenting, "People just came down the stairs and immediately averted their eyes and walked on by without even acknowledging us. All we were trying to do was give them some candy to lure them downstairs for a party in a small stinky room." Fisher went on, saying, "Actually, in retrospect, after hearing myself describe the situation, I can understand people's reactions."

Despite the questionable advertising techniques, the FAHSCP began with a strong start. The event's first guest was none other than President Shirley Mullen, who has two PhDs. Professor Ben Lipscomb, advisor to the *Houghton Star*, also made an appearance. "There was a giant inflatable St. Nicholas," he noted. "I was very impressed. I mean, that thing was huge."

The party's atmosphere was described as a "multimedia experience" featuring music, digital imagery, and no dancing. "They had *Elf* playing all night in the corner and Christmas music playing simultaneously," reported Joel VanderWeele. "Looking back, it would have been nice to hear the movie as well as watch it, but I suppose that *NSYNC's acapella rendition of 'O Holy Night' is a fine substitute. I guess." Alaina Williams, a junior attending her first Christmas party thrown by a newspaper, commented that it was "arguably the best Christmas party I've ever attended."

What truly set the party apart, however, was the food bestowed upon all party participants. "Houghton's alcohol prohibition really freed up a lot of our party funds to be put towards food and decorations," Airhart revealed. "It was a give-and-take. While the party wasn't quite 'off the hook,' we did still manage

to have a lit reindeer and a shocking quantity of Ritz crackers." Associate editor Katarina Kieffer argued that the food even tempted unknown strangers. "You have to expect some snags with any party," she admitted. "Inevitably, we had a Grinch or two who just came into the office, grabbed some food, and then left. They chose to thank us for our hard work all semester by stocking their pantry with the fine selection of cheddars that were available. Whatever."

Students from all walks of life were drawn to the carnival-like atmosphere of the FAHSCP. "I was trying to get some work done in the coffee shop, but I kept getting distracted and heading back to the *Star* Christmas Party," commented senior Ben Tsujimoto. "I don't know whether it was the décor and ambiance or the awesome punch, but something about it kept drawing me in." Indeed. With so many hearts strangely warmed by the evening's events, the FAHSCP planning committee looks forward to celebrating next year's SAHSCP, tentatively planned for November 17, 2008. 🍪



Photo by Wesley Dean

Will and Alaina pause to enjoy two delicious cookies.



CLEW: Did Boot's Message Fall on Deaf Ears?

Joe Boot challenged us to engage and grapple with a deeper Christianity. Did anyone bother to respond?

By Kate Ambrose

Delivered in a snappy, crisp British accent reminiscent of Hugh Grant, the intellectual reasoning, philosophical vocabulary, and logical oratory style of CLEW speaker Joe Boot took most of campus by surprise this week. A far cry from the grandmotherly persona and feel-good sentiments expressed by last year's CLEW speaker, the articulate confidence and challenging insights of Boot's message seemed to be somewhat lost on the glossy-eyed crowd of students in Wesley Chapel on Monday morning.

After sifting through a barrage of social theory, historical referencing, and quotes from great figures such as Blaise Pascal, Francis Shaffer, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud – not to mention an effortless use of complex terms regarding *axioms of self-relativism*, the *autonomous nature of ultra-modernity*, or *armies of metaphors, metonyms and anthropomorphisms* – the underlying theme interwoven throughout Boot's lectures was surprisingly straightforward. As active members of a relativistic society that increasingly dismisses all absolute

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Names may be withheld upon request.

truth-claims, are we prepared to exert our influence in the public as well as the private spheres of life, and to enact out our Christian faith with a consistent, mature, and well-reasoned synthesis of defense and action? In other words, he urged, we must first be sure of what and in Whom we believe, and then be prepared to explain our convictions in a climate of cynicism and doubt without compromising our intelligence, compassion, or influence.

On a much more subjective note, I found it interesting to observe Houghton's response to a Christian apologist, scholar, and academician of Joe Boot's caliber. While I hesitate to endorse the finger-pointing or guilt-tripping that Boot and other members of the community hinted at with certain wry remarks upon the scanty attendance during the evening lectures, I was also dismayed by the lack of response, interest or respect that many of us failed to extend towards our CLEW speaker this semester. Much to my astonishment, many of my fellow students and community members seemed to overlook the powerfully thought-provoking truths of Boot's message in favor of focusing on his formal presentation-style characteristic of many native Brits, his apparent lack of emotion or spontaneity, and his use of argumentation over narrative.

We at Houghton claim to pride ourselves on our critical thinking, our ability to synthesize faith and learning, and our existence in the world today as "scholar-servants," but I must admit that my confidence in such a label was shaken at the end of this week's three-day CLEW lectures. Don't get me wrong—I'm quite the Anglophile myself, but I have to wonder what's wrong with us when I overhear more enthused comments on the chapel speaker's enthralling British accent than on Boot's convicting perspective about truth-claims, the state of the contemporary church, and the

pressing need for Christian apologetics today. Similarly, after surviving an experience I initially associated with a Bressler class, not a chapel session, I will be one of the first to admit that Boot's series of lengthy lectures have left me surprisingly drained on both a mental and physical level after such a steady stream of philosophical jargon, elevated academic vocabulary, and intellectual reasoning presented in a complicated and demanding thinking process. However, I am forced to ask myself: if we aren't willing to engage our minds and rise to the academic and spiritual challenge that Boot issued us, how can we expect those outside of our Christian community to do otherwise once we leave Houghton to interact with the world as representatives of a supposedly all-encompassing, holistic, monotheistic religion?

And so I leave CLEW behind, asking not only those around me but myself as well -- have we at Houghton succumbed to the prevalent social demand for a brief, entertaining, feel-good Christianity that Boot was attempting to confront, or are we willing to actually grapple with comprehensive, complex issues with a detailed historical and philosophical precedent until we are able to confidently articulate our belief in, to borrow a Bootian term, an "exhaustively rational God?"

I end, therefore, with one last thought taken from A. W. Tozer's *The Pursuit of God*, who declares, "God made us for Himself; that is the only explanation that satisfies the heart of a thinking man, whatever his wild reason may say... I speak to thirsty hearts whose longings have been awakened by the touch of God within them." Tozer then powerfully concludes in parallel observation to Joe Boot by stating, "The world is perishing for lack of the knowledge of God and the Church is famishing for want of His Presence." 

Kate is a senior English and IS major.

Vinyl Reborn

An old favorite makes a comeback.

By Nate Lockhart

The digital age has brought about a change in the way we listen to our music. Today, we download full albums onto our computers with the click of a mouse, which we then burn onto CDs or load onto our MP3 players, some of which can hold up to 40,000 songs (160GB). So why is it that there are some of us who still prefer to listen to our music on the seemingly archaic vinyl record format?

Is it the quality of sound that vinyl has to offer that makes it so attractive to those of us who collect it? Possibly: well-kept vinyl does offer technically superior sound when compared to an average audio CD. Since it is an analog format, vinyl can produce a much wider range of frequencies, contributing to a "thicker" sound. The lack of these extra frequencies is not immediately apparent, as most are inaudible to the human ear; yet due to this lack, the higher frequencies on audio CDs are often muddled and distorted. CDs are also notorious for not misrepresenting natural sound waves by only taking samples of the wave instead of an exact replication, as is the case with vinyl. This loss of quality can be seen in "Gimme Shelter," the opening track to the Rolling Stones' 1969 album *Let it Bleed*. Through the beginning of the song, a very high tone rings, sounding much like the sound one hears when an analog television is turned on. Translated to CD audio, the high frequency becomes a faint hiss, taking away the original intended sound.

Notice, however, that these added advantages of vinyl only apply to well-kept records. Vinyl isn't terribly durable. It doesn't take much to engrave a permanent scratch in a record, causing pops and clicks in the overall sound with even the slightest misuse. However, many don't mind this drawback; in fact, some even prefer it, saying that it adds a certain "character" to the sound



of the record. As for myself, I don't think the early Beach Boys singles would sound quite right without a few pops or clicks scattered throughout, and R.E.M.'s *Murmur* wouldn't capture the underground sound.

Another appealing factor of vinyls is the sleeve art. With CD album art, an artist only has a 12 cm square to work with, whereas with record album art, an artist has a full 12 in. square canvas. The band *mewithoutYou* recently released their three studio LPs on vinyl, and the artwork featured on the sleeve is mesmerizing, achieving a far greater effect than the diminutive CD cover versions. The size of the vinyl sleeve has also allowed for artistic experimentation; such is the case with the Rolling Stones' 1971 album *Sticky Fingers*, which featured a picture of the crotch of a pair of jeans with a working zipper, designed by infamous avant-garde artist Andy Warhol.

I also find that one has a greater sense of ownership for a record than MP3s or even an audio CD. The owning of an album in MP3 format is almost abstract; you can't hold the MP3 album in your hands, and even an audio CD doesn't feel like much. But vinyl is much more; taking the album out of its grand sleeve, laying it on the turntable record mat, and gently placing the needle on the outer edge of the groove is a special experience all its own.

The popularity of vinyl is increasing among members of our generation. There are even a few of us here on campus who are avid record collectors and go over to each other's rooms to just listen and discuss the music. Today, one can go to a number of music shops and find a small section of brand new records, such as Hot Hot Heat's newest album, the latest single from Queens of the Stone Age, or even reissues of classics like Love's *Forever Changes*, all on high-quality vinyl. In this day and age, it is surprising to see this tried and true format making such a comeback, but I, for one, am certainly excited for it.

Nate is a junior IS and Linguistics major.

From the Editors' Desk...

Scrapping Chapel Attendance: A Modest Proposal

We've argued about chapel attendance for years. Why not settle the question with a temporary cessation of the policy?

By William Airhart

Entering the second semester of my senior year, I've grown weary of heated discussions concerning chapel attendance. I still remember the hullabaloo when we switched to the so-called "random scanning" policy during my sophomore year, and the rancorous debate has resurfaced every six months or so ever since. (We can all fondly remember last semester's escapades involving *La Revolución* and the Black Hole.) It is only with reluctance, then, that I broach the tired subject once more.

This past week, Joe Boot delivered a series of lectures on contemporary Christian apologetics as a part of this semester's CLEW. While his chapel message on Monday morning was very well attended, the turnout on Monday night was pitiful: just over 120 people (including faculty and community members) showed up. Row after row of seats were unfilled, and Mr. Boot even commented on the low attendance, noting that he appreciated all those who were attending despite not receiving credit towards their "quota" of chapel credits. Similar attendance patterns continued throughout the week. As a Houghton student, I was, frankly, embarrassed.

It was the perfect example of the flawed chapel attendance policy. By requiring two-thirds attendance, we tacitly encourage students to adhere to the bare attendance requirement and go no further. It's not as though the current policy is very useful in the first place, as it shortchanges the chapel speakers scheduled during the final weeks of each semester, after many students have already fulfilled their quota. As a frequent attendee of Christmas-themed chapels, I've always been amazed at how empty Wesley Chapel can seem at the end of the fall term. Compared to chapels held earlier in the semester, the

atmosphere is markedly different. This is a direct outgrowth of the two-thirds attendance policy.

The root problem with the Houghton chapel attendance policy does not simply lie with the distasteful practice of I.D. scanning. If Houghton were to alternatively employ assigned seating to enforce two-thirds attendance – as it did for many decades – the end-of-semester problem would remain. I believe that, if the attendance policy was scrapped, Houghton students would continue to attend chapel. Others may disagree. How might we go about settling the dispute?

Sometime soon—and it must be quite soon, given that we wish to avoid the end-of-semester pitfall associated with the two-thirds attendance policy—the Office of Student Life should declare a three-week cessation of chapel scanning. During this time, students will receive automatic credit for all nine of the chapels scheduled during the three-week period. They will continue to scan at the beginning to chapel, but not to meet a requirement—they will do so only so that we can monitor if Houghton students continue to attend chapel when it is not required. The new temporary policy will be thoroughly advertised so that all Houghton students have the opportunity to hear about and understand the policy.

The outcome will be simple to determine. If students, when trusted with this new responsibility, continue to attend chapel, then it will indicate that revision of the chapel policy may be needed; if they decide not to attend, then we'll know that the Houghton chapel policy is a necessary evil in the imperfect world of student requirements. Of course, this proposal hinges on the assumption that chapels are worth attending. But I'm confident that they *are* worth attending. By all accounts, chapels have improved steadily every year since the arrival

of Dean of Chapel John Brittain, and there is no reason to assume that this trend won't continue.

This proposal begs an obvious question: what is preventing students from diligently attending nine consecutive chapels in the knowledge that they never be forced to attend again? This is an unavoidable problem. The period of time chosen must be both sufficiently short (so as to not disrupt our chapel cycle too greatly) and sufficiently long (to discourage students from simply showing up once or twice in order to gain a free pass later on). I claim no scientific justification of a three-week period; in my estimation, however, it seems to be an appropriate amount of time. I would point out, too, that skeptics of my proposal must assume that students are devious and hell-bent on wiggling their way out of chapel attendance at any cost. I prefer to think much more of Houghton students.

This is admittedly a bold proposition. But to finally put this tired topic to rest, an inventive act of leadership will be required. All it will take is three weeks of chapel credit to better determine whether the chapel requirement is superfluous or regrettably necessary. I strongly urge President Shirley Mullen and Vice President Sharra Hynes to consider my proposal and take action.

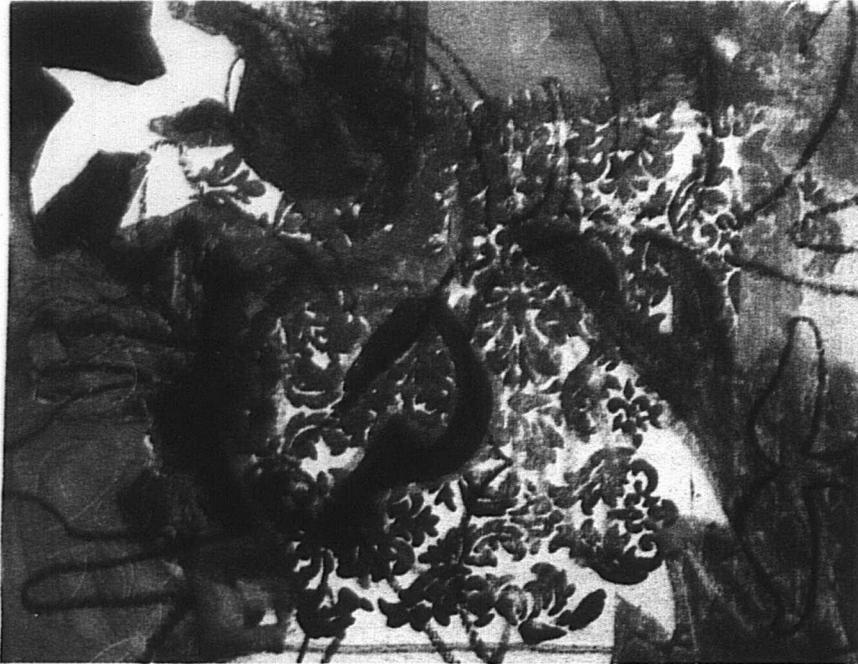
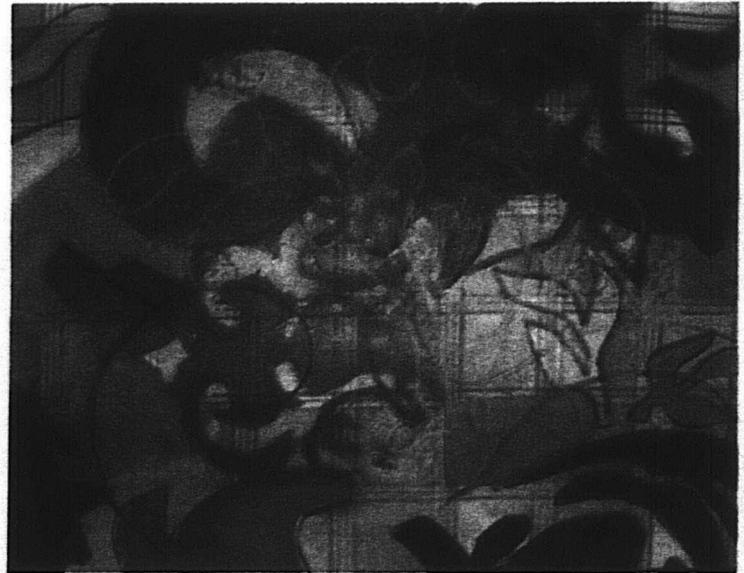
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On a related note, I have been absolutely horrified by the number of loud phones that have gone off in chapel in recent weeks. Worse, these phones often have delightfully obnoxious ring tones that cause further disruption. Why anyone would spend money on a self-evidently embarrassing ring tone is beyond my comprehension; regardless, it isn't difficult: when you go to chapel (or to class, etc.), silence your phone!

William is a senior Political Science major and serves as editor-in-chief.

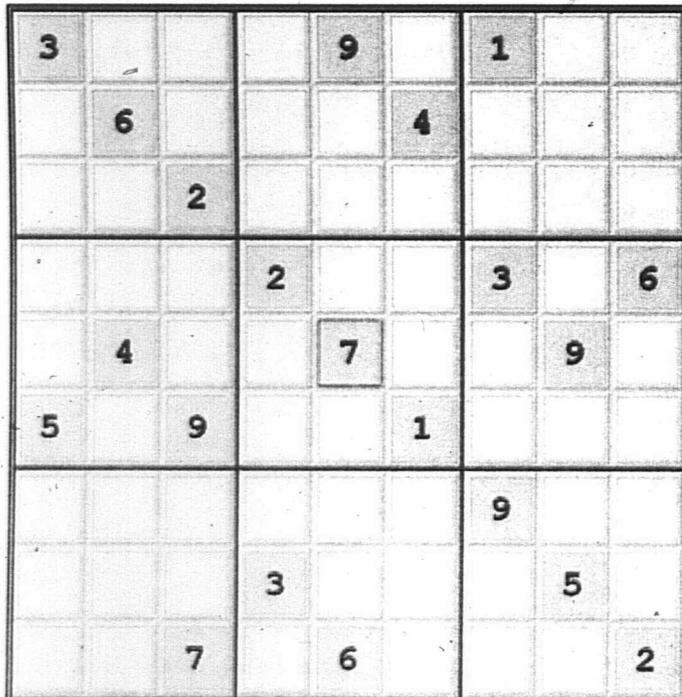


featured artwork | COLLEEN BARRY

*In Honor of Mrs. O'Murphy**Outlandish*

Note from the artist: *I am fascinated with patterns. In my work, I try to incorporate different textiles and patterns using painting and printmaking methods. Whether it's stretching a piece of fabric and painting patterns on it or silk-screening a piece of canvas paper and drawing a fabric pattern over it. I love the relationships between the different types of pattern. I work with a lot of damask and baroque type patterns, but I'm constantly looking around for inspiration. Patterns are everywhere and styles are constantly changing just like in fashion. There's always something new and I'm never bored.*

Colleen is a senior Art major with a concentration in Painting.



SUDOKU CHALLENGE

Submit completed puzzles with your name at the Star office. One correct puzzle will be selected at random and the winner will receive a Sudoku puzzle book! This week's puzzle is by Eric Liddle, a freshman Math and Computer Science major from Albion, N.Y. He is currently in London, but remains a diehard Sabres fan.

Answers to last issue's Sudoku puzzles are printed below:

7	3	2	6	8	1	5	9	4
8	1	6	4	5	9	3	7	2
9	5	4	2	7	3	1	6	8
1	4	5	8	6	7	9	2	3
2	7	3	1	9	4	6	8	5
6	8	9	5	3	2	4	1	7
3	2	7	9	4	6	8	5	1
5	6	1	3	2	8	7	4	9
4	9	8	7	1	5	2	3	6

left: hard right: easy

7	1	8	9	4	3	5	6	2
9	2	5	6	7	1	4	3	8
4	6	3	8	2	5	7	9	1
8	4	9	5	3	2	6	1	7
6	3	2	1	9	7	8	4	5
5	7	1	4	8	6	9	2	3
2	5	7	3	6	4	1	8	9
1	8	4	2	5	9	3	7	6
3	9	6	7	1	8	2	5	4