Pop Culture Conference starts NOW!

Speakers from inside and outside the Dordt community are here to talk about how Christians should respond to pop culture

Hannah De Vries
Staff Writer

Vampire Novels. Tim Tebow. Fashion. From Thursday, November 1, to Saturday, November 3, a variety of speakers will be lecturing and leading discussions on these exact topics during “The Christian Evasion of Popular Culture” conference being held on campus, asking what it means for Christians to encounter and interact with the things that are a part of today’s pop culture.

The conference itself will be a kick off for a new major at Dordt: Christianity and Pop Culture. But the idea of popular culture being discussed at the conference and involved in the major will be broader than the memes and movies that first come to mind, said Assistant Professor of Theology Jason Lief, one of the main professors involved in the conference.

“We mean is more like ‘popular practice’ and cultural theory—the practices of everyday life, how they form and shape who we are, and how identity is created and influenced by popular culture,” said Lief.

The search for the new Provost is now underway

Rachel Mulder
Staff Writer

Dordt College has begun the process of hiring a new Provost by putting together a Provost Search Committee.

“The Provost Search Committee is made up of ten faculty members, administrative staff members, a Board of Trustee member who will chair this committee, and one student,” said Sue Droog, Director of Human Resources.

The committee will meet once a week to get things started and will continue to meet as needed and as often as necessary to work through each part of the process. “Our roles as committee members will be to collect feedback from the faculty and others in the campus community regarding this position, prepare a position profile and job description, and handle all advertising,” said Droog.

The Provost is the chief academic officer of the college. Administratively, they are second in command. If the President is off campus, the Provost is responsible for campus duties. They need to be able to lead the campus and faculty according to the mission statement of Dordt College.

Until he became President this year, Erik Hockstra served as the Provost. Now the appointed search committee is in the process of searching for someone to fill the position. During this process, Jim Bos, Registrar; Leah Zuiderma, Professor of English; and Bethany Schuttinga, Vice President of Student Services, are splitting the role.

“The charge from the President to this committee is to develop a pool of qualified candidates and narrow this pool to 2-4 finalists for the President to consider,” said Droog.

“The hiring of a Provost is very important and the process is important. The Committee appreciates the prayers from the campus and community,” said Jim Bos, Registrar.

This work of the committee will last until March 1 when the committee passes on names of potential candidates to the Board. It’s a long and challenging process, but Bos says that with prayer and support they are confident it will be positive.

When the committee has passed on the names, the President will review them and make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. The Board will then make the final hiring decision.

“The committee covets the prayers of the campus community for the work of the committee, as well as for those candidates and their families God is preparing to engage in this process with us,” said Droog.
Smart phones: convenient distractions?

Kristin Janssen
Staff Writer

Smartphones are sweeping the Nation. They’re popping up everywhere, including Dordt. Even impoverished, rural villages in Africa can afford simple cellphones for a few dollars a month, so acquiring a fancy 3G or 4G smartphone just keeps getting easier. New models of the iPhone make the older models decrease in price. New apps are developed every day making the phones’ potential endless.

The recent surge of smartphone technology has even created a psychological panic, called nomophobia, which defines those who have a diagnosed fear of being without a cellphone. U.S. News reported that 77% of those suffering from nomophobia are between the ages of 18 and 24, the same age range as most college students. Step foot onto Dordt’s campus, where smartphones seem to be having a similar effect. Although smartphones may not be required or even necessary on the small campus with a plethora of computers in every academic building and almost all residential buildings, plenty of students and professors seem to be using the new technology for everything from checking emails on the way to class to Googling questions that may come up in conversation and tweeting the latest crazy quote from Professor DeRoo.

Senior Ashleigh Mindermouth has loved having a smartphone as a nursing major. She can check class schedules and tweet the latest crazy quote from Professor DeRoo.

Even recent Dordt graduates have quickly found out the importance of smartphones in the world beyond undergraduate studies. Nicole Scholten and Joe Lammers, both 2012 graduates, recently purchased iPhones to assist in their “real life” after Dordt.

Scholten, who graduated with degrees in elementary and middle school education, now teaches middle school science at Westminster Christian Academy, a rigorously academic school in St. Louis, Missouri. Although Scholten was not required to purchase a smartphone, she quickly realized that because of parental pressures and the frequent requirement of immediate communication, an iPhone was “the way to go.”

Scholten’s classmate, Joe Lammers, a biology undergraduate and current first-year student in the “Physicians’ Assistant program at the University of Colorado in Denver, found an iPhone to be a necessity. “Professors will change the location of a class minutes before the class starts,” Lammers shared. “I have to be able to get emails and updates instantly.”

Regardless of whether or not college students and professors will fork out the money for the latest smartphone, the changing technological world seems to be making their use much more of a requirement. Although smartphones don’t seem to be quite as prevalent or necessary on Dordt’s campus as in the rest of society, they do seem to make life a little more efficient and manageable.

Photo by Darin Lammers

Inauguration of President Erik Hoekstra: The beginning of an “educational opus”

Kelly Zatlin
Head Editor

A multitude of trained voices resounded throughout a packed B.J. Haan auditorium, singing “Praise to the Lord” in acapella on Friday, October 19, just moments before President Erik Hoekstra was ushered in as Dordt’s fourth president.

Delegates from Christian colleges around the U.S. came out to witness and celebrate the president’s inauguration, as well as Sioux Center’s mayor and the entire Dordt College board of trustees.

Aanna Stadem, Dordt senior and graphic design major, gave a speech as the student body representative in order to welcome the new president. She spoke directly to President Hoekstra as she displayed the student body’s confidence in his ability to lead the college and uphold its Christian vision.

Dr. Hubert Krygsman, President of Redeemer University College in Ancaster, Ontario, and former Dordt College board member, spoke to the collegial community representative, while Sioux Center Mayor Dennis Walstra spoke for the local and state community.

Once President Hoekstra received the historic medallion and went through the ceremonial “Laying-On of Hands,” he was announced as Dordt’s fourth president and gave his inaugural address, which focused on transforming Dordt’s academic task into an academic “opus.”

“Opus is an effort to produce an abundance,” said Hoekstra. “It’s originally tied to agriculture and later it was expanded into artistic and other factions. A task means that an abiding effort that we do with joy. A task means that it’s imposed; an opus means that we freely give it. A task has the sense of a minimum standard, but an opus has a sense of excellence as our marker.”

President Hoekstra began to chock up as his recital of the question and answer to number one of the Heidelberg catalog, “what is your only comfort in life and in death,” left the audience with this thought on the role the Christian should take on as a response to this comfort: “Just as a student struggles to find our comfort with getting comfortable, the catechism makes a dramatic turn and finishes in this way: ‘because I belong to him, Christ by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.’”

President Hoekstra has had a history at Dordt beyond being named its new president. He has taught business courses at Dordt and served as the provost. Students are familiar with him and he makes it a point to become familiar with them.

“I think Erik Hoekstra was a good choice for Dordt College,” said senior Victoria Johnston. “He is very personable and seems to care about the students, the education, and pursuing Christian education. I also think he shows his desire to do well by involving himself in campus life.”

The new president’s goals for himself and for Dordt College are a whole to be rest in the comfort of the Lord at the same time sitting on the edge of our seats, ready to do our work with confidence. “So for me, the idea of participating in Dordt’s educational opus gets my heart pounding and moves me forward to the edge of my seat,” said Hoekstra. “With God’s help, together, we can take up educational task with joy and vowed and transform it into an educational opus.”
Hannah DeVries
Staff Writer

With the unveiling of the newest Dordt Defender Logo, Dordt College sports teams gained a new identity. Yet, while some students love the logo, others question its origins, motives, and real purpose.

At a student symposium meeting on October 23, several students presented a proposal outlining several concerns about the new Defender logo. Professor John Short stated their overarching concern about the logo and outlined four major points they wished to discuss about it.

“Since the unveiling, we have heard several concerns over the new logo from students, faculty, and alumni,” claim DeBoer and Hiemstra. “These concerns, of theirs and ours, were great enough that we thought it appropriate to bring up the issue to student symposium.”

The proposal submitted by the seniors stated: “We believe that the new athletics logo revealed last Friday was enacted prematurely and without sufficient input from staff, faculty, and students/athletes, and that the decision should be reviewed with allowances for broader input, especially by those who will be representing it.”

The four main points of issue with the logo were as follows:

1. The new logo promotes separation between Dordt athletics and Dordt academics.
2. The Knight/Crusader image is not well-conveying goals or ideas.
3. The aesthetic message of the logo is unclear and does not well convey the goals or ideals of Dordt College.
4. Considering that both Unity Christian High School and Calvin College have Knights as their athletic emblems and names, the new Dordt logo seems to lack creativity.

Not all students hold this view, however. Vanessa Vigil, a sophomore, said that “initially, I didn’t like it, but I grew to like it. It’s nice to have something to stand behind, an actual representation.” Freshman Annie Pinkerton agreed. “Actually, having a mascot is nice,” Pinkerton said.

The proposal submitted on October 20, several “flat facts” about the new Defender logo were listed. Among these were: “The logo is intended to convey the following: a. Region: The servant acknowledges edges with a kneeling posture that he/she is serving someone greater and b. Readiness: The sword is in hand and the armor still adorned. The defender realizes that he/she always needs to be on guard, ready to rise up and take the next challenge or opportunity.”

In an interview, the creator of the new Defender logo, Dordt College graphic artist Jamin Vis Velda, said, “The athletic logo is used on the main Dordt logo. It doesn’t supersede the main logo.” He also said that the main symbol of the letters “DC” and the cross are not the only logos standing for Dordt College. “It’s a part of a family of logos,” said Ver Velda, which include the Dordt seal, the Andreas center, and the Stepping Stones preschool owned by Dordt College. The image of the knight was used not only because it went well with the idea of a “Defender,” said Ver Velda. “The figure of the knight worked best – the main point is that you don’t know who is inside, it could be anyone.”

The release also stated that “the new logo is a reflection of the responsibility of public relations, in collaboration with the athletic department. The logo went through several drafts and modifications before being adopted.”

For Brett Favre,” said sophomore Penni DeBoer, “the next step was a logo.” said Jongma Knauss.

“Athletic Branding Committee was also involved in the creation of the logo, said Jongma Knauss, as well as students. “But the students that were involved just aren’t here anymore.”

A petition created by Hiemstra, Short, and DeBoer had collected 53 signatures by 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 23. An updated number has not been released.

“We want to be sure that we are not saying the logo looks bad as a graphic design, but it is the deeper issues surrounding the logo, namely the process and the messages it sends, where we found fault,” said Hiemstra and DeBoer.

“Our main concern, which is outlined on the purpose of the petition, is to have the administration reconsider the use of the logo in light of the concerns we have brought forth,” concluded Hiemstra and DeBoer.
International Introduction: Niger, West Africa

For years, international students have felt blessed to call Dordt home. However, language, other cultural barriers, and even apathy, often prevent these students from being warmly welcomed into the Dordt student community. In this new feature section, we hope to introduce the Dordt community to a different international student each week with the hope of bridging the gap between international and non-international students that is often so evident around campus. Finally, it is our hope that this section will remind the community of God’s call to have a heart for ALL of His nations.

Kristin Janssen
Staff Writer

Although many may believe that international students are best recognized by a different accent, skin color, or clothing choice than the majority of students on Dordt’s campus, many international students blend in quite a bit more. David Kusserow, a 20-year-old freshman, is one of those students.

Kusserow was actually born in the United States. He lived in Pineville, North Carolina, until he was a toddler, moved to Canada while his father studied French in Quebec, and then moved with his missionary family to Niger, West Africa, when he was about five years old. Kusserow has called Niger his home until July 18, 2012, when he traveled back to the United States with his family on furlough and began attending Dordt in August.

In addition to the moves, Kusserow’s family also spent a year at home in the United States after spending every three or four years in Niger. Kusserow lived with his family until he graduated high school. After high school, he decided to take a gap year and volunteer at a mission hospital in Niger, so he lived in his own tiny apartment on the opposite side of the country from his family.

Kusserow’s decision to attend Dordt after the gap year was a pretty straight-forward, obvious decision, because he wanted to study agriculture at a small Christian school, and Dordt is one of the only schools in the United States with both a Christian foundation and well-developed agricultural program.

Kusserow has expressed only one hesitation in his college decision. “I really, really didn’t want to come to Iowa because it’s cold in Iowa,” he shared, “but studying agriculture is more important than being warm.”

At Dordt, Kusserow is a resident of North Hall and is an Agriculture Major. He has recently become involved with the department’s Honors Program.

Kusserow loves the welcoming, friendly community at Dordt and that students are taught to “do things in a way that honors God.” Already in his first semester, he believes he has learned quite a bit about “relating to people and broadening (his) perspective.”

Although Kusserow appreciates his experience at Dordt immensely thus far, he has felt like an outsider a few times already. In agriculture classes, Kusserow doesn’t like the huge emphasis on professionalism because agriculture in Niger’s culture simply isn’t set up for that. “(Professionalism) is a good thing,” he said, “but it’s not me.”

Kusserow also feels left-out occasionally because he is not a “farm kid.” The farming community he grew up in was a “small-scale, non-mechanized community.” He doesn’t wear boots and doesn’t talk the same way as the majority of the agriculture majors, so feeling a part of the department has been a recent challenge.

On campus as a whole, however, Kusserow feels welcome. “People are actually interested in where I’m from,” he shared excitedly, “I never feel like an intruder or like I’m sitting on the edge of groups I have to fit into.” Kusserow spends much of his free time with other international students, including sitting with them in the commons. Kusserow says the international students always sit together, but he wishes there wouldn’t always be that separation.

Overall, Kusserow would love for American students to tell international students about where they are from. He says, “Niger is foreign, new, and exciting to most of campus, but Iowa is also new and fascinating to me.” Kusserow shared that the first time he came to Iowa was the day before he moved into Dordt.” Kusserow admitted. He believes one of the hardest things at Dordt is related to people without knowing anything about them.

Kusserow shouldn’t be thought of as just another international student, agriculture major, or missionary kid from Niger. Instead, Kusserow is a freshman with a unique past who would like to know about American students just as much as they would like to know him.
The word "calling" is one we hear a lot around this place. We are called to love others. We are called to use our gifts and talents in a way that praises the Lord and lifts others up. We are called to serve in certain places. We are called to a vocation that the Lord has given. And he wholly prepared us. We have all been called to Dordt College to receive the preparation the Lord sees fit for our future vocational placements.

I am an education major; my heart desires nothing more than to spend the rest of my days in an educational setting. I am a teacher, a professor. There are people who would call me a "hustler" or even founding a non-profit or using my education to make a name for myself (15 more minutes of fame) he probably puke after hearing that offer. That's possible. We live in a world where showing Christ's love may be a challenge and not having those tangible ways of doing so may prove to be difficult as well, but I'm not in a rush to get myself a job and make a big name for myself. Like just my background and education at Dordt taught me so. In my mind, I wouldn't want you to have also been taught not to only make choices that are easy, but also call him to the easiest path; He called me to one that I am most prepared for, the one that will advance His kingdom most. He called me to go out into the world and make disciples. He called me to be a Christian educator in public schools.

Back in the Netherlands, the government makes it possible for any student, no matter their parents' income, to attend a Christian school if they choose by funding all school. And since they bike everywhere, transportation is never an issue. While that would be incredible, we don't live in a place where that's possible. We live in America, where there is separa-
tion between church and state, and therefore education may not be an option for some because of money, and biking to school every day doesn't seem very realistic.

Jennifer Van Der Hoek
Columnist

You Don't Have to Face the Airlift of Zombies

If you're a kid like a lot of people, including myself, one of your first thoughts is probably, "Holy cow! That looks like a world of walking outside the classroom. First of all, we are scared of something. Recently I read that the Bible is "do not fear." Now, I could be wrong, but I think God is trying to tell us of "not fear" that He wants us to, let me see here. I don't often take time to ask kids about their concerns or requests on the board. Most of them raised their hand, whether they actually had a prayer request or not.

One student, when called upon, paused for a second, and then said, "Miss Mulder, if I was a Christian, I would like to pray about growing up."]

Rachel Mulder
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Kids say the Dardest Things!

Opinion
Exclusive: Christian Education

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Rachel Mulder
Columnist

Kids say the Dardest Things!
Despite losses, Defender football has seen improvement

At every 8K (Men) or 5K work, proper practice, and as one that involves team ships, both men’s and women’s teams have their eyes fixed on making it to nationals in Vancouver, Wash- ington on Nov. 17.

Cross country is a sport that is often overlooked as one that involves teamwork, proper practice, and mental preparation. Team- work is always needed by everyone person on the team. At every 8K (Men) or 5k (Women) race, each runner must do their best to con- tinue to improve the team performance in any way possible.

Most of the meets Dordt has been participating in this fall are two weeks apart. This allows for a pre- cise and beneficial training schedule. Various work- outs and recovery runs are spread out accordingly to help the athletes perform the best on race day.

One of the team goals this year has been to com- petitive right off the bat and also improve as every race goes on. Encouragement is huge in cross country in or- der for teammates to reach the goals set in the season. Members of cross coun- try teams understand these mental, physical, and social practices are beneficial at- tributes of the sport.

Top scoring runners for the men’s team this year are Ryan Tholen, Nathan Jack- son, Trent Kischer, Chris Postma, Tim Biema, Derek Opp, Jake Byma, and Ryan McNamara. For the women’s team, Merissa Harke- ma, Lauren Opp, Renee Buikema, Kayla Byl, Lillie Koerner, Katie Bonnema, and Abby De Vries have all been running solid rac- es this season improving the women’s team national rankings.

The Defenders ran their final regular season meet on Oct. 20 in Yankton, South Dakota. The conference meet will follow in Sioux City, Iowa on Nov. 3.

Cross Country: more than just running

An excerpt on the cross country team, submitted by Aaron Spronk

When people think about cross country, many think of work, endurance, speed, or even insanity! But for the 2012 Dordt Cross Coun- try team, it is more than just that.

As the end comes near for Coach Greg Young- blood’s first season as the head coach of the Dordt College football program, challenges have certain- ly arisen, but he believes that the team can be proud of the progress they have made from week-to-week.

“In my first season, I can’t say there have been any huge surprises, but I am very thankful for the hard work our coaches and players have put in,” said Youngblood. “We have steadily improved and, while we are still not where we want to be on the scoreboard, I feel good about the progress we are making.”

In a number of games this season, Dordt was able to show that they had the ability to win games, but fell short at the final whis- tle. Against Briar Cliff, it was a neck and neck bat- tle throughout the entire game, down until the last 10 seconds of the game in a 33-29 loss. A week later in a match up with Dakota Wesleyan, Dordt amassed a total of 691 yards of of- fense before falling short 45-31 in a game where multiple team records were recorded. The Defenders did manage their first win of the season, however, during Parent’s Weekend on Saturday, October 20, against Dakota State. The final score came out to be a 24-7 victory.

Throughout each week, the goal has always been the same; if you continue to have day-to-day and week- to-week improvement, the desired results will come. This year has been full of learning curves for every- one, coaches and players alike, but players have kept spirits high.

“Every week I just have to go out there and do what I can to help out the team. We always need to keep moving forward and make our fans proud,” said soph- omore Trai Pickney.

The Defenders finish up the season strong with two tough matchups. First, Dordt holds the final home game with senior night on November 3 against Do- ane, and then the season finale against rival North- western on November 10 in Orange City.
Alex Updike
Staff Writer

Visiting the theater department on Dordt’s campus is never a boring experience, especially when student Jeremy Vreeken is there, going on about the difficulty in maintaining his weight despite his terrible metabolism and how he’s cheating on his wife with his secretary.

In case you haven’t guessed it, Jeremy wasn’t talking about his own life. In fact, he was running lines for the upcoming play “Plaza Suite,” a three-act comedy written by Neil Simon and being student-directed this semester by Mia Kornelis.

“Plaza Suite” is “quirky and fun,” Kornelis said, “but also takes a serious look at relationship dynamics.” In the first act, a couple, played by Jeremy Vreeken and Rebecca Dykhuizen, head to Suite 719 in the Plaza Hotel, where the entire play takes place, in an effort to rekindle the fire of their now-stagnant marriage.

In the third act, a loud-mouth mother and father, played by Chris Geels and Jerusha Pimentel, spend their time in Suite 719, attempting to get their daughter out of the bathroom and downstairs to her wedding. Adam Luth and Katerina Ryder also make appearances in both acts.

Kornelis described the play as “full of wit and slapstick,” stating also that “if the audience doesn’t have a really good time, we definitely did something wrong.” But the play isn’t meant to simply give audiences a good laugh. “I hope that the audience will be willing to take a critical look at these relationships,” Kornelis said.

Of course, taking on the responsibility of directing an entire show is no easy task, but Kornelis seems to be taking it all quite well. “I really like directing a lot,” Kornelis said. “There’s tons of people to coordinate . . . it’s cool to have a hand in all the decisions, and guide the whole process, and makes me really excited for the final product.”

She is not alone in her endeavor, however, as many students, ranging from designers to actors to costumers, are all willing to help out where they can. “It’s great to have so many other students willing to work with you, give ideas, and help out,” said Kornelis.

“Plaza Suite” runs November 15, 16, & 17 at 7:30 p.m. in the New World Theater. Students receive a discounted price of $2 per ticket, which can be purchased at the door.

“The show is only about an hour and fifteen minutes with intermission, so definitely consider it as part of your weekend plans,” Kornelis said. So come, think, and have some laughs as you support your fellow students in their production of “Plaza Suite.”

Costume Dance Photos and Highlights

Compiled by Aanna Stadem, Photography Editor

Dordt students danced the night away at the Halloween Dance this past Friday, October 26th. DJ Teresa DeWitt kept the music going while the floor was shaking from the full dance floor. The event lasted from 9:30 p.m. until midnight with a costume contest at 10:00 p.m.

First place winner Emily Holz, dressed as Katy Perry, received a $25 cash prize. Tyler Wolterstorff and Corey Hulstein placed second as boy scouts from the movie Up, winning $15. Visitors from London District Christian Secondary High School, Cassiee Feyen and Beth Dekker, placed third as a bubble bath, winning a 5 lb bag of candy.

Alex Updike, a senior, attended the dance and described it as a “fun time to hang out with friends and see people let themselves go a little bit.”

Can you find yourself on the dance floor?
Movies can do wonderful things. They can inspire us, depress us, teach us truths, and allow us to see worlds that don’t exist. “The Tall Man” is, quite frankly, one of the most thought-provoking movies I’ve seen. The plot is simple in the beginning. The movie stars Jessica Biel as Nurse Julie Dunning who lives in a small Washington town where children have been disappearing for years. The only clue to their disappearances is the local folklore: The Tall Man.

Legend has it that The Tall Man comes into the village at night and steals children away from their families. The town is built on 40 square miles of mining tunnels, making it impossible to locate the children. No one knows if the children are dead or alive. No one knows who the tall man is. No one can find the children or any clues. It’s as if the tall man doesn’t even exist.

The movie picks up when Dunning’s home is broken into and her son is kidnapped. She chases after whom the audience assumes to be the tall man. She hangs for dear life on the back of the van the tall man is driving, despite being attacked by a vicious dog and having cuts and bruises all over her body.

It’s at this point that the movie does an entire 180 and flips itself upside down and inside out. Throughout the second half of the movie, you aren’t sure who is good and who is evil. I know this description may sound vague, but I can’t allude to the twist without giving away the entire plot. Let’s just say that the acting is phenomenal, the plot is twisted, yet hopeful, and the emotional satisfaction is completely fulfilling. If you decided to watch this, be prepared to do some critical thinking. I just watched it and still can’t figure out who is right and who is wrong. This movie is a must see.