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## Hilltopics: Volume 3, Issue 18

Hilltopics Staff

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# HILLTOPICS

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volume three, issue eighteen  
week of march 5, 2007

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**Be Heard:** *Hilltopics* is always looking for good submissions on virtually any topic. Email your ideas, feedback, or articles to hilltopics@hotmail.com.

## Debates over our theological culture: one students shares her hopes

by Janet Arnold

While there is so much to be learned and the opportunity for personal and spiritual growth seems vast, I have come to feel that such institutions set more restrictions than outlets for benefits. Does religion promote discourse and growth or does it suppress it? I think it clear that it as institution can do both.

All religions have needed the idealists, the zealots, the extremists to grow into the multi-tiered systems that developed along with man's conception of God. With categories and sub-categories and the multitude of choices it is hard to conceive that anyone could not find a spiritual home. But at the same time it's that same religious passion that unites us to our belief.

I remember in my more devout years being so excited about my faith. It was not only a part of me, in so many ways I felt that my Christianity defined me. I remember expressing on two occasions an interest in becoming a leader in the church. The response

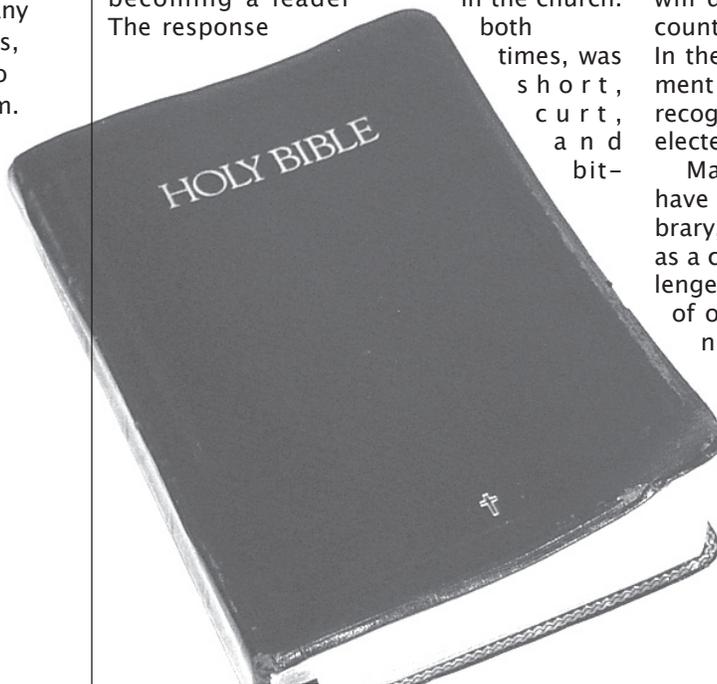
ing. "You know you can't do that, right?" The church had never before these moments seemed a cold and unwelcoming place. How could I feel comfortable there, knowing that I was going to be looked down upon for my gender.

It's no surprise to me that I feel that disillusioned to the church, but I don't understand how we are expected to allow ourselves and our beliefs to be self limited. We allow ourselves more freedom in changing our major than we do to opening our minds towards different religions. We're not even talking about a Cox-Medows jump here. Why must we have to reconcile that in order to be a denomination, I have to commit to a concept and close off all others?

In talking with my friends on the war in Iraq, we all agreed that it is frustrating how infrequently people take accountability for their actions, especially when it comes to politics. It is disheartening to us that they will down play problems because they are counter to their stated beliefs or platforms. In the course of our conversation, the comment was made that our generation seems to recognize this, and that maybe when we are elected to office we will maintain that desire.

Many arguments on a theological level have addressed the current topic of the library, and it is comforting to know that we as a community are willing to entertain challenges and questions, as well as raise some of our own. It gives me hope that we will not allow our dedication to our beliefs limit our growth and openness to outside ideas.

*Janet Arnold is a junior marketing major*



We welcome submissions from all members of the SMU community. Letters to the editor should be up to 300 words in response to a previously published article. Contributions should be articles of up to 300-600 words on any topic or in response to another article. Please email your submission to hilltopics@hotmail.com by Wednesday at 7:00 PM to be included in the following week's publication. Special deadlines will be observed for breaking campus events. The opinions expressed in *Hilltopics* are those of the authors solely and do not reflect the beliefs of *Hilltopics* or any other entity. As such, *Hilltopics* does not publish anonymous articles.

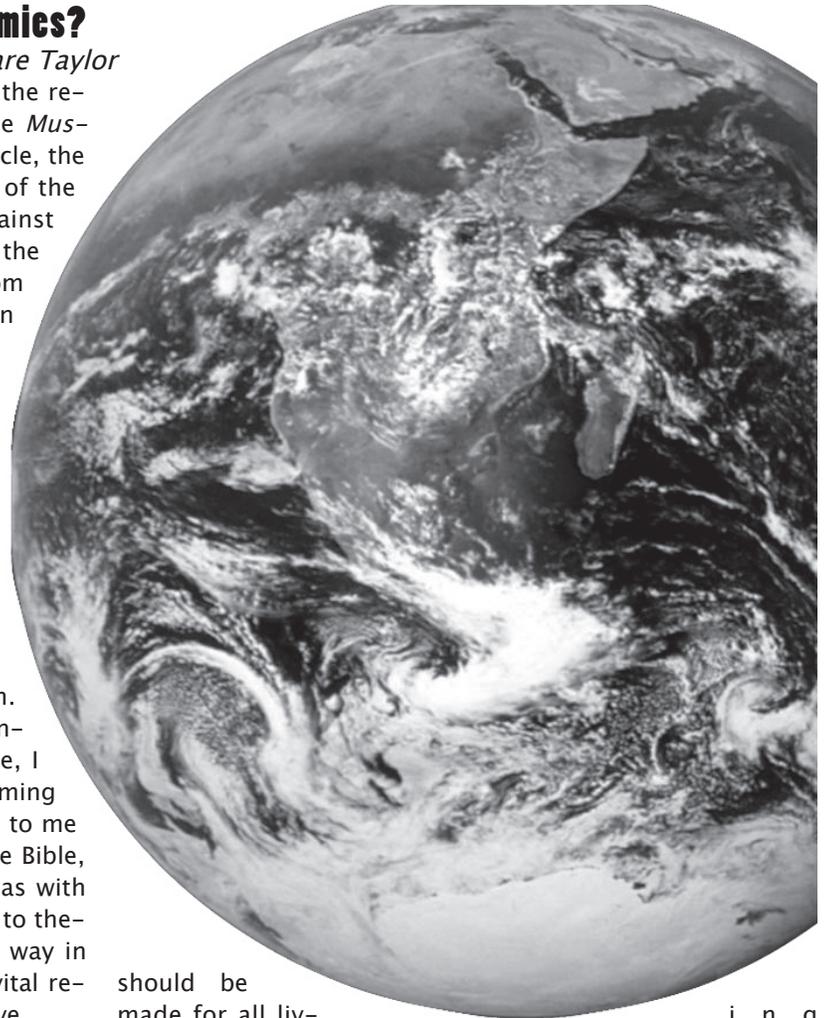
## Theology and science: are they really enemies?

by Clare Taylor

On one hand, it seems almost silly to respond to the recent article from one of our fellow publications, the *Mustang Post*, called "The Book on Hypocrisy." In the article, the author cites the reasons why he believes members of the Methodist clergy and others started the petition against the Bush library on campus. At several points during the article, I laughed out loud, mostly to keep myself from crying, wondering if the article could really be taken seriously. Then, I remembered it was published in the *Mustang Post*: the article was as serious as a heart attack.

One of the reasons he cites as an argument of the Methodist clergy against the library is President Bush's reluctance to address the global warming issue. I don't intend this article to provide a point by point list of reasons to believe in the science of global warming. However, you don't have to watch *An Inconvenient Truth* to know that science shows that increased CO2 emissions caused by humans are contributing to a rise in the temperature on earth. This temperature increase could have disastrous consequences on our future generations. Science aside, I would really like to address the issue of global warming being "in opposition with Christian beliefs." It seems to me that there are many ways to read and understand the Bible, the author's reading notwithstanding. In this case, as with many other cases, science need not be in opposition to theology. Instead, I believe that science illustrates the way in which we as humans are failing to protect our one vital resource: the earth. Without the earth, we cannot survive.

In addition, if you are a religious person, a certain respect



should be made for all living things. Working individually and collectively to protect the planet from harmful greenhouse gases is morally responsible. By taking a stand now, we can help to protect our children and grandchildren who will face the consequences of our selfishness if we continue down the same path we are on now.

Finally, contending that those who argue against the President using the dispute over global warming are choosing politics over religion is just plain false. Regardless of your religious or non-religious affiliation, as human beings our duty must be to question. To accept blindly and without scrutiny must be avoided at all costs. Still don't buy the science behind global warming? Go research. Find an argument or a source beyond the Bible. Arguments couched in an informed and well-rounded understanding of the issues are more persuasive.

The debate surrounding the Bush Library has provided the students, faculty, and community an opportunity for increased dialogue. It is my hope that this discourse will continue with open minds and reasoned arguments.

*Clare Taylor is a senior French and international studies double major*



*The University Honors Program cordially invites you:*

*Alumna Gaines Greer on Teaching Abroad*

*At the SMU Faculty Club*

*Tuesday 6 March, 2007 at 6pm*

*with a special announcement by Hilltopics!*

*Heavy hors d'oeuvres will be served.*

*Dress is business casual.*

*The Faculty Club is located at the NE corner of Daniel Avenue and Durham Street (next to the Gamma Chi Beta Sorority house).*

## Companies are finally starting to realize how much green the environment holds

by Doug Hill

Nobody likes paying their electric bill, and as the months wear on and the weather gets hotter, those bills only seem to climb. But it's not just in the coming summer months that demand for electricity is high in Texas. In fact, demand is growing so fast that TXU had plans to build eleven more coal-fired power plants in the state of Texas.

They had those plans, that is, until they were bought out this week by two large private equity firms. The new owners, Kohlberg Kravis Roberts and Texas Pacific Group have drastically scaled back those plans, but its not because they don't recognize the growing demand for electricity in Texas—in fact, it's because of it.

The most amazing thing about the \$45 million buyout is that KKR and Texas Pacific are voluntarily opting for alternative energy, cutting greenhouse emissions, and promoting efficient use of their electricity. Even more amazing: nobody told them they had to.

This week's buyout is the latest in a string of events that suggest that even when governments are too slow to craft real environmental protections, corporations sill find market solutions. While the long-term aim of the decision by TXU's new owners is profit, rather than protecting baby seals and polar bears, everyone wins in the long run.

Politicians everywhere are recognizing that carbon emissions must be contained. Nearly the entire globe has ratified the Kyoto Protocol, and even China has stricter emissions standards than the United States. But the problem is being addressed at home, too. Just last week, five states announced projects similar to California's plan for something called "carbon emissions trading," and over 400 U.S. mayors have committed to reduce emissions in their cities. Like it or not, the time is coming when polluters will be put out of business.

Recognizing this fact, TXU's new owners were faced with a dilemma: how is a polluting company going to stay in business if the future will be one of regulation? The answer they found was simple. Stop polluting so much.

When polluters are faced with robust laws to stop their reliance on unsustainable environmental practices, they are also going to find that they are faced with lawsuits. It's bad when global warming causes an iceberg to melt and some penguins or something die (whatever, I'm no scientist), but it will be even worse a few years down the line when global warming prevents certain crops from growing or puts certain industries in jeopardy. Those who are economically hurt by climate change are going to look for someone to blame, and KKR and Texas Pacific seem wise to try to keep TXU out of those crosshairs.

Americans have been given the same line on environmental policy for years now: "Protecting the Earth is important, but must be balanced against economic interests." It's such a familiar line of argument that it goes without saying that environmental protection hurts our economy.

It's also a load of crap.

Aside from the obvious fact that if we destroy Earth, GDP and the Dow Jones seem fairly unimportant, it seems obvious that, in many cases, sound environmental policy is the same thing as sound economic policy.

One reason is that, as TXU's new owners are recognizing, polluters will be held accountable—if not by governments, then by their customers. Observe what's happening in the automobile market. American carmakers like GM and Ford failed a few years ago to follow Toyota, VW, and other foreign companies in creating lines of fuel-efficient and eco-friendly cars. Ford is now scrambling to keep up in the hybrid market and struggling to stay solvent, while Toyota is reporting record profits. Ford looked at American politics and decided Americans didn't care about the environment; Toyota looked at gas prices and decided Americans did care about not putting a fifty dollar bill into their gas tank every few days.

Forward-looking environmental policy would be smart no matter what the costs; it is a moral responsibility to ensure that Earth is livable for future generations. But it's especially smart when there's so much green to be made. The truth is that environmental protection doesn't hurt the markets—it creates new ones. Engineers are going to get paid to design wind turbines and solar cells. Farmers are going to get paid to grow biofuels. Automakers are going to get paid to develop eco-friendly cars. The new challenges we face demand new technology, and new technology invariably leads to industrial innovation. People are willing to pay a lot of money for environmental solutions, and companies are finally recognizing that it might be a good idea to try to find those solutions.

*Doug Hill is a senior international studies major.*



**AN OPEN FORUM:**

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**GEORGE W. BUSH  
LIBRARY &  
INSTITUTE**

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**Monday, March 5 1-3pm**  
**Hughes-Trigg Commons**

**Public discussion to follow**

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# HILLTOPICS

First Annual

## Hilltopics Campus Essay Contest

2007

This spring semester, Hilltopics will host its first annual campus-wide essay contest, and you are invited to participate! Contestants will write one essay according to the prompt and guidelines below for a chance at \$1,000.00 worth of prizes—grand prize, \$750; two honorable mentions, \$125 each. In addition, the top three essays will be published in a special issue of Hilltopics. Entries are due no later than 5:00pm on April 13, 2007 in 108 Clements Hall.

**Prompt:** SMU is well known for its vibrant Greek life and party culture and less well known for its academic excellence and “life of the mind.” What, if anything, should SMU do to change this perception?—essentially, how can SMU not only appear, but actually be more scholarly and/or studious?

### Submission Requirements

Contestants should follow the instructions below carefully or else risk disqualification:

- Essays should be between 600 and 750 words.
- All essays should have a cover page with the following information: contestant’s name, email address, telephone number, classification (year graduating), and student ID number. Nothing but this personal information should be on this cover page.
- The contestant’s name should NOT appear on any page OTHER THAN the cover page. All other pages should include the contestant’s student ID number in the upper right-hand corner.
- All pages should be double spaced, 12 point font, Times New Roman.
- If resources are used or quoted, students should create endnotes following MLA style (see <http://www.aresearchguide.com/7footnot.html> for information).
- All pages should be numbered, not including the cover page.

### Adjudicating Criteria

Essays will be judged according to the following elements:

- clarity of thought, argument, and idea
- syntax, spelling, word choice, and grammar
- use of specific examples, information, and details to support assertions
- essay addressed the prompt fully and creatively
- essay adhered to the submission requirements listed above

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**Questions?** contact Todd Baty at [tbaty@smu.edu](mailto:tbaty@smu.edu)