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Hilltopics Staff

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HILLTOPICS

week of November 2, 2009

Vol. 6; Issue 4

RICHTER SHAKES THINGS UP

By: Savannah Niles

On Friday, October 23, twelve students of the University Honors program presented what each studied, concluded, and experienced while traveling as Richter Research Fellows.

Awarded twice a year to University Honors students, the Richter Research Fellowships provide students with the grants needed to pursue independent research in any area of study. This year's Richter Fellows traveled inside and outside the United States: three students researched in Taos, New Mexico, while the others studied in Europe and the Americas. One panelist, Astrud Villareal, will travel to Australia over winter break.

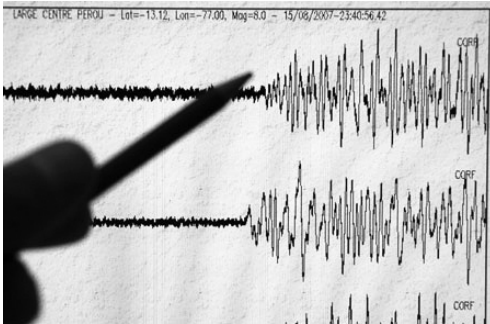
When asked about her thoughts on her fellowship, Villareal says, "I want my research to have actual value, something that can be built upon later on so there's definitely a desire in **RICHTER** continued on page 7

WHARTON'S WALL OF SHAME

By: Mark Gelbart

"I'm dead if this leaks. I really am - and my career is over. I'll be like Martha f—ing Stewart." Danielle Chiese, former Bear Stearns director, was recorded saying in an aggressive Bear Stearns-style conversation with a co-conspirator in one of the largest insider-trading scandals of the twenty-first century. Mr. Rajaratnam, a crusader of Wall Street and founder of the reputable hedge fund, Galleon Group made his billions off of investments in healthcare and technology in the late nineties. However, as returns stabilized, Raj felt increasing pressure from investors threatening to withdraw funds, forcing him to get a bit more creative. Through a network of strategically placed players among the ranks of Intel, IBM, Moody's, New Castle Partners, and the unblemished McKinsey & Co., Raj...

BUSINESS continued on page 4



A THEORY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND SOCIAL TENSION

By: Cody Meador

Over a year ago, I read an article about New York City expanding some bridge or highway, which was meant to alleviate traffic congestion, but the author of the article argued that the expansion would worsen traffic congestion because more vehicles would simply fill the added space. The author claimed that the reason why so many people in New York City use public transportation is precisely because driving in the city sucks. This author went so far to say that we should actually be removing traffic lanes and parking spaces one by one to force more people out of their comfortable cars and onto buses and trains.

This is a little kooky, but I actually like the idea. While I was living in San Francisco for my first year of school, I also noticed that a significant part of the city's population used public transportation instead of driving. The public transit system was great compared to DART, but it was still public transit. The buses were often late, the seats were sticky, the air inside was stinky, but nonetheless, a wide range of people could be found together on a Muni bus or a BART train. And I think I know why. Driving in San Francisco sucks (especially if you are a timid driver with a stick shift).

When I lived in San Francisco, I rode the bus to an internship downtown once a week for a semester, and I witnessed people of all sorts crammed into this small, musty space.

THEORY on page 5

IN THIS ISSUE...

FUN AND GAMES

WORD SEARCH - "AROUND SMU"

HOTTEST TENNIS PLAYERS

ENTERTAINMENT REVIEWS

T.S. ELIOT'S "THE WASTE LAND"

SAMUEL BECKETT'S "WAITING FOR GODOT"

IN RESPONSE!

Letter to the Editor

I have read with interest your first issue of Hilltopics, a good kickoff for the year. I do, however, want to offer a mild correction in re: ³Coming to a Theatre Near You,², p.4.

I'm no expert on Holmesiana, but 1927 did seem to me a bit late for first publication of anything about Sherlock Holmes. A little fact checking (Columbia Encyclopedia, 5th ed.) confirmed that the first Holmes story was published in 1887. The year 1927, in fact, brought publication of The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes, the last Holmes stories by the original author, A. Conan Doyle, (who died in 1930).

Jeremy Brett (d. 1994) was, for my money, by far the best Holmes portrayer so far, though I'll grant that tastes do differ. Robert Downey, Jr, was brilliant as Charlie Chaplin, but I'm not anxious to see his take on a comic book version of Holmes. And, though I admire much of Jude Law's work, casting him as Watson seems ludicrous.

--
James M. Gerhardt
Professor emeritus
Department of Political Science

MY LIFE IS AVERAGE HALLOWEEN EDITION

Today, my mom called me on my cell phone and asked if I was in my room. I said yes and she told me to clap my hands. Confused, I clapped my hands. As soon as I did, a halloween witch that she had hidden by my window started to light up and wail. I screamed. She laughed and hung up. MLIA.

Yesterday, I went into school late and missed my history class. When I went to my school football game I saw my history teacher and he asked where I was. Since I was dressed as a ninja in honor of Halloween I told my teacher that I was there, he just didn't notice me because I was a ninja. My teacher then apologized for marking me absent and told me he would change it to say I was present. MLIA.

Today, I saw a man dressed as the Burger King, and another man dressed like Ronald McDonald fighting in front of a Wendy's. MLIA

MEADOWS PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

"AN EVENING OF PERCUSSION"

FEATURING DREW LANG, MARIMBA.

Wednesday, November 11, 8:00pm, Caruth Auditorium, Owens Fine Arts Center, SMU.

Come see the Meadows Percussion Ensemble as they perform their Fall Concert, "An Evening of Percussion" The concert is FREE and no ticket is required.

We are honored to be performing a WORLD PREMIERE of a newly-commissioned marimba concerto. G. Bradley Bodine has composed, "Namaste" A Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble. Meadows faculty member, Drew Lang, will be performing the solo part. Come see the first performance of this very important new work.

Also on the program:

Xpu-Ha Experiment by Phillip Mikula
Vespertine Formations by Christopher Deane
Intentions by Eugene Novotney
Laylit Houb by Mohamed Abdul Wahab
Double Music by John Cage and Lou Harrison
Triplets by George Hamilton Green

Come see what promises to be an inspiring night of music!



BETTER KNOW A HONORS PROFESSOR

DIANA CLARK GRUMBLES

Which classes you are teaching this semester:

ENGL 2305 - Honors First Year English: Understanding and Doubting.

What other classes do you teach:

ENGL 2306 - Honors First Year English: Human Responsibility and, in summer, English 1300 - Foundations for Rhetoric

Hometown?

Dallas, TX

Married?

Nope

Children?

One son, Danny Solomon, who graduated from SMU last May.

Interests/hobbies:

Teaching spin cycling; running half marathons

Educational History?

BA, MA in English at SMU; elected to Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest academic honor society.

Special Research interests:

Between running the Common Reading program and Directing First-Year Writing, no time for research!

Interesting Facts:

Has never left SMU since she was 18 and is one of 7 members of her family to attend SMU.



RATEMYPROFESSOR.COM SAYS

“The BEST Honors English teacher. She is hilarious, thought-provoking, and leads great class discussions. You move quickly, and generally cover one short book or several poems/stories a week, but they are interesting and she makes it fun. She really helps you improve as a writer and you will never be bored in her class! Take Grumbles!”

“She is great! She is extremely helpful and very specific with what she wants, has a lot of common sense and leads discussions well. She likes to make you think, but is not out to get you. She is a fair grader--she grades according to the level of thought she sees in your writing, not just structure and style.”

BUSINESS CONT...

...was able to make insider trades worth some 20 million dollars. By pooling tips from various sources, Raj made substantial trades before earnings reports were releases, and then selling them off for hefty profits.

What is quite remarkable about this case was captured perfectly by SEC director of enforcement Robert Kuzhami when he said, "Rajaratnam is not a master of the universe, but rather a master of the Rolodex." Both Rajaratnam and co-conspirator Rajiv Goel graduated from the Wharton School of Business in 1983. The rocking eighties figures from the prestigious Wharton School have found themselves in loads of trouble over the past few decades. The trend from Wharton has been so noticeable even recent students and graduates refer to the notorious collegiate as forming the Wharton Hall of Shame. Raj and Rajiv join the likes of Michael Milken, a legend on Wall Street who is credited for creating junk bonds, and five other 1980s graduates. It's not unusual for large scandals of this nature to implode based on ambitious partnerships formed in school. In fact SMU holds the record. Take Jeffery Skilling, SMU alumni of '75 and member of Beta Theta Pi, wound up in a dangerous partnership with fellow Beta brother Ken Lay. The duo brought about the world's second largest bankruptcy pre-Lehman. Perhaps it's the hubris or the addicting adrenaline rush between each concealed trade that allows these giants to think they can roam unnoticed.

It is still early in the investigation, but you can expect more partners and conspirators to surface before Raj goes to court. This sends an unpleasant signal to Washington, which is already mired with demands for financial regulation. As Galleon Group closes its doors and unwinds over 7 billion dollars in assets, you can bet Washington is gearing up to tackle the hedge fund industry.

Mark Gelbart is a first year Finance and Economics major, minoring in Statistics and Chinese. He can be contacted by email through (mgelbart@smu.edu).



HOTTEST MALE TENNIS PLAYERS

1. *Rafael Nadal*

Looks/Personality:

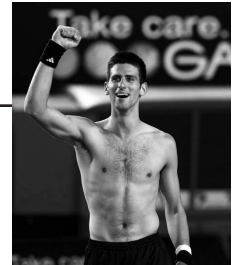
Compared to many of his peers, Nadal is not very tall. He stands at 6'1", but his muscular build makes up for it. Nadal's buff, tanned arms are exposed at every match due to his usual sleeveless attire. And of course, we can't overlook Nadal's butt scratches—weird? Maybe a little. This may shatter some hearts, but Nadal has been dating a certain Maria Francisca Perello stably for the past three years. News is they are still going as strong as ever, so we should keep rooting for the happy couple, as well as for Nadal to reclaim his number one spot on the tour. He has won all of the four Grand Slams except for the US Open.



2. *Novak Djokovic*

Looks/Personality:

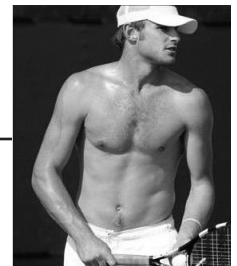
Just a few years ago, Djokovic was predicted as the next "Federer" because he was beating both Nadal and Federer in Grand Slams. Djokovic has a little bit of an attitude on the court. He can get overconfident and insensitive, especially when he has beaten his opponent. Other than that, he's a man of versatile talents. He speaks Serbian (his native tongue), Italian, German, and English. He enjoys scuba diving, soccer, and skiing during his free time—in fact, his ideal career had been either a skier or soccer player. His piercing blue gaze and extremely narrow waist are also part of his charm.



3. *Andy Roddick*

Looks/Personality:

Roddick's cute in an All-American, boyish way, and he's the perfect role model in many aspects. He founded his own philanthropy, the Andy Roddick Foundation, which focuses on children that are in danger and underprivileged. He has graced the covers of many prestigious magazines, including Rolling Stone and Men's Fitness. In addition, his blogs on his website reveal what a hilarious, lax guy he is in real life; he likes to share lame jokes and embarrassing moments. As far as his relationship history goes, Roddick has dated actress Mandy Moore and tennis star Maria Sharapova. However, just last year, he got engaged to swim model Brooke Decker quite unexpectedly; they had been dating for only several months. I don't want to burst any one's bubble, but let's just hope it was for true love. He holds the fastest serve in the world: 155 mph (249.5km/h).



THEORY CONT...

...Kids going to school, businessmen and women going to work, minimum wage workers going to serve burgers, and me. I also used to hear so many different languages! Chinese and Spanish were common, but several times, I didn't even know what I was hearing. When more people take public transit instead of driving, more people have to share public space, whether it is walking on the street, standing at the bus stop, or riding on the bus.

Now, let's return to Dallas. We know that Dallas is trying its damndest (kind of) to get a fantastic public transit system going, but a large part of the problem is that few people use the buses and trains who aren't forced financially to do so. I've spoken to numerous people who feel that riding the bus in Dallas is awkward or even unsafe because a certain "kind" of person is the only "kind" of person on the bus. We also know that driving in Dallas, for the most part, is a breeze. The only place it really gets bad is downtown, and if you go downtown you probably work there and you

probably have a parking garage.

A couple weeks ago, I was working at my retail job (which I like because I get to talk to random people about random stuff), and I was talking to someone who was about my age and who had recently moved from Austin to Dallas. He said he felt a social pressure to dress nicer in Dallas (hence, he was at my store buying new shoes) and that the social differences were more apparent. This was interesting to me because I had heard the exact same thing from another coworker who had made the same move. After talking more, I found out that in Austin, like San Francisco, a lot of people take public transportation and come together in those public spaces.

My theory is not that more people take public transit because driving sucks (I think that's obvious), but that when more people take public transit, social barriers may be diminished, if even just a little. First of all, when you have to walk to a bus station, wait on the curb, sit on a sticky seat next to a potentially smelly homeless person (also common on San Francisco buses),

you dress differently. Furthermore, you start to see yourself differently in relation to the other people you encounter on a daily basis. Not only do you feel less self-conscious because lots of ladies have sneakers on with their work skirts (which is not cute), but you start to start to see yourself as a part of the crowd. That burger-server, that person whose language is unrecognizable, and that businesswoman all suddenly share something and some space with you. This is no solution to urban social conflicts, but I think it is a teeny tiny start.

Lastly, did you know you can get a DART pass for practically free at the Park N' Pony? At my school in San Francisco I did not know one single student without their university bus pass. At SMU, I can count the students I know with the university pass on one hand. So, get your pass and get on the bus already!

Cody Meador is a senior political science major and can be reached at (codylm@gmail.com).

Do you have an opinion about...

politics? music? class? television? football? shopping? intramurals? fraternities? movies? tests? the Mavs? club sports? sex? religion? driving? Umphrey Lee? technology? baseball? the weather? dating? books? nightclubs? the Daily Campus? pets? Texas? study abroad? sororities? news? the war? magazines?

or anything else?

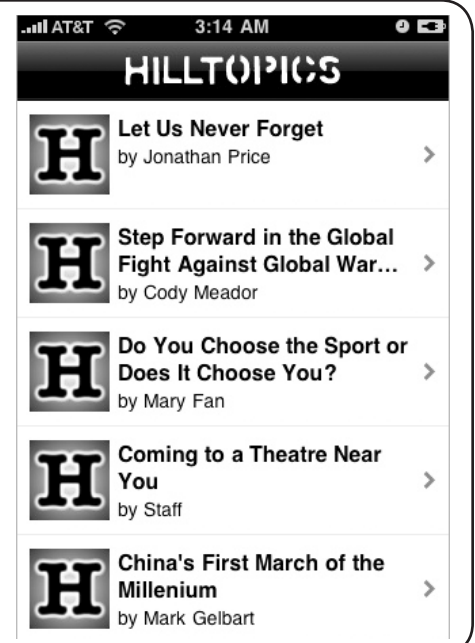
*we're listening at
amhowe@smu.edu*

DID YOU KNOW?

Hilltopics has its own iPhone App?

While nothing can really replace a paper copy, getting a free update on your iPhone is pretty close

Get it for FREE at the App Store today!



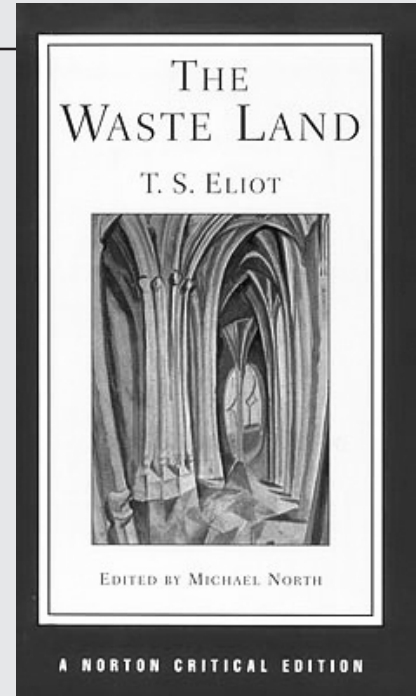
IN REVIEW...

By: Jack Swearingen

“THE WASTE LAND”

“I think we are in a
rats’ alley
Where the dead men
lost their bones.”

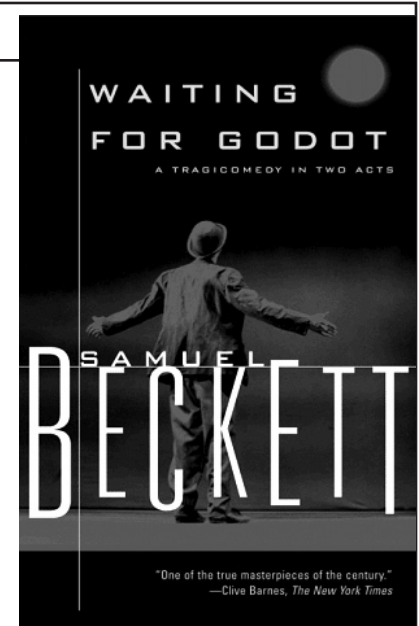
Published in the aftermath of the Great War and anticipating the chaos of World War II, T.S. Eliot’s long poem, “The Waste Land,” is arguably the premier poem of the 20th century, not only for its groundbreaking accomplishment in pushing the limits of poetry beyond the established norm, but also for its depiction of the total moral, intellectual, and spiritual bankruptcy the modern human condition is now plagued with. Composed in five sections with abrupt changes in tone and narrative voice, “The Waste Land” embodies a waste of poem dealing with the sterility of humanity and the hopeless quest to return to a former innocence and sense of coherency. As the poem progresses, the verse line gets increasingly erratic until the final stanza completely immerses the reader in a nihilistic state of total abandon and madness. Although T.S. Eliot draws much of his literary and scholarly inspiration from Eastern religions, causing some critics to argue that the poem ends in a state of religious nirvana or selfless bliss, the reader is left on the banks of a clogged river with the impotent Fisher King who, as drawn from Arthurian legend, remains forever impotent along with his realm. Likewise, we also remain impotent in our endeavors to return life to the barren, mutilated soil of our existence. Perhaps not the best poem to read in the rainy weather but a classic nonetheless.



“WAITING FOR GODOT”

“Let us do
something, while we
have the chance!
It is not every day
that we are needed.
But at this place, at
this moment of time,
all mankind is us,
whether we like it or
not. Let us make the
most of it, before it
is too late!”

“Waiting for Godot” by Samuel Beckett represents the pinnacle of Absurdist Theater, although true absurdist would mock this as paradoxical and irrelevant. Consisting of two men waiting at a train station in the middle of nowhere for someone named Godot (whom they know nothing about), the entire work deals with their immense boredom, repetitive encounters with various characters passing through, and the overarching realization that life, for both the characters and the audience, has gone beyond meaningless and settled on silly. While prone to philosophical discourse and crazed ideas of adventure never realized, Vladimir and Estragon cause the audience to laugh at their incredulity and cry in realization that they are guilty of the same pathetic, almost hysterical antics in search for meaning in life and the motivation to fulfill the charge. As the curtain closes on the final act, Godot never shows, but the play was never really about Godot anyways. The play is about waiting – waiting for a life that consistently passes us by, waiting for meaning that never presents itself, waiting for some sign or sense of direction to show us whether to stay where we are, as we are, or to move on and look for life’s deeper meaning elsewhere. Our only choice is to wait, and perhaps twiddle our thumbs in the meantime.



RICHTER CONT...

myself to do really well and that's what's making me slightly nervous. But overall, I'm excited for the project!"

To apply for a Richter Fellowship, students develop research proposals and detail budget plans. Following their research, the Fellows present their findings in a scholarly written work,

which they may submit to academic journals in the area of their research field...

The variety of fields researched by this year's Richter Fellows was one of the most impressive features of Friday's presentation event, which featured three panels of Fellows:

Panel 1 consisted of students who researched in Taos, New Mexico:

Caroline French attempted to explain the disappearance of a mass of turquoise mined by the jewelry company Tiffany & Co.: Where did all the Turquoise Go?

Jacqueline Wilcher studied environmentally sustainable housing pods in Taos: Earth Ships—Self-Sustaining Homes

Kyle Hobratch, a visual arts major, researched the emergence of the artistic community centered in the region: From the Cafes of Paris to the Pueblo of Texas



Panel 2 included those who traveled to Europe in order to conduct their research:

Preston Osborn studied the treatment of criminals in early modern Britain: The Propertied and the Peasantry: Who were the Criminals in Early Modern England?

Victoria Kean conducted research on modern attitudes towards the Holocaust in Germany's Jewish communities: Post Holocaust in the Heart of Germany

Patrick Littlefield evaluated the social causes and effects of the establishment of new churches in present-day London: Emerging Churches in England: Reactions, Shapes, & Structures

William Elder compared two historic battles between the Romans and barbarians: Arminius and Boudicca: Barbarian Threats to Early Imperial Rome

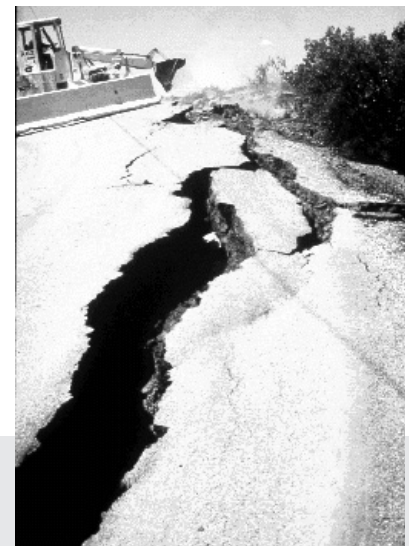
Andrew Coit and Erica Ritz conducted research to propose and support a compromise in the controversies surrounding Greece and England's opposing national claims on the Elgin Marbles: Reclaiming History: Greece & England

The final Panel consisted of students who traveled to the Americas and beyond as a part of their research:

Vivian Costady traveled to Buenos Aires to evaluate and study "public memory" and "public trauma" of the country's past political conflicts: Cleaning up the Dirty War in Argentina

Patrick J. Gardner researched the nature of the public's feelings of nationalism that inspired US territorial expansion: American manifest Destiny: The Republican Roots of Territorial Expansion

Astrud Villareal will be traveling to Australia this winter in order to research the success of the Australian government's efforts to combat obesity in the population's youth: Supersized Kids in Australia



Through each of their presentations, one could sense the passion and discipline that fueled these Fellows' research.

THUMBS UP

ZOMBIES!
Homecoming
Studying Abroad
Midterms are over
Playing Twister in a cape



THUMBS DOWN

Inflation
Class registration
Finals are coming up
Tripping and hurting yourself while
playing Twister in a cape



WORD SEARCH *AROUND SMU*

S Z Q Z F O Z R T H E R Y N S A P H B M
B C Z I F R F V O S O I T T X S G I U U
M A I L P K A M S S I U I E R M F L L S
U H T T N W E T S J A D R Q C A H L C T
P Z D X I C S E E D O K O F T S P T T A
H T W D O L F O D R O U R H V U D O H N
I J A M M O O Q N H N E O N T H V P G G
Z S I A R B X P B V N I S W W E A I I X
D N V P F J U V V G K O T H U M M C N I
G A N U R E P R I D B N D Y J S X S E S
E N G L I S H N B A C K P A C K N C V I
D E J S D X E Y S E L L A B T O O F Y D
L L A B Y E L L O V R E T U E I D M F U
K B K G R O V N A X R R O S U J R V R V
E X T R E K B L E A G D Y I V U B K F U
H H U X B O U U F Z R O A N R Q F K O Z
J S Q W L M L R J O F T H E U R S P N T
Y V Z W N K I O F J A Y O S R B K T X I
D J V I H A E R G W O I N S L U E Q K A
D Y D E B G I U X Y Y O A Q O S B M R W

AIRFARE	ALUMNI	BACKPACK	BURBERRY
BUSINESS	ENGINEER	ENGLISH	FOOTBALL
FORD	FRATERNITY	GEOLOGY	HILLTOPICS
HOMECOMING	MAIL	METHODIST	MUSTANG
NIGHTCLUB	PARTY	PERUNA	POLITICS
PROFESSOR	SAMSA	SORORITY	VOLLEYBALL

CRIME DOESN'T PAY...

(but it still makes us laugh)

Criminal Mischief; September 3, 9:03 am

A student reported some unknown person shattered her window while it was parked.

***What was her window doing out on its own?*



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