

Why study abroad in Sicily?



Alex Yu
News Editor

Imagine yourself soaking up the sun on an island in the Mediterranean reading a book for class, while your friends battle the cold November wind back at Rhodes, studying for finals in their dorm or the crowded library. This dream could be your reality if you attend the Rhodes Odyssey in Sicily. But if you want this dream to come true, you must hurry and apply because the deadline for non-scholarship applicants is February 15!

Why choose this program over others? There are many advantages. For starters, it's Sicily. Catania, where the program will take place, is the second largest city in Sicily and the tenth largest city in Italy. The city of Catania is located on the eastern side of the island, and is considered as the "Athens of Sicily" due to the rich artistic, cultural, and political influence during the Renaissance. According to Dr. David Sick, the program leader, "Sicily is an exciting place because although part of Italy, it has a long Greek tradition. Therefore, students interested in the ancient world would be able to get both the Italian and Greek side of things." Another reason this program is a plus over others is that students will be able to take Search. "It's very hard to go abroad and take a class to finish the Search program," says Sick, "but I will be teaching Search 201 which means students will be able to finish if they have not done so already." The program is also a full semester long, something that stands out since most Rhodes programs are only summer programs. Students will also have the opportunity to fulfill a number of Foundation requirements such as F1, F3, F5, F8, and F11. Students can also expect expeditions in and around Sicily on an almost weekly basis.

This program also introduces a new con-

cept of the study abroad idea to faculty. "Rhodes is trying to set up a model where faculty can go abroad and do their teaching duties. For example, the two courses that I will be teaching will count as my teaching for a normal fall semester. This is a test case to see if it will work, but the idea is that other faculty may then develop similar things in other places. The goal, I feel, of the college is to get more students to study abroad during the academic year. We do pretty well in the summer, but it would be pretty nice if we could get the percentages up during the academic year, and this is one way we are trying to accomplish that," says Sick.

So what classes will be offered? There will be two core courses offered, The History of Sicily, and Italian Language. For elective courses, students will be able to take Latin Literature, Humanities 201, Classical and Medieval Art, Politics of Modern Italy, and Geology. For Geology, Sick says, "Catania is at the foot of Mount Etna, so it's a great opportunity to study a volcano."

One of the aspects of the program that Dr. Sick is most excited about is the fact that students will "have a chance to go to the Mediterranean and see the kinds of things that they have been studying in class, which is always exciting for the students." The number of students that can be accommodated is 15, and the cost of the program will be the same as Rhodes tuition and covers room, partial board, and all excursions such as the traveling seminar to Rome. So what are you waiting for? Stop reading this, and go apply right now before it's too late! As an incentive, Dr. Sick adds, "We also plan to throw the least favorite student into the volcano as an offering at the end of the semester." Who would want to miss that?

The weekly sassy lesbian column

You can be hetero, just don't
flaunt the lifestyle

By Rin Abernathy

Our college has a commitment to diversity. This includes accepting people of all sexual orientations. We happen to have a large amount of heterosexual students on this campus, and I respect that students are free to date among any gender they desire. After all, you can't help loving someone. However, I've noticed a trend among heterosexuals on this campus.

Maybe you're going through that straight phase. Maybe you think it will get you more attention from your friends. Maybe you're HUG—hetero until graduation. That's cool. College is all about self-exploration. However, it's your choice to be straight. Just because you live that sort of lifestyle doesn't mean I have to see you flaunt your heterosexual agenda.

You distract people with all your public displays of opposite gender affection. You ignore real, important issues by talking about all your typical hetero topics—how great it is that you can get married to each other, all those edgy legal rights to have children together, that flamboyant way you can hold hands in public. Don't think people don't notice when you act all stereotypically heterosexual. I mean, straight boys watching sports and playing violent video games? Girls who like shopping and cooking? Men and women grinding at frat parties? Please, you're trying way too hard to fit into those heteronormative gender roles.

It's one thing to be straight in private or on campus, but the public sphere should be off-limits. Think of the children! If they see a boy and a girl flirting, their innocent little minds might be warped, and they themselves could be turned heterosexual. I know I definitely don't want my future children exposed to your deviant, perverted male-female ways in their schools. Perhaps I'm being a little unfair. I know you say you were *born* that way. And yeah, looking at nature, other species have heterosexuality. Did you know that sharks are just straight dolphins?

I occasionally make the mistake of assuming that the stereotypes on TV or in movies represent real life. Not all straight people ruin the sanctity of marriage, even if they do have a 50% divorce rate in the United States. Despite what reality shows tell me, most het couples probably don't have sister-wives. It's possible that some straight men know how to cook or how to dress themselves, or that a girl can love both boys and Birkenstocks.

Maybe I shouldn't assume that my token straight friends speak for all heterosexuals. After all, I'm a forward-thinking young Rhodes student, which means I have to acknowledge that some people choose different lifestyles, even if they love the opposite gender. Next time I hang with my straight female friends, I'll be magnanimous enough not to mind when they talk about boys. Next time I hang with my straight guy friends, I'll accept that they, too, like to date girls. (No hetero, bro, no hetero.)

Have a question or a topic you'd like addressed?
Want advice or opinions full of semi-witty and sarcastic answers?
Email abere@rhodes.edu.

Imaginary product of a chaotic mind

Adiha Khan

2012. Starring John Cusack, Amanda Peet, and Chiwetel Ejiofor. An epic adventure about a global cataclysm that brings an end to the world and tells of the heroic struggle of the survivors. To be more accurately stated, I would re-phrase this plot description in the following manner. 2012. Starring John Cusack, Amanda Peet, and Chiwetel Ejiofor. A movie created with an asinine desire to cram as many hair-breadth escapes and eternities of suspense as possible into 158 minutes, inculcating the audience with the realization that the only thing that can bring an end to the generic dialogue and unending preposterous plot points is the coming of 2012 itself. As it neglects to re-connect the concept of 2012 back to roots that conform to the theories on this event, failing to provide any thorough references to the Mayan civilization and its seeming connection to this matter (except for one nonsensical news-clip scene in reference to people committing suicide atop Mayan temples), what this movie does succeed in doing is in reflecting the reality of the non-reality of 2012.

December 2012 marks the conclusion of a b'ak'tun; a period of years in the Mesoamerican Long Count calendar, which was used in Central America prior to the arrival of the Europeans. There was a strong tradition in Mayan culture of especially devoting special rituals like ballgames and sacrifices to deities during certain critical time periods like the ending of these b'ak'tuns to ensure the continual progression of the seasonal cycles, allowing for the health of the harvest and the continuity of life. The present-day Maya, as a whole, do not attach significance to b'ak'tun 13 because it solely represents the completion of another cycle, and perhaps the beginning of a new age. Mayan elder Apolinario Chile Pixtun and Mexican archaeologist Guillermo Bernal both have noted that "apocalypse" is a Western concept that has little or nothing to do with Mayan beliefs. Mayan archaeologist Jose Huchm once stated: "If I went to some Mayan-speaking communities and asked people what is going to happen in 2012, they wouldn't have a clue. They wouldn't believe you. The world is going to end? We have real concerns these days, like rain."

Attaching the seeming end of the Long Count calendar to a manufactured Nostradamus-like end of days prediction, beyond doing a disservice to this civilization of antiquity, more than anything embodies the greater need in the human soul for a perception of chaos. Although on the surface, it seems as though we enjoy our stability and tranquility, chaos is an indestructible element of our composition. What were the beginnings of the universe if there was no chaos? What are our lives without constantly changing chaotically defined complexities? With every catabolic reaction in our metabolism releasing new energy into the brewing atmosphere, we are the agents incessantly drawing our universe into a state of increasing entropy. Violence and uprisings and wars all stem from our own needs for greater dominion and assertion for the fulfillment of the values and desires and greed and need that overpower our view of the harmony of the whole. And with every soul interacting in assemblages, constructing links branching into billions of rays across the universe, it can simply be understood that we are chaos. We want what we are. And, if what we are is chaos,

then we spend our entire lives in anabolism, sculpting our minds for the attainment of a profession that contributes to the construction of a civil society, when the innermost desire of the human heart has always been the destruction of what it creates.

Using 2012 as an answer to this undisclosed desire for chaos, we have defended our humanness and preserved the virtuosity of the human spirit by even going so far as to assert that the harbingers of the apocalypse will not be the human world, but aliens and half human/half angel hybrids. In late 2009, rumors began circulating in UFO forums on the internet that Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI) had detected several city-sized spacecraft headed towards Earth, often citing a particular image from the Digitized Sky Survey as evidence. In December 2010, an article appeared stating that a high-ranking SETI researcher named Craig Kasnov had reported that three flying saucers, each tens of kilometers long, would arrive in Earth's orbit by December 2012. If the alien invasion scenario seems too far-removed and it makes more sense to believe that the world's end, if eminent in our future, will be a product of our own vices and self-destructive inclinations, some may even turn to the Bible to preserve humans from blame. According to biblical legends, Nephilim were a race of giants and super-heroes who did acts of great evil. Their great size and power likely came from the mixture of demonic and angelic "DNA" with human genetics. All that the Bible directly says about them is that they were "heroes of old, men of renown." The Nephilim were not aliens, they were literal, physical beings produced from the union of the sons of God and daughters of men, supposedly created to pollute the human bloodline and prevent the rise of a pure, sinless human being. Using the Nephilim concept, we can easily assert ourselves to be the most righteous creation in existence, only being led to apocalypse and destruction by fallen angels and forces beyond our realm of control. But the ease with which it is to use conceptions beyond our comprehension and influence and careless references to the devil to defend our moments of fallibility and vulnerability is an only greater indication of the frailty of the human spirit.

If we took on an exclusively scientific perspective on this entire matter of apocalypse and the nature of the human spirit does it make our conclusions any more justifiable? It is additionally predicted that December 21, 2012 will mark the date of galactic alignment and pole reversal and massive solar flares, conferring cataclysmic prediction theories on a scientific basis. The scientific evidence for anything is always formed on a basis built on speculation. We create experiments. We form theories. When we have more evidence and knowledge, we make new experiments that defeat old theories and create new ones. Therefore, with every effort to make an impactful, undeniable assertion, human reason will always fail. If we accept our fallibilities and impurities and eccentricities, we can bring ourselves to realize that the amount of knowledge we have can never be enough. Like a microorganism or a sound wave, the end escapes us. Our capacity to see within definable limits ends with the present moment. And any defended conception of an unknowable, indefinable end is an imaginary product of a chaotic mind.

Follow-up on cafeteria changes

Erica Morozin
Layout Editor

There are very few times when a journalist can be directly credited with more than sparking an idea that creates change. The purpose of journalism is to promote change, yet a journalist is rarely responsible for tangible change.

With that being said, I celebrate the changes that Mr. Sciara has begun to make as a result of my January 26 dining hall article. It is refreshing to know that journalists can make a difference and can cause positive change.

Admittedly, the article was not one of my best written, yet it is the article that I have received the most positive feedback on.

Though my article may have been rather hard for Mr. Sciara to swallow at first, I be-

lieve it made him acutely aware of the food situation.

Last Friday, I ate lunch at the Rat. This was the first day that I saw new changes being implemented at the Rhodes dining centers, and I was happily surprised by the expansive nature of the changes.

Vegetarians and meat-lovers alike can appreciate the changes. Two new stations were added: another vegetarian option was added to the already vegetarian-friendly, stir-fry section, and a "choose your toppings" section was added to the pizza line. In addition to these innovations, delicious flatbread was added to the pizza line, and numerous fresh desserts including a delicious (in an unbiased way, of course) chocolate pie were added to the numerous selection of desserts.

Sciara and his colleagues stood back and

watched the students' reactions to the new selection of food. As they witnessed the excitement and pleasure of the students, the Rat staff seemed to be overcome with happiness. Even Leroy was smiling.

This is a new and exciting time for the Rhodes student body, because the lines of direct communication are now open between students and cafeteria staff. Sciara made a hotline available for suggestions and also welcomes suggestions through email. I sincerely hope that others follow suit and propose additional changes for the dining halls.

This experience has truly been a learning experience for me as a journalist. I have learned that even the smallest articles can have a great impact on the actions of others. Journalists can make an impact if they express themselves in such a way that allows for it.

THE SOU'WESTER

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As the official newspaper of Rhodes College, *The Sou'wester* is produced entirely by students on staff. It functions independently of faculty and administration. The newspaper is published weekly throughout the fall and spring semesters, except during exam periods and breaks.

The Sou'wester is a member of the Student Media Board, a consortium that includes the editors of all student media outlets, class representatives, and at-large representatives from the student body.

All staff editorials published in *The Sou'wester* represent the majority opinion of the Editorial Board composed of section editors and executive editors. Opinions expressed in opinion columns and letters-to-the-editor do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *The Sou'wester* Editorial Board. Letters-to-the-editor are encouraged, but cannot exceed 350 words; all letters must be signed and will be edited for clarity.

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ASSOCIATED
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PRESS

Protests in Egypt infused with radical undertones

John Ayers
Staff Reporter

It has been said that the Egyptian protests are a beacon of democracy. Those who follow the news have even heard many reporters say that the protests are largely peaceful and have little radical Muslim activity. Those who are realists, though, see the violence and recognize the radical Islamist nature behind much of it. Already, violent gangs have fired on police and broken violent militants out of prison. To clarify, briefly, Islamist does not mean Muslim. It stands for a group of radical Muslims who push for Islam to be the guiding force for the state. This means that Islamic law is supreme, Muslim clergy help run government, and foreign policy decisions are made based on Islamic principles. For Mubarak and his government to fall to these forces would be a disaster for the United States, Israel and the region.

Egypt is the second largest recipient of American aid. Roughly \$2.1 billion dollars have been sent to the country for economic development and military support every year since the 1979 peace treaty with Israel. The Egyptian government should be considered friends. The people are another matter. Much like the Shah of Iran was despised by socialists, radical Muslims, and the poor, so is the Mubarak government, and we are now witnessing the culmination of much frustration over lack of economic progress, disagreement with foreign policy, pro-democratic forces, and Muslim extremism. Whatever sympathy we may have with the pro-democratic forces in Egypt, the United States must not allow Islamist forces to take control of the government. Obama has already come out as one of the Egyptian government's strongest critics and has demanded reforms. Hillary Clinton called for an orderly transition to democracy. Support for Mubarak from the White House is non-existent. This is eerily reminiscent of Jimmy Carter's treatment of Iran just before the fall of that government to pro-democratic, socialist, and Muslim extremists. Just like Iran, the main organized opposition is the Islamists who would likely fill the power vacuum. For a President whose

foreign policy has been often compared to that of Carter's, almost always a negative comparison, Obama is showing remarkably little intelligence. The White House has even gone so far as to claim it is reconsidering its annual aid to Egypt in light of Mubarak's intransigence. This is guaranteed to not only weaken one of our few Middle Eastern allies, but remove confidence in the promise of American support to other struggling allies around the world. What government will be inclined to align itself with America when its support could be taken away as lightly as Obama has abandoned Egypt? How can any of our allies trust us if we are willing to not only fail



Photo courtesy of Google Images.

to support, but actively advocate the removal of their government at the drop of a hat. Egypt has been crucial to maintaining peace in the Middle East, and as a bulwark against radical Islam in the region. Obama's betrayal for idealist reasons may soon destroy that bulwark and it will win him no real gratitude from a people who are strongly anti-American. It is as if our leaders have departed from reality to live in their own fantasy world.

Unfortunately, we do not live in a world in which democracy comes easily, as we have seen not only throughout history, but in our recent experiments in Afghanistan and Iraq, and in many other modern cases including Algeria, Iran, and Venezuela. Egypt is not poised for some remarkable rebirth, but is more likely to sink into extremism. The problem is that Islamist extremists represent the main organized opposition group in the country. The Nobel Prize winning ElBaradei, a likely successor for Mubarak, has already been in talks with the Muslim Brotherhood, a violent anti-Western, anti-Israeli and extremely conservative group to form a unity government in the event of democratic reforms. The government itself has been forced to cave to this radical group that advocates repressive Sharia law, does not recognize Israel, and is fiercely anti-American and open talks. A radicalized Egypt would be the worst possible outcome, and the most likely should the Egyptian government fall. Algeria, too, allowed sweeping democratic reforms to take place in a short period, and the regime soon realized that the Islamists were taking control of the country and were destroying the secular government, and so they retook power, and a violent civil war ensued. Democratic reforms must be introduced slowly in Egypt, not forcibly brought about overnight as Obama and the protesters want. Countries like Egypt are too prone to allow Islamic extremism to govern them should power be handed over to the people, and the Islamists are too organized and violent to be trusted with any sort of authority. There cannot be democracy, which it is doubtful would last long under an Islamist government, if it means an Egypt hostile not only to the West and Israel, but to its own minority groups such as women and Christians. Just because Egypt might become a democracy does not mean it will not be hostile to peace and our interests, in fact, it will make this much more likely. The choice of stability in the entire region and steady reform is more appealing than losing yet another Middle Eastern ally to extremism. The United States must support Mubarak's government in order to support peace, democratic reform can come later.

Can America ever move together as a nation?

Dean Galaro

A man in New York City owns a food cart. He diligently feeds his customers every day on a street corner in lower Manhattan, working long hours to feed his family. Unfortunately he is the sole income earner for his children. One fateful day, his cart is confiscated by a policeman for not being properly licensed to operate where it was stationed. It is a bit of a hassle, but the fine for such an offense is pretty small, and it could be paid on the spot. The policeman won't tolerate that kind of behavior and slaps the man in the face, slinging insults at him for who he is and what he does.

Jobless and embarrassed, the man visits the local police headquarters to complain, but is refused an audience. There is nothing else he can do and no one who will hear his case, so he retires to his home defeated. An hour later he returns to the police station, douses himself with gasoline, and lights himself on fire. He dies a week and a half later.

What would the national reaction be? There would be a vigil in his honor and it would get news coverage for a few days. Pundits would discuss his motivations. Some would probably call the incident an overreaction, while a few might even try to defend his actions. MSNBC might call him a hero for the poor and disenfranchised. Fox News might suggest Islamic fundamentalist ties. Sarah Palin might get on Twitter and complain that Obama hasn't solved unemployment yet. America would pause for a few days, reflecting upon the incident, and then move on to bigger and better stories.

If this were to happen in, let's say, Tunisia, it would incite riots that would quickly spread throughout the country, motivating people to protest the government and the policies that they were unhappy with. That revolutionary idea would spark those same feelings in those disgruntled citizens of other nearby countries, the growing discontent boiling over in countries like Egypt and Yemen. It would catch the international eye for

weeks to come.

Unfortunately, it did happen in Tunisia, and it has escalated into revolution and protest throughout the Arab world. The protests in Egypt have thus far garnered the most attention (because how many Americans can find Tunisia on a map?), but they are a direct offshoot of the protests in Tunisia.

I place the Middle Eastern protests in the American context to consider why it seems that we are so much more peaceful and stable on this side of the Atlantic. Although this is not to say that we have not had our fair share of protests and uprisings. Our country was created amidst revolution. There were several important slave rebellions in the 19th century. Riots also broke out in 1968 in Chicago at the Democratic National Convention. And who could forget the Watts riots of 1965? Or Rodney King in 1992?

Many times have Americans rioted in the face of oppression, but they have been, for the most part, isolated incidents. The last time there was a significant national protest movement was the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Only racial tensions could bring Americans together to protest what was wrong in our country.

And yet the civil rights movement did not bring about regime change. It forced legislation to be passed that helped move racial integration forward, but it hardly toppled any dictators. Maybe that's because we simply don't have dictators in the United States—we have *Democracy*. And yet there is still unrest and dissatisfaction and a myriad of social issues that cloud our political dialogue.

Maybe we just have it good over here. Maybe things are comfortable for enough people that we see no reason to rock the boat that much. Maybe it's simply too hard for the poor and disenfranchised to actually rise up and make their demands heard. Or maybe we trust Washington enough to protect our interests and create the social change that we all

want.

The Arab world protesters want an end to corruption and ill-treatment. They want to have a stronger voice in their own political systems and want freedom from the iron fist of their own government. The people feel mistreated, and the forceful reactions from their governments might lend some credence to those feelings.

If police brutality and government corruption can bring about riots of this magnitude, then they must be important issues. This begs the question: Are there issues in America worth rioting for? Healthcare is pretty important. Immigrant nationalization is pretty important. Drug policies are pretty important. Racial and gender equality is pretty important. Civil liberties are pretty important.

It's not like we don't have government corruption, or that we don't hear about issues of police brutality and overuse of force. But how much more important is it to fix our healthcare system? And how much more important is it to secure civil rights and civil liberties for everyone, regardless of race, sex, or orientation?

This is not me calling for revolution. It just strikes me as odd that, in the face of social injustice and political disarray, we are still calm. Although maybe that is a good thing. Insurrections do tend to bring the whole death and destruction thing along with them. The United States could just be too large to actually coalesce into a unified protest. Or we're just too evenly split. The Tea Party may protest, but too many people don't take them seriously, so their threat to government structure is, for the time being, muted.

We've grown to love our government, and are quick to forgive it when it messes up. Could we ever really give that up?

Student Voice

What additional changes would you like to see in the Rat and the Lair?



"I'd like to see chocolate chip cookies more often. I feel like we never have them..."
-Courtney Mott ('11)

"I would like to see more lettuce wraps. When they have them, they are really good."

-Elise Hastings ('13)



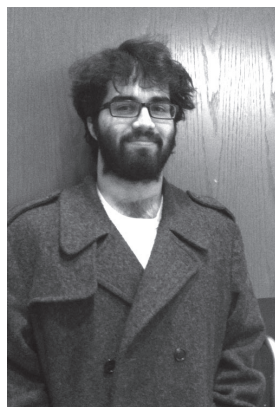
"Today was nice. They had dumplings, and little bread squares. I've already seen some good changes. I just want better quality. I think they're doing a good job changing."

-Julia Wolfe ('13)



"FOB access to the Rat so that ice cream will be available late into the night. Nom Nom Nom all night long on the tasty, tasty ice cream."

-Klaus Garcia ('14)



"I'd like it if they had a fruit bar all day – not just during breakfast."

-Maha Bano ('13)



Groundhog predicts end of winter, though many in doubt



By Julia Fawal
Staff Writer

With all the snow we've seen so far this year, it seems like winter will never end. But never fear, for on this year's Groundhog Day, the illustrious Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow, signaling an early spring.

The Groundhog Day tradition has Roman roots, but it was brought to this country by German settlers in the 1700s. In German custom, if a hedgehog sees its shadow on Candlemas, a German celebration, six more weeks of winter will follow. If it does not, spring is just a mere two weeks away. The tradition is almost akin to the one we follow today, only, obviously, a groundhog is used instead of a hedgehog.

And it is a particular groundhog, at that. Punxsutawney Phil, the groundhog who forecasted the weather just last week, is allegedly the same groundhog that was present on February 2, 1887—the very first official Groundhog Day. It was held at Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania where it is now an incredibly popular ceremony that hosts crowds of up to 40,000.

Scientists say that groundhogs typically only have a lifespan of about seven years, making the claim that Punxsutawney Phil is over 120 years old a slight stretch. However, his handlers and devoted fans insist that his amazing old-age is due to the Groundhog Punch he drinks. This elixir of life is supposedly the reason Punxsutawney Phil is able to wake up every February 2nd before sunrise to make his prediction.

On his off-days from being a prophet, Phil resides in the town library with his lovely "wife"

Phyllis (Seriously. I can't make this stuff up). A group called the Inner Circle makes sure he is comfortable and well-taken care of while they plan the next Groundhog Day ceremony. This Inner Circle is selectively chosen, and they can be identified by their outfits of top hats and tuxedos. Each year, Phil is brought to a temporary burrow nestled in a simulated tree stump in Gobbler's Knobb for the sole purpose of crawling out to essentially predict the future based on his shadow.

The Inner Circle warns everyone not to be fooled by imposters, though. There is only one "official" weather-predicting groundhog, they say, but rivals such as Staten Island Chuck and General Beauregard Lee are trying to steal the spotlight.

Phil is clearly extraordinary, for not only can he predict the weather, but now he can also text message (text "groundhog" to 247365 for a forecast update) and update his Facebook status. That's right, this groundhog has a Facebook, and next February 2nd, you can be directly informed the moment he steps out of his burrow.

In all of his years, Phil has seen his shadow 100 times, he has not seen it 15 times, and there are nine years undocumented.

As far as his accuracy goes? Phil's handlers and fans are adamant that his predictions are flawless, but let's just say that no one should start celebrating this supposed early spring just yet. He only has an accuracy of 39%.

Regardless of the validity of either his predictions or abnormally old age, Punxsutawney Phil's name and legacy seem to be immortal. But for the sake of seeing an end to this cold weather, let's just trust that he knows what he's talking about.

Salvia: Not a thing you want found in your dorm

Julia Fawal
Staff Writer

Ska Pastora, Diviner's Mint, yerba de Maria, Sally-D—all of these are names for Salvia, the hallucinogenic drug recently made infamous by Miley Cyrus. Salvia divinorum, or diviners' sage, is rumored to be kind of like a "legal marijuana," but that is not the case, and the repercussions for using it could be great.

Salvia is a plant indigenous to areas such as southern Mexico, Central America and South America. In Mexico it was often used by Mazatec curanderos for rituals before it entered Western culture in the 1990s. It is part of the mint family, and the leaves have the chemical Salvinorin A. This chemical is considered the most potent natural psychoactive substance. When it lands on the kappa opioid receptors in the brain, hallucinations quickly occur in the individual.

Though the chemical is strong, it is not addictive. Still, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, or DEA, has recently listed salvia as a "drug of concern," according to TMZ. "Psychic effects include perceptions of bright lights, vivid colors and shapes, as well as body movements and body/object distortions," the DEA reports, adding that other effects include uncontrolled laughter, overlapping realities, dizziness and slurred speech. Synesthesia, the alteration of physical sensations allowing one to "hear" colors or "smell" sounds, is also known to occur. It is also not uncommon for users to feel uncomfortable or unpleas-



ant after using the drug, a sensation known as Dysphoria.

Harvard and the University of Kansas believe that Salvinorin A could aid in the development of pain and psychiatric medications, and Dr. Bryan L. Roth from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill said in 2002 that there is evidence salvia could treat brain disorders such as depression, schizophrenia, Alzheimer's, or even HIV. However, there have also been cases where people committed suicide minutes after smoking the drug.

Salvia is legal in the majority of states, but before you start lighting up by the Rat, don't. Tennessee is **not** one of them. On July 1, 2006, a bill was passed that classified the known produc-

tion, manufacture, distribution, or the possession of salvia as a Class A misdemeanor. Though technically it is not a criminal offense to possess, plant, cultivate, or grow this drug for aesthetic, landscaping, or decorative purposes, it is still probably best not to risk getting a fine of up to \$10,000 and/or 9 months jail time.

Salvia seemed fairly under the radar until Miley Cyrus was filmed smoking it from a bong towards the end of 2010. However, a 2008 *New York Times* article states that, in the United States, 3% of young men between the ages of 18 to



25 used the drug that year. Such statistics show that it is used twice as often as LSD and almost as often as ecstasy. Studies even showed that it was used by up to 7% of students on college campuses. But because of its legality in most states, videos of individuals using salvia are popular among websites such as YouTube.

Though Cyrus was in California and technically not doing anything illegal, the incident raised a multitude of concerns. More states are beginning to question the legal status of the drug, and the DEA is currently considering labeling it as a controlled substance. Obviously, since it is illegal in the state of Tennessee, it is illegal on Rhodes campus. Its recent media popularity has peaked students' curiosity, causing an increasing number to experiment with the drugs' effects. However, getting caught could directly lead to expulsion, and it seems as though the effects of "Sally D" are not worth the severe negative repercussions.

CAMPUS SAFETY

January 31-February 7

1-31-2011

2150- Medical/ BCLC- Student injured finger during basketball game. Transported to local hospital by car. Pertinent information gathered report filed.

2-1-2011

2330 Medical/ Glassell quad- Sick student. Transported to local hospital by ambulance. Pertinent information gathered report filed.

2-5-2011

1013 Information/ Checking on a student's welfare. Student located and is fine.

2-6-2011

1406 Medical/ Robinson- Sick student. Transported to local hospital by ambulance. Pertinent information gathered report filed.

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True Grit: How The West Was Re-Won

by Shelby Lund
Staff Writer

"They told me you had true grit." And apparently that's all that qualifies US Marshal Rooster Cogburn to help 14-yr-old Mattie Ross hunt down her father's murderer in this new film version of the classic Western novel *True Grit*.

In contrast to the 1969 John Wayne film, which centered entirely on Wayne as Cogburn, the story of the 2011 *True Grit* stays true to the original novel by following the point-of-view of Mattie, played by real-life 14-yr-old Hailee Steinfeld. Mattie is an incredibly mature, yet still naively idealistic girl who sets out to avenge the murder of her father against the wishes of everyone involved, including Cogburn, Jeff Bridges, who she hires to help her track down the murderer, Tom Chaney, Josh Brolin, and a talkative Texas Ranger, La-Boeuf, Matt Damon, who is also after Chaney. Nevertheless, through pure spirited determination as well as her willingness to threaten anyone in her way with her family's lawyer, Mattie convinces Cogburn to let her tag along to hunt down the gang of lawbreakers who Chaney is rumored to have fallen in with, led by "Lucky" Ned Pepper, Barry Pepper.

The movie excellently captures the flavor and spirit of Oklahoma in the 1800s, from the Oscar-nominated period costumes to the beautiful wilderness locations on which the film was shot. This period accuracy extends to the state of civil rights in America at the time: a courtroom scene contains a jury consisting only of white adult males, the film's two African-American characters both appear to be servants, and the Indian characters are openly mistreated. However, these are not major points of the film—they merely serve to illustrate that the film takes place in a time *very* different from our own. Although one rarely thinks the mistreatment of the Indians such as two children getting repeatedly kicked off a porch as comedic, these instances can actu-



Courtesy of Wikipedia

In total, the film has received ten Oscar nominations, including Best Director for the Coen Brothers.

ally be considered perversely funny in context. Despite being a film about revenge in the Old West, *True Grit* has quite a bit of humor built in, from Mattie cleverly out-haggling a trader to Cogburn's tendency to state the obvious. The film also has the violence and shooting to be expected of a Western, including a couple of gruesome scenes not for the faint of heart.

The film thrives mainly on the skills of its all-around excellent cast. Jeff Bridges has been nominated for Best Actor at the Oscars for his portrayal of the irascible, drunken, one-eyed Cogburn, with a drawl that would put John Wayne to shame. Hailee Steinfeld puts

in a truly impressive performance as Mattie, the film's viewpoint character, portraying a young girl who is both very grown up, yet at the same time still a child who expects to get her way and have everything turn out right. The balance between childhood and adulthood that Steinfeld brought to the role is no doubt the reason why, despite being only 14, she has received an Oscar nomination for Best Supporting Actress. Matt Damon is hilarious as LeBoeuf, with his Texas Ranger pride, Western lawman swagger, and tendency to get the short end of the straw. Yet, LeBoeuf is a much more complex character than first meets the eye. Despite their lack of major screentime, Barry Pepper as Lucky Ned is a credible threat to the protagonists, and Josh Brolin's Chaney is menacing and intimidating, especially when he tries to kill Mattie in the film's climax.

One complaint about the film is that the dialogue is spoken in grammatically correct English with no contractions. While it is historically accurate and matches the dialogue in the book, the characters speaking occasionally sound odd and stilted to the ears of a modern audience used to hearing characters in Westerns use incorrect grammar. However, it isn't a huge issue, only really noticeable at a few points and not enough to ruin the movie-going experience.

All in all, *True Grit* is a film done in a classic Western style which evokes the great Westerns of the 1950s & '60s and which is faithful to its source material, a great compliment for any book-to-film adaptation. Multiple stars of the original *True Grit* have highly praised the Coen Brothers' masterful adaptation, and it entirely deserves its Oscar nomination for Best Picture. And I'll bet, if John Wayne was still alive, he'd clap those brave pilgrims on the back for transporting American movie-goers back to a time before the West had been won.

Grammy Nominees

While the award show will take place on Sunday, here's a list of a few of those up for a golden record player...

Record of The Year:

Nothin' On You – B.o.B. featuring Bruno Mars
Love The Way You Lie – Eminem featuring Rihanna
F*** You – Cee Lo Green
Empire State of Mind – Jay-Z & Alicia Keys
Need You Now – Lady Antebellum

Album of The Year:

The Suburbs – Arcade Fire
Recovery – Eminem
Need You Now – Lady Antebellum
The Fame Monster – Lady Gaga
Teenage Dream – Katy Perry

Song of The Year:

Beg Steal Or Borrow – Ray LaMontagne
F*** You – Cee Lo Green
Love The Way You Lie – Eminem
Need You Now – Lady Antebellum

Best New Artist:


Justin Bieber
Drake
Florence + The Machine
Mumford & Sons
Esperanza Spalding

Best Female Pop Vocal Performance:

King of Anything – Sara Bareilles
Halo (Live) – Beyonce
Chasing Pirates – Norah Jones
Bad Romance – Lady Gaga
Teenage Dream – Katy Perry

Best Male Pop Vocal Performance:

Haven't Met You Yet – Michael Buble
This Is It – Michael Jackson
Whataya Want From Me – Adam Lambert
Just The Way You Are – Bruno Mars
Half of My Heart – John Mayer



THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

Directed by:
Allie Eiland and Jerica Sandifer

THE DETAILS

Date: February 17th-19th, 2011
where: Blount Auditorium
Time: 6:30 info fair, show starts at 7:30 pm
Tickets: 2 for \$7 opening night ONLY, \$5 other nights.

THE DETAILS

Cast Members:

Emily Sellers	Jennifer Marshall
Madeline Scott	Jasmine Tate
Catherine Coker	Marissa Clark
Morgan Smathers	Shelby Long
Ryley Erhardt	Rhiannon Mancinelli
Carly Agre	Colleen Parrish
Hannah Gysin	Sydney Shearer
Daisy Laird	Tanisha Wakefield
Kelly Allison	Julia Golizio
Julie Borden	Professor Evelyn Perry
Bailey Hutchinson	Aya Kato
Sarah Bacot	Professor Li Han
Marrissa Scales	

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Rhodes Singers Invited to a Prestigious Festival

by Joanie Williams

This year, the Rhodes Singers will go on a four-day tour to sing in various locations in Washington, DC. The Singers were invited to audition and were subsequently accepted for the main program, which is the National Presidents' Day Choral Festival at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The festival is based around music in commemoration of the September 11th attacks. One of the pieces includes the sounds of the planes crashing into the buildings, and incorporates English, Latin, Arabic, Greek, and Hebrew languages in its performance. The Rhodes Singers will be joining a couple of other selected choirs, and the accompanying orchestra includes active members of the military.

The director of the Singers, Dr. William Skoog, was also invited to be the artistic director for the Festival. When asked what the most exciting thing is for this tour, Skoog said, "The unexpected." He notes that it is amazing and a gift to "have this experience, a collective community experience" to promote the hard work of the Singers. Skoog also says that the Singers get a rare opportunity to sing in places specifically designed for choral music, as well as see national monuments and other historical locations.

Kenneth Scott, class of 2011 and an officer of the Rhodes Singers, provided sentiments towards the tour and his final year, along the same lines as Skoog. "It's a good last year. It's been a while since we've had a tour this large, (and it's the) one time we get to spend together outside of a classroom. Because it's not just a

classroom – it's where we find our cohesive sound. We get the opportunity to perform in really unique spaces, acoustically designed and meant for choral singing."

Other performances planned on their itinerary include participating in the U.S. Military Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns, a performance at the Vienna Presbyterian Church as well as at the St. Patrick's Cathedral, attending an evensong at the National Cathedral as well as a performance by the Singers beforehand. Their adventures in Washington, D.C. also include a tour of the Arlington National Cemetery and an evening walking tour of the Lincoln, Korean, Vietnam, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and National World War II Memorials. The group will also visit the Washington Monument, George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens, and Ford's Theatre where Lincoln was shot, all before heading back to Memphis. The Singers have worked hard to fundraise and get donations from friends, family, and alumni to go on this trip and participate in side activities. In fact, most of these activities are a part of the program to commemorate Presidents' Day Weekend

Participating in this trip will be forty six Rhodes Singers, James Cornfoot, Debbie Smith, and Laurence Albert, in addition to Skoog, all from the Rhodes Music Department. As a final note, Skoog mentions that he has conducted quite a bit, and no matter what he has "always been surprised."

Dan Savage Brings Love to Rhodes

by Annika Wuerfel
Staff Writer

Dan Savage definitely knows how to tell it like it is. After reading a few of his responses he gave to people on his advice column "Savage Love", it is no wonder why Savage has grown in such popularity. Between his high doses of hard truth, sharp, blunt remarks, and vivid, sometimes made up words, there is no one like Savage. Now not only can the Rhodes community read Savage's advice online, we can also hear him talk in person and maybe even answer a few of our own relationship dilemmas during his visit to campus Tuesday, February 15!

Savage was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1964 to a Roman Catholic family. He attended an all boy Catholic high school, Quigley Preparatory Seminary North, where the other students picked on and harassed Savage for liking musicals and being gay. He then attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and majored in theater and history.

In 1991 in Madison, Wisconsin, Savage teamed up with Tim Keck, co-founder of *The Onion*, to help start an alternative weekly newspaper in Seattle. The newspaper, titled *The Stranger*, is home to Savage's "Internationally syndicated relationship and sex column", Savage Love. Currently, Savage is the editorial director of *The Stranger*. In addition to being a columnist, Savage has a weekly podcast, Lovecast and his own App on iTunes. Savage is also a contributor to Public Radio International's "This American Life" and has been a Real Time Reporter on HBO's "Real Time with Bill Maher."

As if all these jobs were not enough to keep Savage busy, he maintains his perhaps most well-known and important project is his The It Gets Better Project as well. This project asks people, whether they be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or not, to make videos encouraging gay teenagers that life can improve and will improve despite the bullying in school. This worldwide Inter-



Courtesy of Google

In addition to being a columnist and speaker, Savage has also worked as a theater director, both under his real name and under the name Keenan Hollahan, using his middle name and his grandmother's maiden name."

net project phenomenon was started on September 21, 2010 after Savage learned of Justin Aaberg and Billy Lucas, who both committed suicide due to being bullied for their perceived sexual orientation. When Savage heard about these two boys, he stated, "I wish I could've talked to that kid for five minutes before he killed himself...I'd tell him that however bad it was in high school or middle school...it gets better."

The It Gets Better Project has inspired thousands of videos and over 30 million views. However, these videos have not only been made by regular citizens, but also by dozens of celebrities. Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, Adam Lambert, Anne Hathaway, Matthew Morrison, Joe Jonas, Joel Madden, Ke\$ha, Ellen DeGeneres and the staffs of Google, Facebook, and many more have made videos encouraging struggling teenagers and kids that their happiness, potential, and positivity in their lives will increase if they can get through their teen years.

Savage has made a huge impact on the world in terms of giving young people positive, helpful, lifesaving messages. Savage is a true example to all those teenagers who are struggling by living his life happily married to his partner Terry. The two were married in Vancouver, British Columbia in 2005. They also have one adopted son.

Rhodes College is honored to have such an incredible, accomplished person like Savage come to our campus to speak. The event is Tuesday, February 15 from 7:00 until 8:30 in the McCallum Ballroom. There will be a book signing immediately following Savage's presentation.

THIS WEEK IN ENTERTAINMENT

New Movie Releases:

2/11/11

Just Go With It

Gnomeo & Juliet

The Eagle

Justin Bieber: Never Say Never

Television Highlights (2/9-2/15):

Criminal Minds, Wednesday, 8 pm, CBS.

The team investigates unusual murders in Los Angeles and more information about Prentiss' past arises.

Modern Family, Wednesday, 8 pm, ABC.

Claire and Phil decide to reprise their role-playing adventure from the previous year.

Law & Order: Special Victims Unit,

Wednesday, 9 pm, NBC. Detectives investigate a video of a sexual assault featured on a college campus Intranet feed.

Community, Thursday 7 pm, NBC. Abed and Troy vie for the attention of the college librarian.

Bones, Thursday, 8 pm, Fox. The team analyzes a BMX rider's remains, discovered on the roof of a warehouse.

Grey's Anatomy, Thursday, 8 pm, ABC.

Meredith and Lexie's father returns to Seattle Grace with stomach pains and a new girlfriend.

Wanted, Friday, 7 pm, FX. An office drone becomes part of a secret society of assassins.

Fringe, Friday, 8 pm, Fox. A terrorist "over there" arms himself with an insect that enjoys human flesh.

House, Monday, 7 pm, Fox. A woman with an extraordinary memory experiences temporary paralysis.

Gossip Girl, Monday, 8 pm, CW. Blair is given a challenging assignment and the promise of a possible promotion.

Glee, Tuesday, 7 pm, Fox. Brittany helps Rachel try to launch her social comeback, and Sam starts a tribute band.

Southland, Tuesday, 9 pm, TNT. Lydia is suspended from duty and bonds with an injured witness, and Chickie is haunted by a chase.

Super Bowl shows NFL's lack of care for its fans

By Andrew Mullins-Williams

Sports Editor

"Oh, no, I'm back in Canada," said Sammy Sandu, one of the thousands that traveled to Arlington, TX for Super Bowl XLV. "It's just pouring down snow. Are we still at home, or have we left? We didn't drink that much last night, did we?"

Sammy was one of the lucky ones who actually made it to Arlington to watch the game. According to the flight-tracking service FlightAware, more than 1,250 flights were canceled at Dallas-Fort Worth Airport in the week prior to the Super Bowl.

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell shrugged off criticism that Super Bowls should not be played in winter-climate cities by saying, "Conditions this year have been exceptional, it's going to be a great weekend for us, and the weather's getting better."

Boy, was he wrong.

Super Bowl XLV was supposed to be a glorious event played in Jerry Jones' billion dollar backyard, but snow, ice, and poorly managed game-day operations turned Cowboy Stadium into an unexpected experience. While Jones couldn't control the weather, he definitely could have done more to produce a world class product that wasn't an embarrassment to the entire league.

Beyond the flights that were canceled and the snow that fell off the stadium that injured six people, Jones showed that his greed for producing a new Super Bowl attendance record was more important than what the Super Bowl should be about—the fans.

For those lucky enough to make it to the Dallas area, they were greeted with rolling electrical outages that miraculously only affected schools, residential homes, water pumping stations, and any other service not deemed "vital" by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (those in charge of power service). Naturally, Dallas Stadium was included on this "vital" list and the heat was promptly increased inside the stadium in hopes of melting the snow on the roof.

If the snow outside the stadium was not bad enough, the seating capacity inside was a disaster. In the hopes of beating the attendance record set in Super Bowl XIV (1980), the NFL and Jerry Jones had about 15,000 temporary seats installed throughout the stadium. However, due to the speed of installation and the problems that the weather provided, many of these seats were deemed unsafe and not up to code. The result, of course, was that about 1,250 fans with tickets needed to be re-seated in the moments before kickoff. Of those, about 400 never got to see the game from inside the stadium and were regulated to outside viewing areas and standing room only plazas.

"It was obviously a failure on our behalf, and we have to take responsibility for that," NFL Commissioner Goodell said. "There were a lot of things we were trying to deal with, but there's no excuses."

While the actual number of those displaced by the seating error is statistically small, it further proves the point that the NFL cares more about making money than the experience of the fan. Not only will the refund amount (which is supposedly 3x the actual ticket price) only pay for a fraction of airfare, hotel, and food costs, the inexplicable act of selling tickets for seats that were currently unavailable robs fans of seeing their favorite team in the Super Bowl, something no amount of money can ever refund.

Let's say we overlook the poor weather and flight delays, the injuries from falling snow and the seating debauchery. There still is the final product of putting together a fan friendly atmosphere that was completely missed.

One example of this happened hours before kickoff by the thousands of fans trying to enter the stadium and get to their seats. James Wilson, a junior economics major, attended the game for his 21st birthday and commented, "Only two male and two female guards were doing pat-downs at the South Gate. This was terribly inefficient because the crowd was a majority male, and I must have stood in line for over an hour."

Apparently, Wilson's experience was not unique. Besides the unbalanced ratio between male and female guards, at least three (and for a time four) of the 10 gates used to enter Cowboys Stadium were closed prior to kickoff. "We have to ensure the safety of the fans above everyone else so the decision was made to close some of the gates," said James Hawthorne an Arlington police chief assis-



tant.

Even after waiting in line for hours to just enter the stadium, fans were greeted with Christina Aguilera butchering the National Anthem, and then the flyover of F-16s was done with the dome closed—even though it only takes 12 minutes to open and close the stadium roof. While I can't really fault the ruling to not open the roof, it does seem odd to have a fly over that no one can see. Through it all, fans were "rewarded" with what some call the worst half time performance ever, and they still did not set the attendance record.

To sum it all up, the fan experience consisted of canceled flights, rolling blackouts, injuries from ice and snow, unnecessarily long lines, seats being revoked because of safety, a butchered national anthem, and a halftime show most want to forget.

In fact, the only reason this Super Bowl was worth watching was for the game itself. The next time Dallas comes up for a Super Bowl bid we should not forget the fan experience of Super Bowl XLV.

Mid-major report: Who will be Cinderella this year?

By Andrew Mullins-Williams

Sports Editor

While the NCAA tournament has its usual starring cast, every year there seems to be a newcomer that wants to break into the party. Last year it was Butler, who managed to beat Syracuse, Kansas State and Michigan State, before finally falling to Duke in the title game. In years past it has been Gonzaga, Davidson, and George Mason to carry the torch for the underdogs, but this year finding a Cinderella story may be harder than ever.

Entering the second week of February, there are two teams in the top 10 from non-BCS conferences and four overall in the top 25. San Diego State, BYU, Utah State, and Temple seem to be the top of the "little guy" schools, but many conferences are looking to get more than one bid this year, including the Mountain West, Atlantic 10, and Missouri Valley conferences.

The Mountain West currently has both BYU and San Diego State as apparent locks for the tournament. San Diego State has an impressive front court led by Kawhi Leonard, who is averaging 10.5 rebounds and about 15 points per game. BYU is led by Jimmer Fredette who just became the conference all-time scoring leader with 2,194 points.

The Atlantic 10 is shaping up to be one of the most interesting conference races, with Duquesne and Xavier at 8-1 and Temple and Richmond close behind at 7-2.

While it is very unlikely all four teams make the tournament, any team out of the Atlantic 10 will cause problems for people in the early rounds.

The Missouri Valley is a little less well known but still has teams like Wichita State (20-4), Missouri State (18-6) and Northern Iowa (18-7). While none of these teams seems capable of going to a final four, we must remember that Northern Iowa defeated number one Kansas last year.

Outside of these conferences, Utah State from the Western Athletic, Memphis, Southern Miss and UTEP from Conference USA, and VCU from the Colonial Athletic Conference are all viable teams who could cause upsets in this year's tournament.

However, just because numerous conferences are getting teams in, it does not mean that they will produce victories. While there is some parity between Mid-Majors and BCS Conference schools, there is still a level of quality that can only be found in select schools that will be able to consistently rival the Dukes and Ohio States of college basketball.

There is still a lot of basketball to be played this season, and, hopefully, as we move closer to March, a real Cinderella will become apparent.



Photo courtesy of Google Images.