



CLUB ENJOYS RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL DECORATIVE ARTS TOUR

What fabulous decorative arts there are at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Sarasota! We have Pamela Hughes, President of Hughes Design Associates, to thank for the Hotel's gorgeous decorative arts that greet the eye at every turn. On February 26th, Ms. Hughes led a large group of enthusiastic Yale Club members through the Hotel, which is such an asset to Sarasota. She explained her firm's complex and creative project in designing and decorating its grand interior.

Ms. Hughes started the tour by explaining the overall artistic and architectural concepts that guided their plan for the Hotel's decorative arts. Her interior architects planned the layout of the interior space, along with its design and beautification. She and her associates visited the Ringling Museum and researched the art of this period, deciding that the Hotel should reflect much of the artistry of the 1920's in her design plan. She pointed out the vibrant colors and flowing patterns of the Ringling in the lush carpets of the Hotel, which all were custom designed and made in Northern Ireland. The Hotel's lovely draperies with their Italian fabrics and its spectacular chandeliers with Czech Republic crystals also were custom designed. Some of the chandeliers are so large that the boxes they arrived in had to be stored in their designated rooms before the doors were framed!

The colorful and strikingly patterned marble floors (the marble came from Italy) enhance the beauty of large,



**Pamela Hughes, President,
Hughes Design Associates**

custom-designed English breakfronts along the walls of the lobby and hallways with their displays of classic English porcelain. Ms. Hughes said that most of the original oil paintings were from the 18th and 19th century, portraying bucolic landscape scenes and several striking portraits. One such example is the lady in the blue dress that graces the lobby. We enjoyed hearing about the copy of an ornate Venetian table that Ms. Hughes had designed to provide a centerpiece for the lobby.

Ms. Hughes also gave us a tour of the Hotel's Presidential Suite, the luxury apartment with its beautiful period pieces, including a gorgeous

custom designed English table. The view from this 9th floor suite from its rooms and its balcony is breathtaking over Sarasota Bay.

We are so grateful to Ms. Hughes for taking the time to give us this inside view of the design and decoration of the Ritz-Carlton. She explained the thoroughness and authenticity of her research and sourcing for each of the Hotel's interior components (including, for example, sending a senior associate to Italian marble quarries to inspect and mark selected pieces), and their careful proportions and balancing. We all left with great appreciation and admiration for the artistic beauty that she and her associates created in this beautiful hotel.

Beverly Wadsworth

Right: Elegant dining area of the Presidential Suite displays signature cobalt blue glass on a graceful, filigreed side table, as well as dining table and chairs, all designed and built for that suite.



Left: Golden vines, leaves and brilliant light combine in splendid chandeliers that are the instant focal points of "sparkle" in the formal ballroom

Right: Botanical themes continue in soft, rich carpet colors, and opulent materials on golden benches formed of swirling leaves are placed along broad halls.



Left: Large scale hand-crafted breakfronts, designed to adorn spacious public areas, attract attention for their exquisite workmanship as well as for their carefully selected contents. All of the design elements relate to patterns reflecting the Ringling influence.

Political Scientist Professor Greg Huber Resolves Election Mysteries

Feb. 8, Michaels on East. Addressing three hundred spell-bound attendees at the annual Yale Harvard Princeton luncheon, Assoc. Professor Gregory A. Huber's lively presentation explored the topic "What can Political Science tell us about the 2008 Presidential Campaign?" Club President Brian Kelly introduced the youthful Huber, of Yale's Department of Political Science and its Institution for Social and Political Studies, noting that he received his Ph.D. from Princeton in 2001 and that Yale had just awarded him tenure a week ago, so he could say whatever he wanted to.

Prof. Huber began his two-part talk with a general

discussion of causal inferences: "What causes What?" The second part of the talk was specifically about cause and effect in the 2008 Campaign.

The general discussion explained how political science works, especially in surveys. The same principles apply to such diverse questions as (A) whether hormone replacement therapy does or does not increase risk of heart disease and other maladies in post-menopausal women, (B) whether Prof. Huber should insist that his 4-year old eats with her silverware, and (C) what techniques to use in an election campaign.

After a briefly detailing the probability notation used by behavioral and medical scientists (which fortunately for the audience did not seem to be necessary for us to follow the line of his arguments), Prof. Huber explained one of the most perplexing sequences in health journalism and science: how did it happen that one huge study—the Harvard Nurses Health Study of 1985—advised the public that postmenopausal hormone replacement therapy (HRT) reduces the risk of heart disease, but two later experimental studies—in 1998 and 2002—advised No, no: HRT increases risk of heart disease, stroke, pulmonary embolism and breast cancer. The answer was that the nurses in the Harvard study were healthier

to begin with than the nurses who did not take HRT. In the 1998 and 2002 studies, by contrast, women were randomly assigned to take HRT, so there was no systematic relationship between their prior health and whether they received HRT. Therefore the Harvard



Associate Professor Gregory Huber

study, though careful and scientific in most ways, had a ruinous bias in its basic data.

The problem of parental discipline ("bugging") is whether it leads to happier children. There is evidence that children who are disciplined are happier. However, Prof. Huber pointed out several other possible causes for this observed effect. It may be that those children who are bugged to

eat with their silverware were happier to begin with than those who are left alone ("selection bias"); or it may be that children who are bugged are neurotic when interviewed later and therefore lie that they are happy when in fact they are unhappy ("non-random measurement error"); or it may be that parents who demand silverware usage pay attention to their children in other ways—such as by reading to them at bedtime—that make them happy ("unobserved heterogeneity"). Prof. Huber provided several tests that help to tease out these contaminating factors.

Over the last 15 years, this scientific approach has been put to use in designing better political science investigations and more effective electioneering. One area is the sequence of information and the wording of questions in a poll: If you tell a Republican that a liberal group supports a Democratic candidate, the Republican is more likely than otherwise to vote for the Republican candidate. Another area is to get better background on the subjects of a poll, and make adjustments for bias: In a political poll conducted while a Republican holds the presidency, a Republican is more likely than a Democrat to say that the economy is doing well.



Yale Club President Brian Kelly checks his watch, determined to start on time, as Professor Huber and Princeton Club President Ernest Dreher chat before the luncheon begins.

In the 2008 campaign, as in others, three common claims are made by political “experts”: (1) Getting out the vote is key; (2) Negative, “attack” campaigning is counterproductive; and (3) television advertising can win an election. Prof. Huber provided research findings addressing these claims.

(1) Only certain campaign contact is effective to get out the vote. Leaflets, partisan direct mail, automated “robocalls”, and e-mail are ineffective. Personal phone calls, whether by paid campaign employees (\$53-\$90 per vote) or volunteers (\$38 per vote) are effective. Door-to-door canvassing (\$29 per vote) is the best, as it involves face-to-face contact. However, these efforts should be targeted, lest adverse voters cancel out the benefit. Also, the benefit may be higher from targeting less supportive populations who are more susceptible to mobilization (a demanding requirement for the designer of the targeting).

(2) There is no evidence that negative advertising is different than positive advertising with regard to turnout or candidate choice. Generally, people who recoil at negative advertising don’t like politics anyway.

(3) Television advertising does not appear to increase voter turnout, once other campaign activity such as door-knocking is accounted for. Television advertising has a short-lived effect on vote choice and likeability of a candidate, but not much effect on issue-based persuasion.

Skepticism of scholarly and popular claims about political contests is often warranted, concluded Prof. Huber, but there are effective tools available to

political scientists. Campaigns matter: they can bring us to the polls and they can change our minds. The latest polls show an extremely tight race. Summing 8 of the latest polls, Prof. Huber reports McCain leads Hillary by 1.8% and Obama leads McCain by 0.7%. Both percentages are eclipsed by the margins of error in polling and will no doubt be made unimportant during the long months to come before Election Day. It will matter if the economy is doing poorly by November; endorsements also matter, and had an effect in primaries in New York and Connecticut.

Questions followed, which Prof. Huber addressed clearly and entertainingly. Among his observations: Few watch debates, and most have already made up their minds. Also, the media’s commentary about debates is influential; thus, most presidential debates are draws. Generally, however, TV or newspaper commentators have little effect because they are watched or read by people who already agree with the particular commentator. In TV advertisements, facts matter; the infamous “Daisy” ad from the Johnson era had no facts, only the scare of a nuclear event blowing away daisy petals. And that ad was pulled almost immediately. The Willie Horton ad, featuring a black convict pardoned by Gov. Dukakis, was more powerful. Exit polls get it wrong in part because people are sophisticated about responding to attempts to interview them after they have voted, and many refuse. The many questions continued until it was time to adjourn the highly successful luncheon.

Dyer S. Wadsworth

Under the auspices of our current fearless leader, Brian Kelly, President, our December 13th luncheon was highlighted by the awesome presentation of County Commissioner, Jon Thaxton.

What most of us take for granted . . . our potable water supply . . . is not at all assured, in fact, based upon the longevity of our

dropped below 2.5 billion gallons, about 4-1/2 month supply, and by late spring this year the authority's reservoir had only a two-week supply.

Entering this dry season, the water authority has roughly a two-

COUNTY COMMISSIONER JON THAXTON REPORTS ON SARASOTA'S WATER SITUATION-PRESENT AND FUTURE

current drought, that our area may well undergo severe water shortage conditions was the premise of Commissioner Thaxton's informative and thought-provoking talk.

The tall handsome Commissioner gave his remarks to us in a low key but impassioned concern for our fresh water supply both now and in the future. He brought with him well-delineated graphics which served to highlight and reinforce the water situation in our area and our region of Florida as well.



Sarasota Commissioner Jon Thaxton

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Commissioner Thaxton's remarks was his description of the 6-8 years lead time required to bring new and substantial water treatment facilities on line . . . and the very meaningful costs involved. In fact, as he described, the cost of new wells, piping, and water pumping/treatment facilities is so enormous that our governing bodies must try not to bring such facilities on line before they can be utilized and paid for.

Jon Thaxton's warnings to our Yale Club had all of us well-prepared and knowledgeable when the Herald Tribune printed a front-page article on the topic of water management only a few days later:

DWINDLING SUPPLY

"Entering the dry season in November 2005, the Peace River water authority had more than 3.5 billion gallons of water stored in DeSoto County. That was enough to supply Charlotte, Sarasota and DeSoto counties for nearly seven months.

By November 2006, storage

month supply — about 1 billion gallons — and without an unusually wet winter, utilities likely will have to increase pumping from the aquifer."

As the Herald Tribune article illustrated, our water situation is very precarious and as Jon Thaxton described to us, what we take for granted as an unlimited resource is hardly that. His remarks made all of us more aware of our own water usage and that we must conserve our most valuable resource in every way we can. I am sure that all in attendance learned a great deal from Commissioner

Thaxton's presentation, especially how fortunate we are to have a man such as Jon Thaxton caring so deeply about our community and its viable future.

President Kelly and luncheon coordinator, Art Engelhard, are to be thanked for their efforts toward bringing us such a stimulating speaker and important topic.

Jack Chris Kahn

bluELInes

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SHAKESPEARE IN THE 21ST CENTURY ENLIVENS OUR JANUARY LUNCHEON

Sara Munson Deats, Distinguished Professor and Chair of the English Department of the University of South Florida and Co-Director of the Center of Applied Humanities, drew on the talent of our Club's actors to bring home the universality of Shakespeare's plays. She used thumbnail review techniques to explore with us Shakespeare's

investigation of issues of his time, which continue to perplex our own society. Prejudices and abuses that plague our society jump out of Shakespeare's plays to show us that they are inherent problems in the human condition.

As Peter French's Romeo serenaded Professor Deats' Juliet, we saw the conflict between society's prejudices and youthful love. Professor Deats noted that the words of the courtyard scene have become so familiar that we sometimes lose their meaning. She showed that Juliet overturned the gender roles – it was she who proposed to Romeo. Juliet's bemoaning of people's categorizing each other strikes a



Peter French as Romeo

familiar chord in a twenty-first century audience. The clichés and jargons of prejudice of this sixteenth century play still abound

Professor Deats then showed how *The Merchant of Venice* explores anti-Semitism. Can we say that our society does not produce twisted characters like Shylock and Mercutio? And yet Shakespeare gave Shylock a humanity that was unusual for plays of the time. How can we hear Shylock's soliloquy and not feel compassion? And late in the play, where in Portia is the mercy for which she earlier pled?



Barbara Knode plays Emilia

Professor Deats then focused on the lacerating treatment of racial and sexist prejudice in *Othello*, the Moor. To illustrate the patterns of spousal abuse, she walked us through Terry Davidson's *Profiles of Conjugal Crime*. *Othello* was seen as the treatable wife abuser, Desdemona as the classic battered wife and Iago as the untreatable wife abuser. Through the duet of Professor Deats' Desdemona and Barbara Knode's Emilia, we see Desdemona as the real heroine of the play, who from the female bonding obtains the courage to defy her husband, even though it leads to her inevitable death. Professor Deats held up Emilia as one of the rare examples in literature in which a woman breaks the cycle of subservience.



Professor Deats, as stern, rigid judge

Professor Deats then analyzed Measure for Measure as an explanation of the reconciliation of the Christian ethic with the needs of governing a secular society. Jay Wilson admirably played the judge whose passion for the law hardened his heart against Portia's (Deats') pleas for mercy. Professor Deats explained that to Shakespeare's audience the issues were particularly poignant. The inevitable retrenchment after an upsurge of crime during a period of clemency made balance difficult. The debate over capital punishment was given a different perspective when Jay intoned that capital punishment is merciful, because it saves future victims from the criminal to be executed. To the audience, absolute justice becomes just as heinous as absolute mercy.

She noted that Shakespeare treated almost every issue of contemporary relevance. This includes the issues of aging and retirement in a materialistic society, which has given rise to a term used by doctors – the King Lear Syndrome.

Professor Deats explained that Shakespeare presents and explores the issues that face human societies. He does not, however, provide answers. That is left for the audience. She concluded with the observation that great literature endures, because it makes an implicit appeal to greater tolerance, agreement and understanding. Members returned home inspired to brush up on their Shakespeare.

Oliver Janney

PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sons, Daughters and loved ones of Eli Yale! I would like to take a moment to thank all 91 of you attendees at the recent Yale/Harvard/Princeton annual Big Three Luncheon at Michael's On East. Our attendance numbers were more than double the prior year and served to heighten the warm reception for our Yale speaker Associate Professor of Political Science, Dr. Greg Huber. As part of my introduction of Dr. Huber to the 313 attendees (second largest in Y/H/P Luncheon history) I announced that he received his tenure from Yale during the prior week and was therefore free to say whatever he wished. His presentation was most brilliant and is summarized in this bluELInes. He received rousing applause for his

presentation and stimulating question and answer period. Harvard and Princeton Club officers told me that the meeting was a smashing success. Many attendees went out their way to express positive comments. It seemed to me that we had a confluence of a bright young Yale professor, a large contingent of Elis and a number of highly impressed John Harvards and Nassau Tigers! Thank you for providing me such a richly rewarding experience as master of ceremony for the Y/H/P Luncheon. We set a high bar for our fellow members of the Big Three to match!

Here are some important upcoming Club events for which I solicit your usual great support:

- **March 20 – Luncheon at Sarasota Yacht Club** featuring Ms. Teri Hansen, President/CEO of the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice. A San Diego native, Ms. Hansen earned a bachelor's degree from San Diego State University and also completed Harvard Business School's Advanced Management Program. The Gulf Coast Foundation is Florida's largest community foundation. The mission is to provide leadership on emerging issues, forge partnerships and make grants to improve the quality of life in the communities it serves. The Foundation with assets of \$260 million has awarded grants of \$75 million in the areas of arts and culture, health and human services, education, civic affairs, and the environment. Ms. Hansen is a most accomplished and effective speaker and will certainly provide us considerable intellectual challenge as to how this great foundation strives to improve our community's quality of life and how we may better our own goals for such improvement. I expect we will have a grand turnout for Ms. Hansen!

- **March 29 – “Sunset on the Bay”** is special night hosted by Dyer and Beverley Wadsworth at their home located on Sarasota Bay. There will be drinks and appetizers and music provided by Florida West Coast

Symphony bass guitarist John Miller. All of this will be wrapped around the fabulous view provided by our Sarasota Bay. This special event will be on Saturday March 29th between the hours of 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. with a cost of \$20 per person – which covers appetizers and all drinks (all revenues go to the Yale Club of the Suncoast.) Please return the reservation form with your check to our Yale Club P.O. Box. Any questions should be phoned to the Wadsworths at 358-7286. Do not miss this wonderful social highlight of our Yale Club of the Suncoast year!

- April 17 – Luncheon at the Sarasota Yacht Club featuring our beloved Robert “Bob” Semple, Y’59, New York Times Editorial Board, who will provide his usual considerable thought provoking commentary. This year Bob will reflect on “Election Musings” a topic which is certain to stimulate the political juices in all of us!
- May 15 – Luncheon at the Sarasota Yacht Club featuring Mr. Ed Hukheiser, Manatee County Executive who will provide us with a poignant and timely talk entitled “Financing a County in a Time of Constraint”.

Finally, I would like to thank each of you for your enthusiastic support you have so often provided this rookie President. If I were asked what I found most rewarding in my first year at the helm of YCS, I would

reply that it was the joy of my individual and collective moments with you – my Yale members. It is a profound pleasure to serve as your captain. I thank you for your trust and reassure you of my indefatigable level of commitment to our Club.

At the same time I welcome any thoughts you might have on how we might improve our YCS. I firmly believe that it is only through your input that we will ever truly achieve the best possible Yale Club. I also want to encourage you to volunteer your time for YCS in whatever measure you feel is most appropriate. Examples of such volunteer effort could be interviewing secondary school candidates for Yale, could be writing an article for our treasured bluELInes, could be helping to organize a meeting, could be assisting the Treasurer, could be suggesting a new event or program for a meeting. We can always use the good help and enthusiasm of a treasured Eli!

Brian T. Kelly



Congratulations

The above picture of David Phillips, '03 MBA, and Jackie McDaniel was taken at the Yale/Harvard/Princeton luncheon, February 8th. On February 23rd, on Marco Island, the two were married. We all wish them happiness. Live long and prosper!