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FOXWOODS COMES TO PHILADELPHIA

BY MEL MCKRELL

Gambling has arrived in your state. Don't bother hopping the border, either. In an effort to pour money into struggling economies and compete with bordering states, 48 of the 50 stripes have some form of legalized gambling.

Casinos have already knocked on Philadelphia's door. They were invited in by Governor Ed Rendell in 2004 and have been eating from his lapels ever since. When Foxwoods Casino first proposed construction of an ill-fated waterfront site certain to heighten existing traffic snarls, the governor wrote angry residents

a note of condolence:

"The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has no authority to require them to accept alternate sites."

Aw, shucks, Philadelphia.

The backdrop: national chumminess with casinos, coupled with Governor Rendell's aggressive politicking, linked to his appointed seven-member Gaming Control Board, two of them with dirty ties to the casinos applying for licenses in 2006. The stage: the Gallery at Market East on 9th and Market Streets, Foxwoods' recent attempt to appease a city roiled by the casino's Delaware river planning debacle.

To borrow the words from a friend, the thief is already in the door.

And we could spend all day looking up statistics about gambling's ills.

But that's futile. Legal reviewers like Paul D. Delva of the *Temple Law Review* turned their sights more than ten years ago toward investigating local regulation—not prohibition-of casinos.

"In the past, during an era characterized by gambling prohibition, local governments enjoyed considerable authority to regulate unlawful gambling," he wrote. "New legislation authorizing gambling activities tends to decrease local autonomy, reducing the degree to which local people and *governments* can control events in their communities. As gambling legislation [is]

Continued on page 2

LITERACY IN PHILADELPHIA BY ELIZABETH COON

September was literacy month at MCPC. While doing research for this event, I discovered some interesting and thought-provoking facts about illiteracy here in Philadelphia. I learned that there are direct links between low literacy skills, crime and poverty—all

three of which afflict Philadelphia's inner city. According to the National Institute for Literacy, about twenty percent of adults nationwide read at or below a fifth grade reading level. Because seventy five percent of today's jobs require at least a ninth grade read-

ing level, it is almost impossible for those adults to obtain a steady job. As a result, some of the unemployed in Philadelphia have turned to selling drugs as a way to keep food on the table for their families. Philadelphia is a blue-collar

Continued on page 4

TOP TEN ETHNIC RESTAURANTS OF PHILADELPHIA:

1. ZORBA'S TAVERN- (GREEK, 2230 FARMOUNT AVE.)
2. BISTRO ST. TROPEZ, ZAGAT TOP 40! (2400 MARKET ST. #427)
3. SUSANNA FOO CHINESE CUISINE (1512 WALNUT ST.)
4. TINTO (SPANISH- 114TH S 20TH ST)
5. SITAR INDIA RESTAURANT (60 S 38TH ST)
6. PASSAGE TO INDIA (1320 WALNUT ST)
7. MY THAI RESTAURANT (2200 SOUTH ST)
8. TANGERINE (MEDITERANIAN FINE DINING, 232 MARKET ST)
9. BANANA LEAF MALAYSIAN CUISINE (1009 ARCH ST)
10. EL AZTECA (714 CHESNUT STREET)

CASINO

revised, local citizens should have a leading role in the formation and execution of regulatory policies.”

More on that leading role soon.

Look for updates on Foxwoods' development in future issues of "The Broad Street Journal".



“Proposed Waterfront location of Foxwoods Resort Casino” Image courtesy Google images.

OUT IN LEFT FIELD W/ ELIZABETH THOMPSON

One of my favorite moments from the past three debates of this 2008 Presidential Election season was the bracelet-off between Senator McCain and Senator Obama out at Ole Miss. Though hardly laughable topics, the candidates managed to use quite a trite symbol in order to explain their allegiance to U.S. troops and their Iraq policies. McCain explained how he said he would “wear [a fallen soldier’s] bracelet with honor...to do everything in [his] power to make sure that [the soldier’s] death was not in vain.” Obama interjected, “Jim, let me make a point. I’ve got a bracelet, too... from... [a] mother [who wants to make] sure another mother is not going through what [she is] going through.” Despite the blatant competition engrossing the candidates’ choices, these bracelets draw my attention to symbols we utilize to express our identities. From partisan bracelets to UGGS (i.e. ugh), all of our clothing or adornments have meaning, whether it is apparent in a punk’s anarchist patch or subtle in a holey pair of

jeans.

A particular article of clothing that has caught my eye is the keffiyeh. About a month ago I was lugging my bike the opposite way down South Street, trying to find Gianna’s Grill for an authentic, Philadelphia, vegan cheesesteak, when I spotted a rack of keffiyeh-like scarves, fluttering in the wind. I immediately went back to my days in the bartering markets and side streets of Egypt and Syria (my semester abroad with Middle East Studies Program), where keffiyehs swing from doors and necks alike. The keffiyeh is a cotton and wool scarf, traditionally with intersecting black (or red) lines and squares on the white cloth.

When I saw these scarves, I was completely caught off-guard by their context. This was not Alleyway, Damascus but Center City, Philadelphia. On top of that, the keffiyeh was not represented in the typical black, red, and white colors or even in more varied solid blues, greens, and yellows that some vendors had carried in the Middle East. These scarves implemented a version of the intersecting lines, squares,

and tassels, but new fabrics, colors, finishes, and accents were added to each. I have noticed these scarves decorating the napes of city dwellers and college hipsters alike throughout Philadelphia.

However, Philadelphia is not a central location for this craze. The entertainment industry demonstrates how this fad has seeped into streamline fashion and onto the runways. In his videos “Homecoming” and “Can’t Tell Me Nothin’,” Kanye West sports the keffiyeh. Rapper Lupe Fiasco wears the scarf in several of his promotional photos for his website and in an *XXL* spread. And so far, a wide variety of Hollywoodians have donned the keffiyeh: Mary Kate Olsen, Ricky Martin, and Joshua Jackson (of *Dawson’s Creek* fame) to name a few. Possibly the most famous event of an American celeb wearing the scarf was this summer’s Rachel Ray/Dunkin’ Donuts fiasco. We all know how that transpired. (Unless you don’t: Dunkin’ Donuts pulled the commercial promptly and apologized to all who accused the ad of facilitating a jihadist conspiracy.)

Clearly, the keffiyeh is now a

part of the fashion and entertainment industry in the United States, transplanted into a new environment. Is the keffiyeh still the *keffiyeh* in this new globalized context?

The keffiyeh is a scarf that was first woven in the Middle East. The pattern is particular to the region. Since the 1930s and 40s, the scarf came to represent Palestinian solidarity against Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as opposition to the illegal settlements across the 1967 territory boundary line (known as the “green line”). The keffiyeh illuminates over sixty years of occupation that Palestinians have endured in a struggle for a national homestead.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is no laughing matter, and consumerism and capitalism are the furthest solutions to facilitate awareness. In actuality, keffiyehs that were once created and made in the Middle East are now only produced in China. The revenue from this popularity is not going to those whom the scarf represents. And through this commodification process, the meaning of the scarf is being lost.

Continued on page 3

KEFFIYEH

I am far from saying that all the celebrities and citizens that are wearing the scarf today are ignorant of its meaning. For some, the opposite is certainly the case. Some artists and celebrities have honest and sincere intent in including the keffiyeh in their wardrobe. But to say that the meaning of the keffiyeh has been represented along with its price tag in this new market would be a ludicrous assertion.

The keffiyeh has been a symbol of the human rights violations committed against the Palestinians over the past sixty years. When a scarf is marketed as an accessory, it *becomes* an accessory and loses its symbolic character to the consumer. The keffiyeh has been introduced to western fashion as a garment, not for its original intent. However, that does not mean that the keffiyeh does not have an inherent power to communicate its message. Its globalization and consumption is an example of seemingly everyday garment that carries intrinsic meaning. This meaning is serious and should



Students in the Middle East Studies Program wear the keffiyeh in the Sahara.

not be reduced to a dollar figure and hip outfit. The message has assuredly suffered a blow from its mass production.

Whether a bracelet or a scarf, individuals must be aware of the symbolism inherent in what they wear. Though one may find a cute shirt with an odd by-line at the local thrift store, the wearer's perception of the product is not the items' sole expression. Capitalism is running rabid in bail-outs and bust-outs, but if we must consume, let us consume consciously. Consider the material of your clothing, where it was made—the hands that made it. Connect to all forms of production, intelligently thinking through the implications of the purchase and use of our garb.

Oh, and let me make this point. I've got a scarf, too.

PARADISE NOW BY BRAD MENSCH

What comes to your mind when the word terrorist is mentioned? How about suicide-bomber? A very common image is a gun-wielding, face-covered, and sinister-looking man or woman. This can be true in some cases, but not every time. The unfortunate part of this view is that it fits a stereotype. *Paradise Now* is a movie that bridges the gap between our own point of view and the point of view we have not encountered. We are given sight into the realistic world of suicide bombers; going beyond what the news has previously shown them to be. The story is about two friends, who are recruited to a suicide bombing in Tel Aviv. Through numerous close calls the two friends are somehow split up and cannot carry out their mission. What breaks this point of view off from the rest is that we get to follow not just "suicide bombers", but actual people with real lives and problems. At the beginning of the movie, both friends were ready to

carry out their plans, but half-way through when they were denied their opportunity they both get a chance to reflect on what they are doing and why. *Paradise Now* is a movie you can watch and get a fresh perspective on life. I would even venture to say that the ending of this movie was one of the most beautiful endings I've ever seen put together.



Image courtesy Goggle images

Join Brad and other students on Wednesday nights, as they preview films in the TV lounge!

DEFINING SEX FURTHER BY CODY WANNER

In reading an intriguing book by Marianne Legato, *Why Men Never Remember and Women Never Forget*, I recently learned a small tidbit of Greek mythology that I had never read before. Stick with me if you like sex, this is cool.

It turns out, as Plato told it,

the first human beings were not gendered- they were both sexes. (Actually, that is not so far from how many translate Adam, the first human being in the Christian story). So these humans were androgynous, self-sufficient and driven to succeed in all areas of life. Soon the humans decided that they were so awesome they didn't need the gods anymore, and they decided to attack and conquer

them. Zeus' punishment for the human race was to split them up into male and female. After this happened, humans became sad, lacked concentration, and couldn't get anything accomplished as they had previously done. As a result, humans started to die. So Zeus asked Apollo to figure out a way to reunite the two genders. Apollo's idea was sex.

This story, passed through

numerous (at least two by the time you're reading it) story tellers, points to a very mystical part of sex. It is the concept of intimacy. Sex is something that brings two people closer.

Now, the reason I have left the definition so broad at this point is because I want to touch on a intriguing fact: you may have read the previous paragraph differently

Continued on page 4

SEX FURTHER

depending on gender. The science behind sex for men and women is incredibly different. Different chemicals are released, different acts are imagined and different parts of the brain become active or inactive. The whole process of sex for men and women is completely different.

Do you agree? What obstacles may this difference lead to in discussing sex in an open coed forum? Do you disagree? Do you feel as though you perceive sex- its pleasurable qualities; its negative connotations in a similar fashion as your male or female peers? Email me. No question is a stupid question; no topic is too much; anything goes.

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GREEN CITIES: CLEAN WATERS

BY CHARLEY WILKINSON



America's greatest cities were built upon the banks of rivers that provided them the power and transportation needed to support industry and urban populations. Of these American Cities, Philadelphia was the first to regard

the delivery of clean, safe water to its dwellers as a municipal responsibility. The Water Works in Fairmount was designed, as was the park, to protect the city's watershed and provide the city with its most valuable resource: water.

Today the Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center, built on this landmark site, strives to reconnect with its roots in Philadelphia, reaching out through art and education to restore the image of beauty and conservation that Philadelphia and Fairmount Park once represented. The FWWIC hosts many educational and artistic programs, highlighting the importance of conservation. One such program is

entitled, "Green Cities, Clean Waters", an initiative whose mission revolves around the enhancement of the health of the region's watersheds through management and water services.

As a part of this initiative, Philadelphia artist and educator Bill Kelly has designed an exhibition that celebrates the human experience of the natural world through our daily interaction with water. Kelly, a leading environmental photographer, has created pieces using photographs, glass jars, and live plants that seek to accentuate the interactions between Philadelphians and the ecology of its watersheds, transforming the city into one celebrated for its beautiful rivers and streams. According to Kelly, the jars featured in this exhibit are, "filled with water and teeming with life and imagery...a reminder of how intertwined we are both locally and globally with the finite amount of water that exists on this planet." This exhibit opened in late September, and the artist will be holding a reception on Thursday, October 16, 2008. RSVP for that event at (215) 685-0723 or visit the FWWIC website for more information.

This exhibition, as well as the other Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center programs, remain an important aspect of the city's ecological history and sustainable future.

LITERACY

city, meaning that most of its employees are in low-income households. There is nothing inherently wrong with this, but a combination of low literacy skills and growing crime has developed into a cycle that keeps many children from low-income families in the same world as their parents. "The typical middle-class child enters first grade with 1,000 – 1,700 hours of one-on-one picture book reading," said M. J. Adams in his book *Learning to Read*, "A child from a low-income family averages just 25 hours". If a child is disadvantaged from the beginning of their education, it is that much harder to develop grade-level, or even above grade-level reading skills,

which could develop into a more secure future for the family.

Steps are being taken to eliminate illiteracy in Philadelphia, but the progress is slow. In 1983, the Mayor's Commission on Literacy was established to evaluate the situation and begin the process of resolving the problem. The new focus revealed the amazing extent of low literacy in the city and has prompted numerous studies. Also, the Center for Literacy, an organization in South Philadelphia, provides teaching and tutoring for readers of all ages-from struggling elementary students to adults who are seeking their GED.

Volunteer tutors must make a six month commitment, in order to ensure consistency with the students. There are numerous other opportunities to help close the literacy gap in Philadelphia, many sourcing from community centers with religious backgrounds. Many of them could not function effectively without the help of volunteers across the city who are concerned with improving the quality of life in Philadelphia.

**We Know YOU Have
Things to Say!**

Make it So!

**Contact Sarah Bowman at
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