

UTD PHI KAPPA PHI NEWSLETTER

Spring 2011

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Chapter 316 Established on UTD Campus; First Members Inducted

On April 19, the 316th chapter of Phi Kappa Phi was installed at The University of Texas at Dallas. Charter members and new inductees, representing the highest levels of achievement in teaching, research and scholarship among UT Dallas' faculty and professional staff, appeared in full regalia for the event. PKP regional representative Dr. David Silva, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Professor of Linguistics from the University of Texas at Arlington, officiated at the ceremony.

Twenty-two charter members and seventeen nominees were inducted as the first members of the chapter:

Dr. Andrew J. Blanchard	Mr. Rafael O. Martin
Dr. Denise Paquette Boots	Dr. Bert S. Moore
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Dr. Dennis Merle Kratz	Dr. B. Hobson Wildenthal
Dr. Patricia A. Leek	Dr. John J. Wiorkowski
Dr. James W. Marquart	



The newly inducted members of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, Chapter 315

PKP Chapter 316 Brings Former Amnesty International Chairman to Spring Honors Convocation



Phi Kappa Phi Chapter 316 sponsored the guest speaker for the spring graduation honors convocation. Chip Pitts is the Board President of the Bill of Rights Defense Committee and former Chairman of Amnesty International USA. He is also a lecturer at Stanford Law School. Mr. Pitts spoke about Integrated Decision-making and Ethical Globalization.

The full text of Mr. Pitts' speech is printed in this newsletter.

UT Dallas Commencement Honors Convocation Speech

May 13, 2011

Joe W. (Chip) Pitts III is a lecturer at Stanford Law School and investor/entrepreneur who has been a lifelong activist on domestic and international human rights, civil liberties, and ethical globalization. Chip previously served as the president of BORDC's board of directors from 2005 through 2010. Co-author and editor of the recent book Corporate Social Responsibility: A Legal Analysis, as well as other publications on business, technology, privacy, sustainability, and human rights, he is former chair of Amnesty International USA. For more than two decades, he has served as a frequent delegate and expert advisor to various United Nations and other initiatives on global ethical, environmental, social, anti-corruption and human rights norms and accountability, while also serving as a leader, board member, or advisor to other business and nonprofit organizations. He led the successful resolution effort in Dallas, TX, and has helped lead BORDC's other efforts nationally to defend the rule of law and civil liberties. <http://www.bordc.org>

Thank you Dr. Boots, Dean Pineres, President Daniel, Provost Wildenthal, Deans and Associate Deans, and distinguished guests. It's a great pleasure and honor to be with you here today. Congratulations to all of you on your honors. To quote Woody Allen, "some drink deeply from the river of knowledge. Others only gargle." I think that we can say that you've imbibed. I'm also very grateful to be inducted into Phi Kappa Phi. Now I need no longer hear my mother ask "why, oh why no Phi Kappa Phi?" In my limited time with you today, I'm naturally going to open with the obligatory reference to **Socrates** that any honors colloquium speaker really must make, but I'm going to do so to make a very practical point about education and jobs in this competitive global economy. Secondly, I'd like to reflect on the importance of **integrated decision-making and systemic thinking** these days. And finally, I plan to suggest that the **best way for you to follow your bliss is to help others achieve their bliss** by working for a more ethical and inclusive, rights-based globalization.

Having spoken with a number of you, I agree with your professors that you're pretty darn brilliant. But I hope that you're smart enough to remember the Socratic injunction that true wisdom begins in humility – in recognizing your ignorance, and that we all depend on the kindness of others, be they family, friends, professors like the excellent ones you had here, or mentors. So perhaps we should pay that kindness forward by offering kindness and service to others.

Socrates rightly noted that "education is the **kindling of the flame, not** the filling of the vessel." Yeats echoed this in saying that "education is not filling a bucket, but **lighting a fire.**" I like that even better. Even significant educational milestones like yours today are mere steppingstones to **always elusive** enlightenment. Just ask my ex-wives. We now know that the brain's plasticity makes such **continuous learning** and improvement possible **throughout** life. So if I can light a bit of a fire under you today, in the direction of both continuous learning and being of service, I will have done my job.

And speaking of jobs, that more **dynamic**, less static sort of education Socrates envisioned and that you've received here at UTD will serve you well as graduates from China and India come online to offer serious competition. This week, children at more than 1,700 schools in North America sang the song "I Wanna Play" at the same time. Which would be just lovely were it not for the fact that, simultaneously in China, about a billion kids were doing math.

This is why Bill Gates gave a speech recently in which he said that we should spend more on math and sciences, because that's where the jobs were. Interestingly, a few days after Gates spoke, Steve Jobs responded that "it's in Apple's DNA that technology alone is not enough – its technology married with the liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the result that makes our heart sing in these post-PC products." One might say that it's important that we guide technology instead of simply letting technology guide us.

The best jobs higher up the value chain will likely continue to be knowledge work of the sort for which UTD has equipped you, but they'll still derive from both the arts **and** the sciences. In each realm Einstein will probably be right: imagination will be even more important than knowledge. Fortunately for you, rote learning still dominates in Chinese and Indian education, in contrast with the creative problem-solving you've learned here. They're filling the vessel instead of lighting a fire. So **at least for now**, you've got a narrow window competitive advantage in adapting to a very uncertain and rapidly changing future. And a key part of it is the dirty little secret many of you share with Socrates but the Chinese still don't know: that questioning is VERY good and -- your parents might not like to hear it, but -- **questioning authority** is even better! (Here, too, we recall Socrates, who died for doing so. (You don't have to take it that far.)

It's no coincidence that Western progress exploded after we formalized systematic questioning and testing in the form of the **scientific method** in the 17th century, and enshrined **rights to free thought, creative expression and dissent** in the 18th century. As with Bill Gates and Steve Jobs, note how the scientific rationality is also crucially complemented by the imagination, creativity, and **human values** so characteristic of the arts and humanities.

The preeminent statement of global values, affirming rights such as free expression, education, and nondiscrimination, is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In case you've not seen it, we have copies for all of you. Enacted in the middle of the last century based on input from all over the world, it covers not only civil and political rights, but also economic social and cultural rights including jobs and economic opportunity – something about which I suspect you can also relate. It applies not only to states, but to individuals and "private organs of society" such as corporations. Many parts of it are now customary international law, and many other parts are now reflected in binding treaties.

This brings me to my second topic: **integrated decision-making, which is closely related to systemic thinking**. A keystone principle of corporate social responsibility, it includes but transcends the concept that there is a "triple bottom line," i.e. a need to consider not only a company's financial performance, but also its environmental and social performance: profits, plus people and the planet. Great companies that have been around a century or more, like Unilever, Ford, GE, and Cadbury's, have always known this, but it has been forgotten in the last 30 to 40 years as "market fundamentalism" has triumphed. And the concept is relevant to other organizations, nation states, and our personal lives as citizens and consumers as well. It's no coincidence, in fact, that the word integration has the same root as the word integrity. And as Henry Ford said, "integrity is crucial; if you can fake that you've got it made." Of course, that's the opposite of the sort of integration or integrity I mean, which relates, rather, to fact-based, reality-based decision-making that honestly, coherently, and transparently looks at problems and relationships in all their complexity in order to seek sustainable solutions.

The systemic connections are now more apparent than ever: between mobile phones in developed countries and conflict minerals in the Congo, for example. Or between sweatshop workers in Vietnam and the garments worn here. Between pollution and rights violations in the Niger Delta and our petroleum-based economy at home. Private and national interests are interrelated with public and global interests to an extent unprecedented in human history. That's why for the last decade or so, multi-stakeholder initiatives like the UN Global Compact have arisen, bringing together governments, businesses, labor unions, NGOs, international agencies in integrated fashion to tackle persistent global issues such as persistent poverty, growing inequality, scarce energy resources, climate change, pollution, hunger, disease, war, genocide, terrorism, refugee flows, and human rights.

We know from such concepts as the water cycle and the food cycle that we're all part of systems that sustain us, but ignoring those systems has been a leading historical cause of civilizational collapse. We should now know better.

And yet, just when we need it, deep systemic thinking and integrated decision-making is more lacking than ever. Even though you are digital natives more used to the constant distractions of the Internet than I am, I would urge you to try to make time for such deep reflection of the sort that arises only in silence, with a good book or just yourself. Here's an example of the sorts of systemic connections we must address. For years, the top global problems have all been addressed mainly as distinct problems, even though a moment's reflection should reveal that they all interrelate and none respects borders of any kind. You might ask, "What on earth could be the interrelationship between such disparate issues as climate change, energy, poverty, inequality, hunger, disease, pollution, war, genocide, terrorism, refugee flows, and human rights?" Yet we now know, for example, that climate change – in addition to being an environmental issue – was a tremendous driver for droughts that affected places as diverse as Australia and the Sudan, pressuring resources and causing conflict between different social groups. Climate change set in motion a complex chain of events that increased commodity inputs and prices, diminished agricultural supply and increased hunger and malnutrition, created greater susceptibility to disease, and even generated violent conflict. At the extremes, this can and did result in changes of government, terrorism, refugee flows, genocide and other human rights violations.

Consider instead what happens when you have a positive rather than a negative causal chain: when e.g. as an ethical consumer you buy fair trade products that give small farmers a living price plus a social premium they can democratically reinvest in community schools, wells, and replanting trees to combat deforestation. You've helped to preserve habitat for songbirds, reverse climate change, and create a virtuous cycle of enhanced women and children's rights to health, education and economic opportunity. These persistent global issues are called "wicked problems" by some because of their complex interdependencies and the information gaps accompanying them, but they are also wicked to me because of the suffering they cause in people's lives.

Other examples of wicked problems that have been center stage for a decade now include the so-called "global war against terrorism" and the various related military conflicts we have in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan. On one hand, yes, Osama bin Laden is dead (even if Donald Trump has not seen the death certificate). On the other hand, isn't it important for the US to recall the role that our CIA and government had in **creating** Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda in the mid-to-late 80's in Afghanistan? And indeed, even earlier, through policies that included support for Middle Eastern dictators, torture, and – yes -- assassinations of democratically elected rulers in Iran, Syria, and elsewhere?

In this as with the environmental causes of civilizational collapse to which I alluded earlier, we seem to be forgetting the lessons of history while bankrupting our nation to the tune of trillions of dollars in ways that actually perpetuate terrorism and dramatically threaten genuine national security. A more integrated, systemic approach would not just pay lip service to but would really heed the **lessons of history**, including that of **colonialism** in the region, would learn from such disciplines as **anthropology**, **political science**, and **economics** in order to construct **sustainable development** solutions that actually work for those in the local societies and cultures **as well as** the regional and great powers involved. Instead, our politicians seem unable to escape a surreal and counterproductive contest as to who can be harsher on terrorists by undermining the human rights and civil liberties hard won by the deaths and treasure of generations of Americans. They have enacted such measures as the Patriot Act, ubiquitous warrantless surveillance, and the absurd and expensive TSA body scanners that give people the choice of being groped or exposed to radioactivity but do not even detect the plastic explosives worn by the underwear bomber that were their supposed reason for existence. This is what the founding fathers warned against, and what Lincoln had in mind when he observed:

Our defense is in the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, and all lands, everywhere. Destroy this spirit, and you have planted the seeds of despotism around your own doors. And this is where you come in as I arrive at the **third and final part of my talk**, where I urge you to use your high-quality education and tools and instruments like integrated decision-making and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to seek a more **values-based, rights-based, ethical globalization** in whatever manner you can, in whatever role you play. At root, of course, this is about the Golden Rule at the heart of all of the world's major religions and philosophies: treat others as you would like to be treated yourself. Humans are very emotional creatures, and in study after study, and at companies like Google, experts have repeatedly found that the critical success factors in life -- and **if there's one thing you remember today, remember this** -- are things like **emotional and social intelligence, real relationships** (not merely "Facebook friends"), and **empathy** -- NOT technical competence, mathematical wizardry, or ability to write code, as foundational as such things are. This makes sense, as science has now confirmed that we're all the same family: we're all descendants of just a few hundred people in Africa just a few tens of thousands of years ago, are all genetically nearly the same (with more genetic difference in this room than there is between many of you and those on the other side of the planet), and we're actually not that genetically different even from all the rest of life: not only chimps and primates, but even fruits and vegetables! I have no doubt that the bulk of whatever success I've had thus far in life, such as it's been, stems from a **service mentality**, one that emphasizes investment in self mainly as the way to **enhance value-added for others**. Whether in business, government, or the nonprofit sector, helping others to develop sustainable communities with ever-expanding opportunities for learning and prosperity is practically the definition of leadership.

You live in an incredibly exciting time and I envy you. The pace of change is so fast now that life has changed more in the last 100 years than it did in the preceding billion years on this planet. And it will change even more in your lifetimes and that of your kids. For millennia, things didn't change very much. Then about 10,000 years ago the pace picked up with the domestication of agriculture and plants and animals and the first cities. Still, when my grandfather was born, the automobile, the airplane, and the electric bulb were quite new. When my father was born, radio was all the rage and television had not yet been invented. When I was born, the fax machine and the Internet were still to come. Now, smart phones and other technologies are circumventing poor web connections and internet penetration to make information widely available to and accessible from every corner of the planet, even people living in the slums of Calcutta, the deserts of Sudan, or the Amazon jungle. In this age of uber-transparency, human rights violations in as remote places as the Congo can thankfully be uploaded instantly via satellite phone to CNN or the BBC, enhancing accountability at least potentially.

Science has shown that change even extends to the way our genes co-evolved and express themselves in different ways depending on the circumstances in which we find ourselves and the choices we make, including what to eat and how to live. So take care in those choices. You will be judged by and remembered for them.

Even before you achieved your honors, you were among the most privileged people in the world. You have access to clean water, you know where your next meal is coming from, you have clothes on your back, you're not about to be raped or killed. A small fraction of you have been affected by the wars in which this nation remains engaged, but in all likelihood the nearest **most** of you will come to being bombed is at that party tonight. Not only can you count on your basic subsistence needs being met (in terms of food, clothing, and shelter), but you still have a much greater chance than most people in the world to attain stimulating, productive, and fulfilling work. (And this is despite the ongoing economic difficulties and the fact that about 1 million people applied for the 50,000 hamburger flipper jobs McDonald's recently advertised.)

In contrast to this, conservative estimates are that over six million people continue to die from preventable diseases in developing countries each year -- over 26,000 of them a day children. Increased poverty in the aftermath of the global financial crisis means that we're back up to over 1 billion people a day going to bed hungry each night. Again, that violation of the right to nutritious food in turn negatively impacts the right to health, affects the right to education (by making it more difficult for kids to learn in schools), and even affects the right to life as infant mortality, maternal mortality, and preventable deaths run rampant. Rights, too, form an interrelated system.

Despite the fact that hundreds of millions of people in China and India have indeed been lifted out of poverty, hundreds of millions in those two countries alone remain and will remain in poverty for many years. And those two countries are the leaders of the pack.

Your privileged position and honors education gives you power. And whether from the Torah, the Gospel of Luke, or the movie Spiderman, "with power comes responsibility."

So whatever you do -- be it the military, business, government, academia, law, medicine, scientific research, or any of the many other possibilities -- I hope and trust that you will have the **courage** to **continue** to seek the truth, to **question authority**, to **vigorously search** for systemic connections and unintended consequences, to **raise moral issues**, to **insist on** human rights and values, to strive for **continuous improvement** both practically and morally, and in short to **be a leader**. Remember, it was YOUTH like yourselves, inspired by universal human rights, who toppled decades-long serving dictators in this year's Arab Spring.

If you think that a single person or small group cannot make a tremendous difference, recall Margaret Mead's quote to the contrary in which she observed that it's the only thing that ever has. Or watch the movie "Twelve Angry Men" (where one doubting juror convinces the others), or go to the Internet and read about Rosa Parks, Nelson Mandela, or Gandhi. As Gandhi said, "Be the change you want to be!" Or pick your favorite nugget of wisdom: "From a tiny acorn a mighty oak grows." "Every avalanche starts with the snowflake." I happened to be in Berlin when the wall fell, and in South Africa during the bloodless revolution in that country, so don't tell me that dramatic change for the better is impossible. And despite the tough job market, they still need good people and **jobs remain** in this area of integrated decision-making and sustainability, as a glance at the ads in any issue of *The Economist* magazine will confirm. So you have less of an excuse than I did not to avail yourself of them and not to help either as employee OR as volunteer, non-profit board member, or activist.

The problems are great and both the job market and the world can seem like dark places these days. But returning to my Socratic theme of the "light of education," I'd like to conclude by recalling the famous expression "better to light a candle than to curse the darkness." Popular with Peter Benenson, the founder of the human rights organization Amnesty International, it aligns very well with Amnesty's logo: a candle, surrounded by barbed wire to be sure, but **continuing** to burn **brightly**.

So should you.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi offers its members guidance with graduate school, career development, job searches and networking. To learn more about these benefits, please visit the national site at www.phikappaphi.org/resource/.