

PANEL

Panelists engage community, talk global perspectives

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"I love being able to share my experience," said first-year Lucas Miller, a student speaker. "I think people need to be aware of what's going on."

Miller recently returned from living in Egypt. Although he did not experience the protests firsthand, he spoke of the unrest he witnessed during his stay. Miller briefly lost contact with his parents when Egypt disabled internet and cell phone access on Jan. 27. His parents have since been evacuated to the U.S.

"Right in the Guilford College community, we have students that are being immediately impacted," said Max Carter, campus ministry coordinator and director of the Friends Center. "Students

should be motivated to be informed just out of concern for their fellow community members. These are events that are going to shape the world we live in over the next 40 to 60 years."

During the panel, Carter spoke against violence, promoting the idea that peace was necessary for a revolution. He referenced the work of Quaker Allen Jay, who brought

compromise among the Quakers in the U.S. during the Methodist revival.

According to Carter, Jay used peaceful reasoning to settle disputes between entrenched leadership and youth — a compromise

that he hoped to see between the Egyptian government and its people.

Part-Time Lecturer in Religious Studies Andrew Mbuvi also cited the recent past,

"These are the events that are going to shape the world we live in over the next 40 to 60 years."

Max Carter, campus ministry coordinator & director of Friends Center



Members of the information panel (left to right): Part-time Lecturer in Religious Studies **Eric Mortensen**, first-year **Lucas Miller**, Assistant Professor of Political Science **Robert Duncan**, Part-time Lecturer in Religious Studies **Andrew Mbuvi**, Assistant Professor of English **Diya Abdo** and Director of the Friends Center/Campus Ministry Coordinator **Max Carter**.

recalling examples of political figures being overthrown in Kenya. According to Mbuvi, Kenya is still home to violence for political reasons despite false expectations of a revolution.

"Even if Mubarak goes, what then?" said Mbuvi to attendees.

Assistant Professor of Political Science Robert Duncan also spoke at the event about the importance of foreign policy and how democratic nations evolve.

Assistant Professor of Religious Studies Eric Mortensen, who helped organize the event, led the question-and-answer session at the end of the discussion.

Throughout the event, the theme of global perspective was very prevalent.

"It is the young people that can bring revolution to an entire country," said Mbuvi. "And it is young people that need to learn about the revolutions going on. Unfortunately, the typical American is ill-informed."

Bryan Series speaker Jeannette Walls encourages sharing stories

By Andrew Glass
STAFF WRITERS

"I'm just a woman with a weird childhood," said Jeannette Walls, award-winning journalist, author and former gossip columnist of Scoop for MSNBC.com. "I'm just a woman with a weird story."

On Feb. 10, Walls shared her story as the fourth speaker of the 2010-2011 Bryan Series.

President and Professor of Political Science Kent Chabotar introduced Walls by speaking of her accomplishments. "The Glass Castle," her memoir, spent 100 weeks on The New York Times' Bestseller List and was listed by Amazon as one of the top ten books of the decade.

Walls' speech, entitled "Half Broke Horses: Knowing How to Fall," emphasized the need to share life stories.

"For most of my life, my story was a source of shame for me," said Walls. "I wrote the first draft (of "The Glass Castle") in six months and then spent five years rewriting it."

"The Glass Castle" delves into her childhood, which she spent in extreme poverty. After becoming a gossip columnist, her affluent lifestyle sharply contrasted with her parents' homelessness.

"For most of my life, my demon was my life — was my past," said Walls.

The memoir brought closure for Walls. The resentment she held toward her parents lessened dramatically.

"Increased knowledge only leads to increased compassion," said Walls. "And you stop blaming people."

Walls was initially afraid of how the memoir would affect her reputation and her job, but she was surprised by the response.

"I saw the world as a place with potential enemies," said Walls. "Now I see the world as a place with potential friends."

During Walls' speech, she explained that if it sounded like she was bragging, she was.

"But I'm not bragging about myself," said Walls. "I'm bragging about the power of storytelling."

Walls believes that there is much to be learned from stories, even from events as traumatic as in her life.

"The reason we tell our stories is to tell how we got through the situation," said Walls.

She recalled a Christmas in her childhood when her father, lacking money to buy presents, offered his children any star they wanted. Walls chose Venus, technically a planet, and it is a treasured memory to her today.

"Everything in life is a blessing and a curse, and it is entirely up to you what you focus on," said Walls.

Walls said that she felt strengthened by the hardships in her life. While she recognizes her parents' faults, she also recognizes what they gave her.

"If you get a love of education and self-esteem, you can get through anything," said Walls, telling how her hard-

ships gave her independence and the ability to push through adversity.

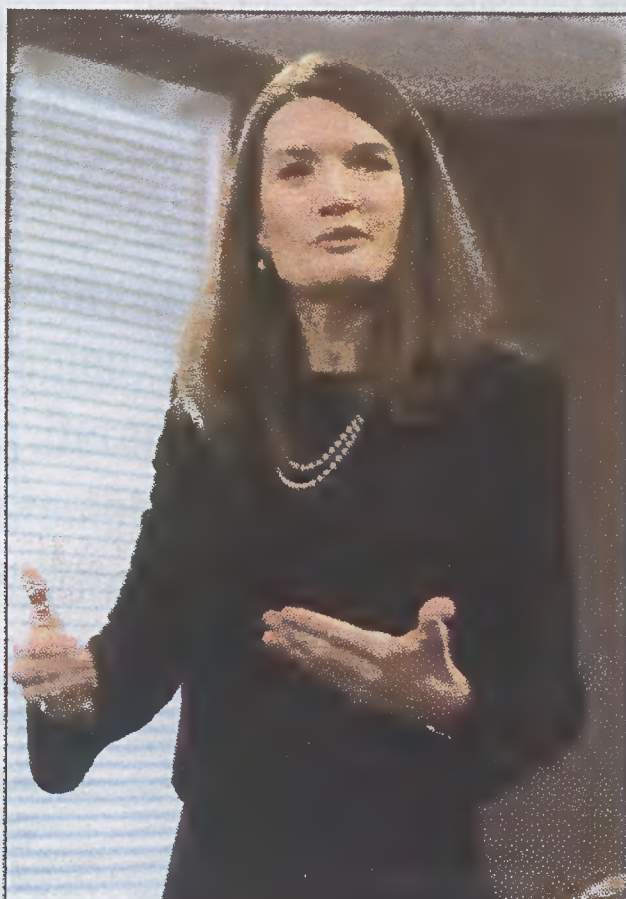
"(Walls) used her experiences in life to synthesize her own philosophy, and that's what her speech was about," said sophomore Chelsea Burris.

Part of her philosophy is to promote the sharing of family history, as she has in her second novel, "Half Broke Horses," about her grandmother, Lily.

"I want people to interview their parents, their grandparents, about their lives," said Walls.

Before she left the stage, Walls encouraged the audience to share their stories.

"The great gift readers gave me is their stories," Walls said.



JACK SINGLARI/GUILFORDIAN



ALEX THIBODEAU/GUILFORDIAN

(Left) Renown author **Jeannette Walls**, fourth speaker in the 2010-2011 Bryan Series, meets with students, faculty, and select book club members in Guilford's Community Center on Feb. 10, prior to her evening presentation. (Right) Walls gives her lecture at the War Memorial Auditorium. Fans enjoyed a chance to meet the author at a book-signing following the program.