



The Grad News

The Newsletter of the Hopkins/Homewood Graduate Community

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Opinions expressed in the Grad News do not necessarily represent those of its staff, the GRO, or graduate students in general.

Restaurant Review: Chiapparelli's

Peter Vajda, Chemistry

For those of us who have the privilege of a dusty wallet that seems to be home to more moths than beloved greenbacks, finding the perfect equilibrium between romantic ambience and affordability is generally the prime objective in planning a date. It has always been my good fortune to find that the best dates are the thriftiest, an observation that can usually be attributed more to the company than the locale. Such frugal dates are excellent for getting to know someone, but there are times when the electric bill must be thrown to the wind in order to misdirect its gusts to sweep your girlfriend off her feet. These occasions call for a touch of class and a bottle of wine.

If your date is like mine and her culinary daring extends no further than various exotic combinations of beef and potatoes, then grandiosity will be unwelcome and wasted. Your best line of attack is to treat her to the elegant familiarity of a nice Italian restaurant. Luckily Baltimore has the best Little Italy south of New York City, and there is a wellspring of wonderful little restaurants to choose from. Chiapparelli's may not be the ritziest restaurant in the district, but then again, you never want to take a date someplace where your waiter will be dressed better than you.

Don't get me wrong; Chip's has more class than a fifth-year senior applying to grad school. Inside you'll find a dimly lit dining area with an Etruscan décor, coupled with a staff that seems as intent on making your date a success as you are. Upon confirming our reservation with the *maitre d'*, we were directed to a quaint table by the window, clearly the arrangement best suited for a romantic dinner. With a smile and a pulled-back chair, the waiter was off to give us some time alone with the menu. We settled on a nice Chianti, whose vineyard I was intent on remembering until about three-quarters of the draught had passed


highly recommend the second least expensive bottle of Chianti on the wine list...as I was saying before, certain situations call for a touch of class.

Perhaps the most vital gauge of an Italian restaurant is the bread that they serve. This category depends on two factors, one being its taste, and the other being its frequency (v), where v is defined as the number of baskets brought out in a period of time. Chiapparelli's can boast a frequency of $v = 2$ baskets per hour, not a modest sum by any means. Sadly, the restaurant must take a hit for the quality of their bread. The crust was soft and the meat within it was dense. I'm no connoisseur of breads, but I do know that a proper Italian loaf should have a crunchy outer shell and a porous inner pocket. Chiapparelli's clearly had neither and could probably be picked up at any Mars, Safeway, or possibly even Food Lion in the city.

While the restaurant's bread left something to be desired, they clearly made up for it with their appetizers. In the true spirit of critiquing, we both ordered the Shrimp Nicola and consequently celebrated every bite of the fruits of our keen foresight. If I may attempt to sway you for a moment, the dish consisted of five butter-

Chiapparelli's

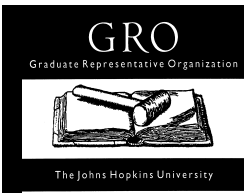
Phone: 410-837-0309
Address: 237 South High Street
Hours: Sun.-Thu. 11:30 AM - 10:00 PM; Fri.-Sat. 11:30 AM - midnight.
Reservations: Not Necessary But Tasteful
Reviewer's Rating:



(out of five Dominic Chianeses)

from the bottle to my person, at which time all I cared for was another glass. For what it's worth, I

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Movie Review: *The Return of the King*

Neda Khalili, Computer Science

You should not see this movie. You know who you are. You're the ones who only caught pieces of *The Fellowship of the Ring* and are not really sure what *The Two Towers* represent. You're the ones who want to see *The Return of the King* only because all your friends are going to see it.

This is not the movie for you.

You should not see this movie before watching the first two movies. How else will you be introduced to the dark forces of Sauron, an evil lord who created one ring to rule everyone on Middle Earth? How else will you understand why there are nine members of the fellowship, sworn to destroy the ring before it falls back into Sauron's power? How else will you understand what hobbits are, who Gollum is, and why the King needs to be returned?

You should put this down now and go watch the two movies. The rest of us will read on.

Return of the King begins with a flashback to Gollum's transformation from hobbit-like river folk to the miserable creature he has become under the spell of the ring. It is a foreshadowing of what lies in store for Frodo—and all of Middle Earth—if the ring is not destroyed. With this powerful beginning, director Peter Jackson expertly leads

us through multiple storylines: Frodo and Sam's quest to destroy the ring as Gollum tries to lead them astray; the union of the last kingdoms of men to fight against the control of Sauron; and Aragorn's acceptance of his role as King.

In actuality, a film as highly anticipated as this should have failed on some level, but it surpasses expectations. The battle scenes are thrilling, as the screen is filled with Sauron's orcs, trolls, and catapults against the will and determination of men. Remember all those movies where buildings blow up and no one actually cares? When the first catapult hauls stone at the castle of Minas-Tirith, the audience becomes distressed. The special effects are so good that they don't feel like special effects.

But the true heart of the movie lies in the strength of friendship between two hobbits, an unusual alliance between a man, an elf and a dwarf, and the guidance of a great wizard. The relationships between the characters are what bind the movie together, and it is done through superb acting by a cast that has been thoroughly transformed into their characters. Ian McKellan exudes power and wisdom as Gandalf, the wizard, with such strength in voice and expression that all other wizards pale in comparison (sorry, Dumbledore). Viggo Mortenson transforms Aragorn from reluctant heir of Gondor to rightful King with a quiet power that commands every scene. And perhaps the most skillful actor is the one who is heard more than seen—Andy Serkis—who voices the miserable Gollum with such passion that we simply forget that he is computer generated. (The graphics aren't so bad, either.)

And yet, none of this would be possible without the vision of Peter

Jackson.

Once in a while, a director gets it absolutely right. Even more rarely does a director get it absolutely right three times in a row, and that time is now. Peter Jackson's *Return of the King* is a masterpiece, not only for its own amazing storyline, but as a spectacular end to *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

Grad Students Say the Darndest Things about Undergrads!

This month we change it up a bit.

From a Random Conversation:
"They're like trained monkeys. Only they're not trained."

From a GRO Gen'l Council Meeting:
GRO Officer: What would you guys like to see in the new library addition?

Department Rep: How about punching bags?

GRO Officer: No, that's what undergrads are for.

From a Cell Bio Exam:
TA: I think that girl in the second row was cheating during the last exam.

Professor: Why didn't you do anything about it?

TA: Well...the thing is, she's really hot.

Next month we'll try to reinstate the usual format, so in the meantime, keep those funny, heartwarming, or just plain dumb undergrad quotes comin'. Send them to gradnews@jhu.edu.

Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King

Rating: PG-13

Runtime: 201 min.

Sexual Tension Between Merry and Pippin: High

Reviewer's Rating:

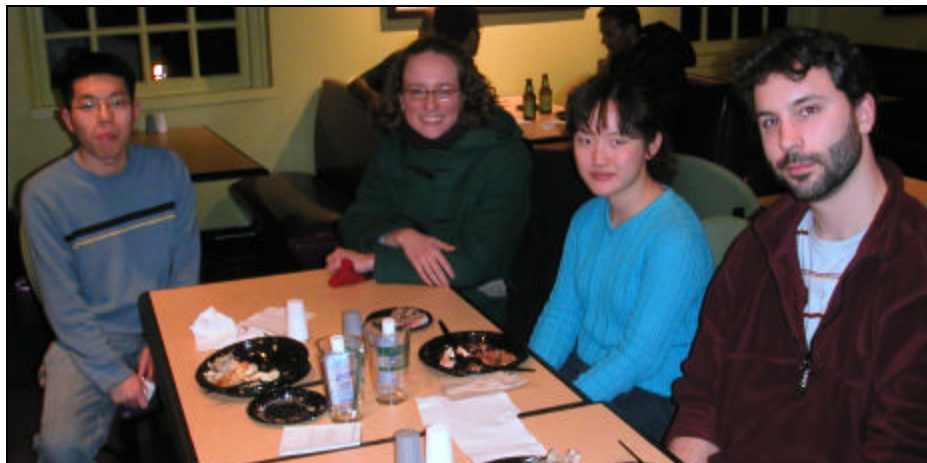


(out of five rings)

Thursday, December 18 was the GRO's Super Mega Bonus Happy Hour, which included pastas, cakes, potatoes *au gratin*, and \$1 bottles of beer. (Hey, we don't use the term "Super Mega Bonus" lightly.) Grad students also helped themselves to free pint glasses, coffee mugs, pads, pens, phone cards, courtesy of the GRO. Did you miss the event? Sucks to be you. Here are some photos of grad students having the fun you missed.



The Sound and the Furry Hat: Erik Billings (Biology) DJ'd the event. No one danced, but thanks to his record-spinning skills, we all had to talk a little louder.



Eat Me: Zhaonian Zhang (ECE), Annemarie Catania (Classics), Liu Yang (ECE), and Mike Nilles (Chemistry) share a departmentally diverse table at the Happy Hour.



ABOVE Your Glass Is Mine: Keith Giles (Biology) flagrantly abuses the free pint glass policy.



Come On, Get Happy: Arun Sripathi (ECE), Vikram Jakkamsetti (visitor), Uttara Sen Gupta (Chemistry), and Annamaria Soto (Chemistry), all of whose names I probably misspelled, revel in the Super Mega Bonus Happiness.

RIGHT Tray Bien: Sakar and Surabhi Padasaini, an alumnus and his visiting sister, mooch off our generosity by taking baked ziti and potatoes *au gratin* from the hardworking grad students. Oh, and I promised them I wouldn't say something like this in the caption, but these things happen.



Future GRO Happy Hours may not be as Super Mega Bonus as this one, but they should still be pretty freaking cool. Come check them out every Thursday from 6:00-8:00 PM in Levering Café.

Something feels inherently wholesome about drinking milk from a glass bottle, much like eating cookies out of a decorative tin, or eating tomatoes with the vine still attached, or licking hot fudge off a loved one. And while you won't find glass-bottled milk (or loved ones) at Super Fresh, you can find it, along with a cornucopia of other delights, at the Waverly Farmers Market.

Every Saturday from 7:00 AM to noon, year-round, rain or shine, local agribusinesspeople congregate in the metered parking lot at the corner of 33rd Street and Barclay Avenue (about five blocks east of campus) to peddle their edibles. The bottled milk, for example, is a product of South Mountain Creamery, a two-and-a-half-year-old dairy near Frederick, MD that trucks its cases of fresh milk, butter, ice cream, yogurt, cheese, eggs, and meats to the Waverly Farmers Market each week. Maybe it's the as-yet-uncrushed delight of the glass bottle talking, but this is totally the best milk ever. And it's tough to compare milks. Not only is it available in quarts and half gallons, plus the usual designations of skim, 2%, and whole, but it even comes in different *flavors*. My favorite is mocha, creamy whole milk blended with real chocolate and coffee. The milk may be twice as expensive as the plastic-clad crap at Super Fresh, but it's worth it.

As difficult as I find it to stop raving about South Mountain Creamery (you have to try their homemade ice cream too!), I must, because it's only one of several outstanding vendors at the Market. You could also visit, for example, Reid's Orchard, where you can sample (yes, sample) over a hundred varieties of apples, pears, Asian pears, jams, jellies, and d-ders. My favorite apples, after two years of taste-testing, are Stayman

(tart, crunchy, and huge) and its cousin Northern Spy (all three of the previous adjectives, but more so). In the summer, Reid's also sells peaches, plums, and nectarines, along with an unending year-round supply of homemade miniature breads (try the lemon poppyseed!). Fruit at Reid's is purchased by the pound, and I can often get a week's supply of apples and pears for under \$3.

Food at the Farmers Market is not limited to farm-fresh produce. Take the Whiskey Island Pirate Shop, for example. There, owner "Captain Mick" sells salsa, chili powder, and what *Baltimore Magazine* voted the best hot sauce in 2002. A medium-spicy man myself (except, of course, in the bedroom, where it's bland and mild all the way, baby), my favorite is the 'Mazin Crab Salsa, a unique dip made from tomatoes, peppers, smoked corn, and hand-picked Maryland blue crabs. The going rate is \$5.50 for a 12-ounce jar, and—you guessed it—you can sample all of Captain Mick's salsas at the table. Every purchase comes with a free Whiskey Island bumper sticker, and if Captain Mck ever sees it on your car, he'll pull you over and hand you a free jar of salsa! (Captain Mick's powers of spice are not limited to hot sauce; in the winter, he brews the tastiest hot mulled spiced cider you can imagine, a must-try at only \$1 a cup.)

"The bread here has been made by the woman you're buying it from," writes the *Baltimore City Paper*, which gave the Farmers

Market its "Best of Baltimore" award in 2002, "the apples come from a tree planted by the grandfather of the guy who bags them for you, and the potatoes were dug up by the couple selling them." This friendly, local atmosphere dominates the Market, where street musicians occasionally perform, the Baltimore Theatre Project advertises, and some guy who now feels like a distinct part of Baltimore always tries to sell me a Socialist newspaper. Some Saturdays I even find myself wandering through the Market's stalls without intention to purchase anything. I aspire to a time when I can approach the fried mushroom people, or the French women who sell croissants, pastries, and tea cakes, or the magic-makers at Everything Ginger (try the ginger-lemon tea!) and ask for "the usual."

Oh, and as long as we're quoting publications, here's what the always articulate undergrad *News-Letter* has to say about the Farmers Market: In a November 6, 2000 article (now *that's* research), the *News-Letter* writes, "Waverly Farmers Market is great because of the fresh items found there."

Um...true. There's a bit more to it than that, kids, but good, yes, that's the gist.



What is it about sword fighting? I went to see Kurosawa's *Yojimbo* Saturday afternoon. It is a slow film about a wandering Samurai who passes through a troubled little town. Two clans are making the locals miserable. As a result of their constant fighting, life in the village has come to a complete stop except for the undertaker, who seems to be very busy indeed.

Yojimbo, a Samurai's Samurai, offers his services to each clan. Much of the film is taken up by extended haggling about his fee, but it is unclear what motivates Yojimbo. Is he in it for the money, or is there something else at stake? He appears to be all about business, but in the process of his negotiations he manages to reunite and liberate a family torn apart by the ongoing rivalry between the two tribes.

The whole film revolves around this character, but in the end Kurosawa gives us no real clues about who he actually is. When *Yojimbo* leaves town at the end of the film, peace has been restored, but that is because almost everybody is dead. I am sure there is a moral here somewhere, but I do not know what it is.

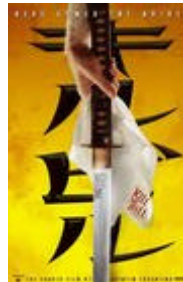
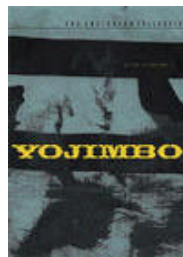
In contrast, in *The Last Samurai* everything is black and white. On one hand there is the honorable wholesome virtuous pious countryside Samurai; on the other hand there is the wicked villainous gun loving non-Samurai. Veteran American soldier Tom Cruise goes native, changing sides to fight against his former commander.

Yes the plot is simplistic and cliché, but the film builds momentum, avoids predictable sex scenes, and finally ends in an intense and epic battle scene. It is a nice break from the pseudo-intellectual pseudo-independent American movies that we have

seen so much of lately. Many thanks to the Charles for making it available at an accessible downtown location (and, by the way, now the Charles is showing matinees during the week!).

These two movies are great in different ways, but they are only about boys. Samurai movies are almost exclusively about boys. *Kill Bill* makes a break with this convention.

In his efforts to define a new genre, Tarantino goes way overboard, literally drowning the audience in blood. Whereas the bride in *Kill Bill* is almost mechanical, an efficient killing machine, *Yojimbo* is reluctant to use his sword, almost to the point of laziness. In *Yojimbo* it is almost as if fighting is the last resort of the true Samurai.



Uma Thurman has a good outfit, that's true, but she is not the only one this season. Will Ferrell's elf ensemble is pretty nice as well, and so was the movie, at least the first half.

Tarantino is working with Ferrell on the sequel, scheduled to appear next Christmas. It's called *The Last Elf*.

Doctors Without Bordeaux

Mark Your Calendars!

Mom always told you to marry a doctor, but you have to meet them when they're still drunk, lecherous med students. To that end, the GRO presents a thing with lots of wine and students from the Med School!

Tuesday, February 10

8:00 PM - Midnight

Club One

Tickets: \$10

DJ, wine, light munchies (cheese, fruit, etc.)

Shuttle buses will run between Homewood and Club One.

Singles, couples, and groups all welcome!

Sponsored by Bordeaux Wines

You need to get yourself a date for Valentine's Day, you pathetic sack of crap, and your chances are better when people are drunk, so come on out and enjoy!

For more info on Bordeaux wines, see www.bordeaux.com.



(cont'd from Page 1)

fried shrimp, which when stretched out were approximately the size of my index finger and twice as thick! Even the most fanatic PETA members would be pleased to see that they were fished out of the sea, as Shamu himself would have choked on these savage krill. What's more, they were drowned in a rich garlic butter sauce, accentuated with a hint of lemon, and as if to make amends for previous shortcomings, adorned with four pieces of perfectly seasoned garlic bread. As a caveat to those of you with petite appetites, this appetizer could have passed for a meal in itself, and while I would never condone sharing shrimp, it could in fact be split into two adequate portions.

After our delightful foray on these diamonds of the sea, our waiter led us back onto *terra firma* to sample their exquisite foliage. If I made a spectacle of the size of the shrimp, I would have to make a wonder out of the size of the salad. Now, I can count on the extended fingers of my clenched fist the number of times that I was unable to finish any precursor to a main dish, and I am a bit embarrassed to admit that I lost my virgin status to a salad. So go ahead and scoff, but you would be unwise to do so without a feeling of foreboding that if you venture into this dark house "forest" yourself you may not find your way out without a cleverly strewn trail of croutons. But whether you finish the salad or not, you will certainly enjoy the creamy house dressing by which Chiapparelli's has made a name for itself. It's thick, it's creamy, and it's delicious. Excuse the blunt and generic description, but like Popeye, some things just are what they are.

Not all decisions turned out to be so fortuitous, however, as my reacquaintance with an old friend, Penne with Vodka Sauce, turned out to be more bitter than sweet. For those of you lucky enough not

to have experienced the sensation, getting burnt on Penne with Vodka Sauce is like being kicked in the teeth with a steel-toed boot. The one redeeming feature of my entrée was that the sauce tasted like it was made more out of vodka than tomatoes, unless the tomatoes themselves had fermented. But like Casey said to his critics, you can't hit a home run without swinging! My girlfriend has a considerably sweeter swing, and she really hit the ball on the stitches by ordering the Manicotti. For those of you who don't watch "The Sopranos," if you like lasagna or stuffed shells with tons of melted mozzarella and lots of tomato sauce, you would be in heaven. I think she managed to eat about a quarter of it (her poor stomach had

already buffeted quite an assault thus far), but she assured me that it was even more delicious the following day. Since I already had my pants unbuttoned at this point to accommodate my newfound girth, we decided to pass on desert and roll ourselves out to the car.

I won't lie to you; despite what its name may suggest, Chiapparelli's is not cheap. Appetizers range from about \$6 to \$12, and the average entrée is in the twenties. If you want to do it right and get a bottle of wine you're talking about 75 bucks, but then again, not even an economist would try to put a price tag on love. So go ahead, treat her to something nice and put a smile on her face—you know she's worth it.



Not yet tired of grad school? Interested in becoming a post-doc? Check out the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) at:

www.nationalpostdoc.org

The NPA is a "member-driven organization that provides a unique, national voice for postdoctoral scholars [and] a collaborative organization that seeks to work with all stakeholders to improve the postdoctoral experience in the United States."

The NPA was founded in January 2003 through a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and is housed at the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington, D.C. Their website includes career info, surveys, debates, info about meetings, and more!





Trumping and Grinding: It's not a rip-roarin' Math Department Holiday Party until a game of bridge breaks out.



Wyman Bark: Graduate student Alex Ebie (Biology) brought her dog Guinness to the Biology Department Holiday Party. Interestingly enough, Guinness was well behaved and didn't go on a Doggie Rampage like people expected.



ABOVE LEFT Tango Very Much: Graduate students Gretchen Nelson and Usman Bacha bust a move at the Biology Department Holiday Party.



ABOVE RIGHT Mudd Pie: Students in Dr. Ernesto Freire's lab won the prize for Best Presentation at the Annual Biology Department Dessert Competition. They spent three days constructing an edible model of Mudd Hall and about three hours eating it.

ABOVE LEFT Tango Very Much: Graduate students Gretchen Nelson and Usman Bacha bust a move at the Biology Department Holiday Party.

RIGHT All That Jazz: Tom Wright (alto sax) and Jason Flatley (piano) play jazz at the Math Department Holiday Party.



It's Holiday Time, which to the non-Christian world is a euphemism for "Christmas Time." Many departments at JHU celebrated the "holidays," though only two are pictured here, because they're the only ones who sent photos to gradnews@jhu.edu. Doesn't that suck? You betcha. Send us photos of goings-on in your department.

