

Readership WT 2011 Essay Contest

"When I walk into my closet, I think about the hundreds—if not thousands—of people around the world who had a hand in making my clothes. Jeans are no longer just jeans, shirts no longer just shirts, shoes no longer just shoes, clothes no longer just clothes. Each is an untold story. — Kelsey Timmerman

Tour Honduras – Spring Break 2012

The WTReadership Committee has planned a student trip to South America in our effort to understand the conditions described in Kelsey Timmerman's *Where Am I Wearing?* the subject of the 2011-12 Readership WT. Interested freshmen are invited to write an essay exploring the ethical responsibilities we assume as educated world citizens to those suffering from cruelty and exploitation. Winning writers will earn a trip to Honduras and upon return to WT will serve as WTReadership Ambassadors.

Essay Contest Guidelines:

- You must be an incoming, first-time WT student in the Freshman Class of 2011
- Essay must be 1000-1500 words in length; thoughtful, well-crafted, and error free.
- You may seek writing assistance from the University Writing Center, from an advisor, or from another WT faculty or staff member.

Submission Guidelines:

Submit your essay as an email attachment formatted as an MSWord document file. Your name should **not** appear on the essay. Include your name, the title of your essay, and your complete contact information, including your WT student email address within the body of the email to: **readershipwt@wtamu.edu**

DEADLINE: September 19, 2011 – 5:00 p.m.

Winning essays will be chosen for their thoughtful, well-written discussion of the ethical responsibility of an educated member of the world community. Confirmation of receipt will be sent via email. Essays will be judged by a committee of faculty, staff, and students. Semi-finalists will be announced during Fall 2011 Convocation; finalists will be notified by the end of October. As you begin your reading and writing, consider the following:

For the past several years WT has chosen books for its Readership program that reflect the struggle and commitment of individuals from around the world. Elie Wiesel (*Night*, 2007 WT Selection) warns us that "to remain silent and indifferent is the greatest sin of all." Khaled Hosseini (*A Thousand Splendid Suns*, 2009 WT Selection) works through his nonprofit organization to provide "humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan to help alleviate suffering and build healthy communities." Somaly Mam (*The Road of Lost Innocence*, 2010 WT Selection) envisions a "world where women and children are safe from slavery." Kelsey Timmerman (*Where Am I Wearing?* 2011 WT Selection) asks us to think about the "hundreds—if not thousands—of people around the world who had a hand in making" the clothes we wear.

Must we then, not ask ourselves--what is our ethical responsibility for the inhumane actions of others if we say or do nothing to stop them? Can we turn our eyes away from horrendous conditions without then being somehow complicit in those conditions? As educated citizens of a new millennium, what accountability must we accept? What changes can we effect? What ethical responsibilities do we have to our world community?