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## What money can and can't buy: Author, Harvard professor challenges World Affairs Council, UNF audience

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04/13/2012

by Karen Brune Mathis, Managing Editor

Harvard professor and author Michael Sandel brought as many people to their feet as he could Wednesday evening by requesting audience participation in a discussion about morals and ethics.

Sandel was the season's last speaker at the joint World Affairs Council of Jacksonville Global Issues Evenings series and the University of North Florida Distinguished Voices program.

He spoke to about 715 people at the UNF University Center about the topic "How to Think about Moral and Ethical Dilemmas in a Global Age."

Before the 7 p.m. presentation, he met with 212 members of the World Affairs Council at a reception at the center.

Sandel teaches the popular "Justice" course at Harvard that has enrolled more than 15,000 students. It is the first Harvard course to be freely offered online and on public television. Visit [www.justiceharvard.org](http://www.justiceharvard.org).

His most recent book, "What Money Can't Buy, The Moral Limits of Markets," was available for sale at the event and also was the topic for audience participation.

Sandel asked for audience opinions about scenarios that included the Civil War practice that allowed men drafted for duty to hire someone to take their places. He also solicited opinions about immigration policies, particularly one by an economist who suggests that immigrants be allowed to bid on U.S. entry and the highest bidders be accepted.

Sandel also talked about "the skyboxification of American life," describing how people are increasingly separated by their ability to make money or not.

"We live and work and shop and play in different places," Sandel said. "It's not good for democracy nor is it a satisfying way to live."

Sandel said it becomes increasingly more difficult for civil public dialogue to take place when people are separated.

"We can't create that kind of discourse at large unless we can rebuild public spaces where dialogue and discourse can flourish," he said, referring to better schools, public transportation and other institutions and places.

The World Affairs Council of Jacksonville has three remaining scheduled events for the 2011-12 season.

The WorldQuest 2012 international trivia contest is scheduled at 6 p.m. April 24 at Aloft Tapestry Park. The "Economic Effects of the Global Shortfall of Water" is planned at noon May 22 at The River Club. A year-end celebration and preview of 2012-13 event is planned at 6 p.m. June 12 at the Haskell Building.

For information, visit [www.worldaffairsCounciljax.org](http://www.worldaffairsCounciljax.org).

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Harvard University professor Michael Sandel discussed "How to Think about Moral and Ethical Dilemmas in a Global Age" at the joint World Affairs Council of Jacksonville Global Issues Evening and University of North Florida Distinguished Voices series Wednesday night at UNF. Photos by Karen Brune Mathis. Purchase this photo

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