

HONORGRAM

LA SIERRA
UNIVERSITY
honors program



THE HONORGRAM

is a newsletter designed to inform and update Honors faculty and students as well as those who are interested in the La Sierra University Honors Program. If you have any questions or comments concerning the newsletter, or ideas that you would like to contribute, please email us: honors@lasierra.edu

VOL. 16 ISSUE 2 SPRING QUARTER 2007

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SENIOR SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT

The Honors curriculum here at La Sierra University includes an Honors Scholarship Project, in which students develop an original research or creative project in collaboration with faculty. These projects are then presented at professional meetings or published in professional journals. On May 29, May 30, and June 15, nine students will be presenting their projects in various places on campus.



Xousaen Mubarak Helu

Tuesday, May 29, 11:00 am

Cossentine Hall 100



Role of Human pim-1 Proto-oncogene in NGF-differentiated and Undifferentiated PC12 Cells.

Abstract: The first aim of the present study was to determine the effect of human pim-1 in nerve growth factor differentiated, NGF-differentiated, and undifferentiated pheochromocytoma (PC12) cells, a well-established cell model for neuronal survival and apoptosis. Preliminary observations by the research team of which I am a part showed that there is a difference between the cells containing high levels of pim-1 and those containing low levels of the protein kinase. The second aim of this project was to see if higher expressions of pim-1 affect the cell cycle of PC12 cells, particularly the proliferation rate of the cell line. We wanted to determine if pim-1 stimulates proliferation in PC12 cells as it does in other cell types. Our final aim was to see if different levels of pim kinase have an effect in the survival rate of PC12 cells.

SENIOR SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT

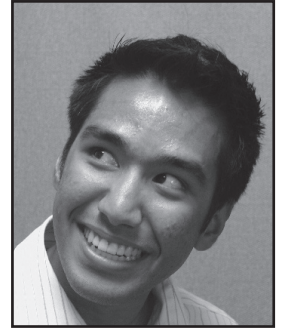
Cactus Room

Wednesday, May 30, 12:00 pm

Clayton Shu Chang Koh

Being a Man—Stripping Away the Stereotypes

Abstract: Being a man is difficult in many ways. From a young age, men are confined to rigid constraints in behavior, hobbies, professions, friendships, and emotional expression, leading to a lack of fulfillment, support, and healthy emotional release. Many are forced to develop only half of themselves—the parts that pertain to stereotypical masculinity. My thesis identifies how stereotypes are formed, how they affect boys, and how they can be broken through educational resources—a presentation for teachers on this critical issue and a children’s picture book that can be read to kids from a young age.



Diana Rose Krueger

Friday, June 15, 11:00 am

Visual Arts Center 102

Caught Between a Modernist History and Postmodern Potential: Death and the Afterlife in Star Trek: Voyager as a Microcosm of Contemporary American Society



Abstract: American society is mirrored in its popular culture. The contemporary American move from a modern mindset to a postmodern view can be seen in a parallel shift in Star Trek:Voyager—particularly in its dealings with death and the afterlife. The primary ideology of the series is often modernist, relying heavily on science, logic, and the ideas that a concrete truth can be found in any situation and some order in any chaos. Yet the series also contains many postmodern elements: pluralism, a certain amount of cultural relativism, and a well-developed sense of cooperative community rather than mere competitive society.

The Star Trek:Voyager series is a succession of shows setting modern thought and postmodern views side-by-side—sometimes rather uneasily. This dichotomy represents a similar stage in American society: one rooted in modernism but gradually incorporating increasing doses of postmodernism. Voyager showcases this slow transition most frequently in its treatment of death and the afterlife; the postmodern leanings of the show are most thoroughly explored in terms of doubt and anxiety related to death.

Visual Arts Center 102

Friday, June 15, 11:30 am

Rebecca Lynn Lemasters

Rewind: Letters to All My Ex-loves

Abstract: This work takes the shape of a fictional autobiographical novella in the post-modern style, telling the narrator’s story, my story, beginning in her junior year in high school and concluding at the close of her college years. The novella addresses all the loved people in the narrator’s life, explicating how each person has affected or altered her in some way, whether negative or positive. The loves are referred to as “Ex” because by the end of the novella, they are no longer a part of the narrator’s life.



Natalie Lauren Marchand

Tuesday, May 29, 11:00 am

Cossentine Hall 106

Line-up Identification Using Suspect, Description, and Composite Matched Strategies



Abstract: This study looked at two strategies currently used in suspect identification: suspect matched and description matched, and compared the accuracy of these two strategies with a third strategy: composite matched. Previous studies have shown various benefits and drawbacks to the two methods currently used. We hypothesized that the composite matched method may eliminate some of the problems found in the description matched and suspect matched methods.

SENIOR SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT

Hole Memorial Auditorium

Tuesday, May 29, 11:00 am

Niccole Christine Modell

The Hula: A Case for Dance in Church

Abstract: Analyzing the hula from a historical perspective, this project offers a positive argument for the often-controversial issue of dance in church. Hula, an important form of ancient Hawaiian communication, was originally a highly revered sacred activity. After Hawaii's "discovery" by Captain James Cook in 1778, and the subsequent Christian missionaries who followed, the very existence of hula was threatened. Decades later, its official revival brought forth an entirely new form of hula—a style popularly stereotyped as meaning little more than grass skirts and coconut tops. This inaccurate image of what hula means undoubtedly contributes to the skepticism of modern-day Christianity, when a hula dancer desires to worship God through dance. This project seeks to explain that hula is not just a hodge-podge of meaningless arm and leg movements or an immorally suggestive form of entertainment, but instead a sacredly-rooted physical form of communication. By viewing it in this light, modern Christians can choose to accept hula as an authentic and acceptable form of worship.



Sarah Monickam

Tuesday, May 29, 11:00 am

Visual Arts Center 102

Neurochemical Influences in Romantic Relationships

Abstract: I have created an informational booklet that can be read in counselor/health offices by people ages 18-25, providing a quick and basic knowledge of the chemistry that occurs in our bodies that influence the way young adults act in relationships. The booklet is presented along three stages of love designated as passion and physical attraction, infatuation and romantic love, and last but not least, the attachment and emotional bonding often seen in young adult relationships. Neurochemicals discussed in the stages include dopamine, norepinephrine, oxytocin, and serotonin which all have unique properties pertaining to romantic relationships and the body. The utility of the pamphlet to increase knowledge and awareness in young adults is demonstrated by a series of surveys and questionnaires using a pre-test/post-test design.



Visual Arts Center 102

Friday, June 15, 12:00 pm

Megan Lindsay Penington

Boyd Penington: The Smog Rat

Abstract: NHRA drag racing. It's fast, furious, and a part of my heritage. Boyd Penington, my paternal grandfather, was a racecar driver during the early years of the National Hot Rod Association. He would take on the 1/4-mile drag strip in his hot rod, nicknamed The Smog Rat. Then during one fateful race, his life was cut short when his car crashed. In spite of this tragedy, his passion for the sport lived on in his children. My father introduced me to the world of motor sports at a young age, and I grew up watching races and even attending a couple. In an effort to honor and preserve the memory of my grandfather, I created a documentary about his life. I drew from several different sources; chief among these were photographs, newspaper articles, and interviews with family members. Through this project I gained a greater understanding of the grandfather I never knew.



Kevin Webster

Tuesday, May 29, 11:00 am

San Fernando Hall 203

Optimization of Error Propagation for Functional Radiosurgery at LLUMC Proton Treatment Center

Abstract: Loma Linda University's Proton Treatment Center is limited in the conditions it can treat by the target location accuracy and the length of the treatment period (about 40 sessions). My research is part of the work of Dr. Reinhard Schulte's research group, which seeks to treat new conditions by increasing the accuracy to 1 mm and improving the automation of the orientation of the patient, thereby reducing the treatment period to a single session. My work involves minimizing the propagated error to functionally maximize the accuracy of the transformation using an approach investigating the geometric relationship of each error through the transformational steps.



Scholarship Presentations

TUESDAY, MAY 29, 11:00 AM

Xousaen Mubarak Helu

Cossentine Hall 100

“Role of Human pim-1 Proto-oncogene in NGF-differentiated and Undifferentiated PC12 Cells”

Natalie Lauren Marchand

Cossentine Hall 106

“Line-up Identification Using Suspect, Description, and Composite Matched Strategies”

Niccole Christine Modell

Hole Memorial Auditorium

“The Hula: A Case for Dance in Church”

Sarah Monickam

Visual Arts Center 102

“Neurochemical Influences in Romantic Relationships”

Kevin Webster

San Fernando Hall 203

“Optimization of Error Propagation for Functional Radiosurgery at LLUMC Proton Treatment Center”

WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 12:00 PM

Clayton Shu Chang Koh

Cactus Room

“Being a Man—Stripping Away the Stereotypes”

FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 11:00 AM

Diana Rose Krueger

Visual Arts Center 102

“Caught Between a Modernist History and Postmodern Potential: Death and the Afterlife in *Star Trek: Voyager* as a Microcosm of Contemporary American Society”

FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 11:30 AM

Rebecca Lynn Lemasters

Visual Arts Center 102

“Rewind: Letters to All My Ex-loves”

FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 12:00 AM

Megan Lindsay Penington

Visual Arts Center 102

“Boyd Penington: The Smog Rat”

Scholarship Proposals

Tuesday, May 29, Cossentine Hall 102

Adam Hori 4:00 PM

“The Analysis of the Education at La Sierra University School of Business”

Nelly Montoya 4:00 PM

“Ordinary Amazing”

Michael Tyler 4:00 PM

“SWAPT: The *Star Wars* Alternate Prequel Trilogy”

Alicia August 5:00 PM

“A New Reality: The Exploration of Third World Medicine”

Gianina Carlos 5:00 PM

Krista Gonzales 5:00 PM

“Sweet Talkin: Are Carbohydrates Important in Extracellular Communication? Testing the Effects of Glycopeptides on the Morphology, Metastatic Potential and Adhesion Rates on Brain Tumor Cells”

Larissa House 5:00 PM

“Hidden in the Closet: Exposing Domestic Violence in Same-sex Relationships”

Julie Chun 6:00 PM

Peace Kim 6:00 PM

Debra Marovitch 6:00 PM

“The Workings of International Development: Grassroots Beginnings or Imported Implementation”

Kassy Skoretz 6:00 PM

“Daybreak Jerusalem”

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

by Dr. Annemarie Hamlin



After eight years as Honors director, Paul Mallery ('89) will be moving on to new challenges at La Sierra University. In an interview about his time as director, I asked him about the origin of the current honors curriculum and of what he is most proud.

When Mallery took on the role of Honor's Program Director in 1999, he began by learning about general education and honors programs from the ground up. He read widely on general education curricula and attended the National Collegiate Honors Council meetings in order to learn what cutting-edge programs were doing. During his first two years as director, when the program still operated largely on the honors program model established in 1982, Mallery taught a class called "Reinventing Honors." This class asked students to research and learn about honors programs across the nation, and then students wrote proposals for a new honors curriculum at LSU. At the same time, Mallery also led a faculty committee that created the current honors curriculum with broad input from many campus groups, including honors students. After seventeen drafts, the proposal was accepted and the program launched the freshman applicants of fall 2002 into the new curriculum.

When asked what he found exciting and unique about the current honors program, Mallery immediately mentioned international travel. In 2002, only a few honors programs required international travel as part of the curriculum, so LSU has been on the leading edge of this innovation. LSU's emphasis on community involvement projects is also unique. Many programs require community service, but few have integrated the activity into the curriculum and even fewer have the students designing and implementing projects over a significant period of time. When students take this kind of responsibility and leadership, Mallery says, what they learn proves valuable even if the project doesn't meet with the success students hoped for.

One of the most unique features of LSU's honors program, however, is the balance of students from so many disciplines, Mallery says. Most honors programs attract humanities students, but at LSU, students come from all four schools and many majors. "Our students are very balanced with regard to mathematics, sciences, humanities, business, and education. Our curriculum matches that in that we incorporate more science than most honors programs," Mallery says. "Therefore, humanities students have to stretch into the sciences, and science students have to stretch in to the humanities, and most of our students are excited about that kind of stretching." This feature of LSU Honors Program graduates is often visible in their senior portfolios, one of the features of the program Mallery most enjoys. He says he likes seeing how students have grown and how the structure of the honors curriculum has let them grow in ways that are useful throughout their lives.

Associate director Doug Clark says "The Honors Program is one of La Sierra's finest gems, cut and polished in large part by Paul Mallery. While there is a large cast of supportive characters on campus for the program's conception and success, Paul has led the way in providing its current structure and enhancing its stature." Students are also complimentary about Mallery's leadership and teaching styles. "He guides you, suggests things and is never forceful, always helpful," says Mike Tyler, junior English major and honors program student.

Mallery says he will continue to be involved in the honors program, specifically, with the community involvement projects, but he also has some hopes and dreams for the program's future. He would like to see the program double its number of students, and he hopes to see the university use the program for marketing and improving the entire university program. Honors programs are used by many universities for innovative teaching, and student achievement among honors students often help "raise the bar" for students in all areas. LSU's honors program, Mallery says, is "poised and ready" to help the university in many ways and looks forward to the day when that comes to fruition.

Mallery has enjoyed working with associate director Clark, who will assume the directorship in the fall of 2007. "It has been great having Doug as associate director this year," says Mallery. "His vision of honors programs is very compatible with LSU's curriculum, but he will also build well on what we have. We are really lucky to have him."

HONORS YEAR IN REVIEW

RIGHT

Herbert Mendoza, Natalie Marchand, and Clayton Koh present their community involvement project along with their fellow peers in November 2006.

BOTTOM

Rinaldl Obeid, Zalema Ibarra, Mary Gamino, Juliana Muchinyi, and Elizabeth Lund socializing at the Honors vespers held at the home of Dr. Douglas and Carmen Clark.



BOTTOM LEFT

Jed de le Paz and Rico Legaspi provided special music at the Honors vespers.

MIDDLE RIGHT

Clayton Koh took pictures at the Honors vespers; Jed de le Paz and Rico Legaspi enjoyed desserts provided at the Honors Dessert Hour; Peace Kim waved at the camera as Larissa House took a bite of her dessert.



ALL THINGS SAID AND DUNN

All Things Said and Dunn: Dr. Robert Dunn to Retire This Year

by Patrick York, freshman

Dr. Dunn was on the telephone already when I arrived at his office at 8:00 in the morning. I had never been there, but I had passed by quite a few times. I walked in and he stood to shake my hand, smiling behind his glasses. He offered me a seat in a golden-green armchair that was surprisingly comfortable, although I sat about a foot lower than he did. He reminded me that not all the information that he would give me would be perfectly accurate, so I naturally thought it was going to be the stuff of legends. But every legend has to retire sometime.

Dr. Dunn has been a key member in the founding and perpetuating of the honors program. His involvement began at the very beginning. The so-called “Dunn Committee” was established in 1981 when Dr. Dunn volunteered to spearhead the foundation of the program as chair. The members of the committee released the “Dunn report” which recommended the program to the administration. Yet, it wasn’t until 1983 that the first students began the program.

The early program started much like it is today with an interdisciplinary track of classes that students take consecutively, in addition to their other courses. According to Dr. Dunn, the entire University would later follow this pattern and establish the University Studies program that is in place today.

Before coming to teach at La Sierra, Dr. Dunn received his undergraduate degree from Pacific Union College and did his graduate work at the University of Wisconsin. He taught a freshman English course at PUC as well as other courses at the University of Wisconsin as a student.

Through the program and over the years, Dr. Dunn has tried to “leave a stamp on the students,” and avoid the problem of “cafeteria style education” where students get a bit of everything, but can’t put it together. The program of classes helps to give a foundation to the knowledge that is learned campus-wide. “Students should have a thinking heart,” Dr. Dunn said and paused. This was the stamp that he wanted to leave on the students of the university.

He explained to me that a person should use their minds and their hearts in life. Not everything can be explained, but all thinking should be rational. These were the characteristics of a thinking heart. The conversation then dipped into his lecture material about knowledge and the reasoning process moving north in modern times, away from the heart and towards the mind. Then he got a call.



I caught up on my notes and took a look around the room. There were books stacked horizontally, vertically, diagonally, with periodic pictures of loved ones that rested on the spines of the library. He turned around after putting the phone receiver on the hook and didn’t miss a beat as he started again,

talking about the largest changes in the honors program over the years. The science department and their involvement in the program is still one of the best things to happen to the program according to Dr. Dunn.

With support from the likes of Dr. Edwin A. Karlow of the physics department, Dr. Gary Bradley of the Biology department and Dr. Paul Mallery of the Psychology department, the program has expanded and broadened its base of knowledge. Dr. Mallery is the current director of the program and has been instrumental in reshaping and reorganizing the program into the Honors department of today.

Dr. Dunn worked initially on getting an honors dorm for students in the program. In the early nineties, according to Dr. Dunn, the idea for a dorm that housed both men and women went before the university administration. Dr. Dunn believed that the idea of a “co-ed” dorm would raise problems, but it proved to be the right idea at the right time. It is only natural that the students of the honors program should live close by each other because the honors program is essentially about bringing “the intellectual, social, and spiritual” together for the students to learn and grow through.

Although he is retiring this year, Dr. Dunn still plans on teaching an occasional course at the university. I asked him if he would have more time for his hobbies now and he wrinkled his eyebrows. “I don’t really have any hobbies beside writing and teaching,” he laughed.

I asked him before I left if there was a message he would like to leave with the students.

“No...These kids are smart enough to know what to do, but sometimes they just don’t do it.”

Big thanks to Dr. Dunn for taking the time to be interrogated. Also thanks to Dr. Mallery for some pivotal information.

HONORS PROGRAM PERSPECTIVES

FRESHMAN PERSPECTIVE

J Silpanisong

To be honest, I wasn't really that interested in the Honors program when I first came. I thought I should start off with being a "normal" college kid, and then maybe consider joining the Honors program during my Sophomore or Junior year. For some reason, Honors sounded intimidating to me—something that required a lot of commitment. As it turned out, my advisor, Iris Landa, recommended me to join and even phoned Dr. Mallery so he could tell me more about it. Dr. Mallery told me that Honors program doesn't mean we'll be taking more demanding classes; it just means that we'll be taking Honors classes instead of taking humanities and other general classes. I really liked what I heard, so I joined.

The Honors program has helped me to discover who I am. In UHNR 101 Beginning to Seek, I got challenged to discover what makes an individual unique, what my worldviews are, and how I formed my worldviews. All Honors classes I have taken so far offer a very supportive environment that has helped me learn and grow.

Being from Thailand, I believe this is a very good opportunity to develop into who I want to be. As far as I know, Thailand's education system does not have honors programs—not even in the Universities. I would really recommend the Honors program to those who really want a good education.



SENIOR PERSPECTIVE

Clayton Koh

Glasses really affect the way I see things. I remember putting on my first pair in sixth grade and being keenly aware of how they affected the way the world looked at me and the way I looked at the world. Some lenses change the tint of your world. Others filter out extraneous light so that you can focus better. Having different types of glasses can be very helpful. However, the most important thing is to make sure your pair allows you to see the world with clarity.

One's worldview is like a pair of glasses. It affects the way you see and interpret all the things that you experience. The honors program has challenged me to examine the lenses through which I view the world. Throughout the program, I was encouraged to see the world through your lenses, as well as the lenses of some of the great change-makers of history. The class discussions, thought-provoking readings, travel experience, and community change project have all shaped me to view the world as an adaptable individual with a variety of developed worldviews. These worldviews allow me to see the world with clarity, an open mind, and hands ready to make change happen.

FACULTY PERSPECTIVE

Dr. Gary Chartier

I enrolled in La Sierra's Honors Program as a first-year student. I never regretted my decision. Honors courses were intriguingly interdisciplinary. The program's core classes exposed us to multiple faculty members, and addressed issues from the perspectives of history, sociology, biology, religion, and other disciplines. The two-unit elective seminars, the program's highlight, gave students the chance to learn about everything from Halley's Comet to the Confessions of St. Augustine. Out-of-class activities, including the annual pizza vespers at Gary Bradley's home, provided marvelous opportunities to connect with other students. The people enrolled in the program were stimulating and thoughtful, and generally tolerant of each other's eccentricities. And the faculty members included La Sierra's best and brightest, who not only challenged and provoked us but also became our friends.

The Honors Program continues to exhibit characteristics that made it a source of valuable educational and personal experiences two decades ago, soon after its inception. I'm pleased by the chance to link theology and philosophy in the classroom, even as I know that, in dialogue with other teachers, students are exploring ideas at the boundaries between social theory and biblical studies or reflecting on the nature of scientific practice. I'm glad that not only Honors social activities but also the Honors residence hall—open since 1992—can help bonding and community-building to happen among Honors students. It's great that Honors continues to attract thoughtful, reflective, intellectually engaged students, as I was reminded by those with whom I had the privilege of dialoguing during my fall 2006 Religion and the Future course. And it's especially good news that they continue to care about connecting meaningfully with their teachers, something my 2006-07 Honors students underscored with their thoughtful response to my mother's recent death.

The 1992 WASC site visitation team identified the Honors program as "the jewel in the university's crown." The team was right. Honors gives students and faculty members alike outstanding academic and personal opportunities. I think we can all be glad that it remains an important and high-profile part of life at La Sierra.



STUDENT FEATURE: ARTWORK & POETRY



ZACHARY JAGGERS

Freshman, Individual Major in Modern World Language

Behold All You May Pass By

The gate is opened;
Let us fly.
Peace and hardship draw nigh.

Take heed to what is often passed;
Remember what does not, long, last.

Oh, it's going, going fast.

The sun just rose and, now, is set?
Relaxing light, I, now, have met.

The things I missed, I regret.

Art speaks both before and after it is found ~ discovered. There is a catch; it speaks and the artist must listen. I must say it is quite a whisper; though. Everything is faintly singing the song of its art. Find it, hear it, listen to it for, if it is not heard, it may be missed and passed away. You are an artist, not because you sponsor the creation of a "piece of work," but because you listen to it and come to your understanding of it. Don't pass it by; let your day, your life, be filled with exploration and new understandings and a sense of worth and respect for everything. That is art.

RICO LEGASPI

The Ultimate Sacrifice

Sophomore, Psychobiology/
Pre-Dentistry Major

His crystal's blinding shine
Pierces through my eyes
Never denying what is mine
I kneel down with my lies

Piercing through my eyes
His knives drive into my heart
I kneel down with my lies
I buy out for His part

His knives drive into my heart
My bullet jumps from gunning
I buy out for His part
Coins of silver strong and cunning

My bullet jumps from gunning
Winning love shines from His face
Coins of silver strong and cunning
I fall down to my base

Winning love shines from His face
I never dared that He could
Fall down to my base
Up above me He stood

I never dared that He could
I can't just say goodbye
Up above me He stood
Here on my back I lie

I can't just say goodbye
He condemned me to my face
Forever on my back I lie
But were it not for grace

NELLY MONTOYA

Junior, Global Studies Major

DIANA KRUEGER

Senior, English Writing/
History Major

Women of the world...

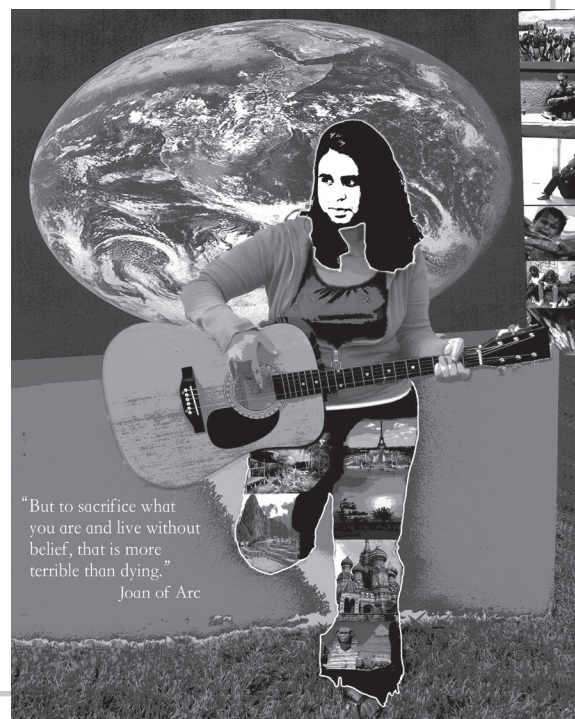
Please wear your jeans much higher,

For my retinas.

Her eyes are foggy

Like mist over the water

Might be cataracts!



"But to sacrifice what you are and live without belief, that is more terrible than dying."
Joan of Arc

SENIOR PLANS AFTER GRADUATION

CLAYTON KOH

After graduation, I plan to do my student teaching, get my masters in curriculum and instruction, and then get a job. I hope to teach students in upper elementary school (4th - 6th grades) in either SDA or public schools. I hope to do some global mission work as well.

DIANA KRUEGER

I will be spending the next year recovering from the Honors program by refusing to process information of any kind. After my sabbatical from knowledge, I will resume my pursuit of academics, refreshed and smelling slightly of lemons.

NATALIE MARCHAND

I will be attending Loma Linda University School of Medicine.

NICCOLE MODELL

Well, in the immediate future.... I will spend part of my summer in New York at a special flute music program. Next year I will return to LSU for a flute performer's certificate. After that, I plan to apply for graduate study at several institutions.

As far as long term future...I would like to someday play flute professionally in a famous symphony, be a studio musician for movie soundtracks, or back-up big stars like Josh Groban. =)

SARAH MONICKAM

I am planning on pursuing a Ph.D. in Industrial Psychology on the East Coast and plan to continue to compete at professional ballroom and salsa congresses and shows. My goal is to become an international health consultant and help organizations and private companies better assist impoverished groups of peoples in developed and underdeveloped countries.

VALERIE NELSON

After graduation I plan to take the summer off and travel the world, well, more like North America. In August, I will be moving to my own place and starting medical school at Loma Linda University.

KEVIN WEBSTER

Next year I will start my studies for a Ph.D. in Biophysics at UC Berkeley. After that I hope to continue researching, either at an academic institution or a government lab. Maybe one day down the line I will teach.

JOSE VARGAS

Perhaps hike a hill, then come down and work more on my saxophone through a performance certificate program here at LSU. If I get bored I'll be an interpreter to interpretive dancers. Then I'll do nursing at LLU

HONORS OFFICE



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

Dr. Douglas Clark, *Associate Honors Director*; Zulema Ibarra, *Student Secretary & Advisor*; Alexandra Lopez, *PR*; Dr. Paul Mallery, *Honors Director*; Megan Pennington, *Student Secretary*; Lynneth Solis, *Secretary*; Zachary Jagers, *Recruitment*.

OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY

8 am-12 pm & 1-6 pm

TUESDAY AND THURSDAY

8 am-12 pm & 3-7 pm

WEDNESDAY

3 pm-6 pm

FRIDAY

8 am-12 pm

951.785.2310

honors@lasierra.edu

BOOK REVIEW: MONKEY BRIDGE

by Nina Park, freshman

The book, *Monkey Bridge*, was originally written in the late 1980s. However, the author, Lan Cao, rewrote and published the second version in 1992. This novel is different from many works loaded with political baggage about the Vietnam War. *Monkey Bridge* approaches the touchy piece of history with an air of freshness and care. However, this book smells strongly of personal experiences and other biographical elements from the author.

In an educational blog, Lan Cao revealed facts that eventually became incorporated into the story of *Monkey Bridge*. Most of the story is true. The second version of *Monkey Bridge* was written after Lan Cao's mother fell ill. This explains the story's being carried by the pushing and pulling between Mai and her mother. The tone of the interactions between the mother and her daughter are intricate yet show no hints of effort or unnecessary extra words.

The interesting twist, which Baba Quan is a Viet Cong, seems fictional, however Lan Cao's uncle was actually one. The change from a Viet Cong member in being an uncle to a grandfather in the text brings a more personal level to the plot. Also, the well-known "Asian duty" factor has more room to be at play. In Lan Cao's case, her uncle was the only family member who was a Viet Cong, and the only one to stay behind after April 30 in 1975. The subtle but complicated ending shows Lan Cao's confused feelings about her uncle's political position.

Being a young immigrant from Vietnam, Lan Cao had to have struggled with her mother involving the two separate cultures. She effectively included conversations in which her authoritative mother is exasperated with her forgetfulness and lack of appreciation for Vietnamese culture. Her traditional mother, who refuses to let her grow and experience the world, equally exasperates the daughter. In order to make these interactions convincing, Cao would have had to capture the exact feel of the tension between the two. This was possible as she probably had fresh confrontations with her bed-ridden mother to incorporate into the text. Mai's position and stand on her transition from the reserved and traditional culture of Vietnam to the free and alien world of America seems to be on the extreme end. This could reflect Lan Cao's relationship with her mother, a typical bond where the older member is unwilling to let go of the ways of the past in a new environment. The other member, on the other hand is in a hurry to blend in and adopt the new practices and manners.

Lan Cao received a B.A. in political science from Mount Holyoke College in 1983, and her J.D. from Yale University. Both degrees are amazing accomplishments especially since English was her second language. In order to obtain success, Cao had to be willing to quickly



adapt into her new world. College life was probably as important to Cao as it was to Mai, for Cao had Mai attend the same college she did. The interview in the story was probably a situation similar to one Cao had faced.

Thanh committing suicide was an attempt to close the book on some sort of conclusive note. Suicide is considered to be honorable in Asian culture on various circumstances and conditions. However, at this point, Cao could have had Thanh and Mai resolve their problems and live a new life together. The suicide seems to reinforce the idea that the old stick to their ways and the new continue on and forget the old ways. On a sadistic note, Cao could have been thinking that Thanh's end would be better than her invasion of Mai's life. As the daughter of an immigrant, she probably often thought what her life would be like without family breathing down her neck.

This book is considered to be "the first novel by a Vietnamese American about the war experience and its aftermath." The plot, though intense, was extremely low-key. Knowing that Lan Cao wrote this version of the book about two decades later, gives me the impression that she was able to mature and really think about what she wanted to say. Lan Cao managed to write a book about the war without shoving political opinions down readers' throats. She was more intent on telling a story with depth, focusing on the life of immigrants and the relationship between a mother and daughter. She brought elements of her experiences as a civilian and an innocent bystander as a child in the war. Lan Cao was able to voice her frustrations dealing with the two worlds through Mai's narration. Her first-person point of view gives the book more credibility without flaunting it.

The book, *Monkey Bridge*, gives us much insight into the author's life and her experiences as a civilian and an immigrant. The biographical components are strong pillars with which Lan Cao has wrapped her story, leaving behind the true essence. Surprisingly for her first fiction piece, Lan Cao was able to pull it off with ease. With this book, she has paved the road for more Vietnamese literature, and, in effect, has constructed a bridge into a different culture.

THANK YOU

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THANK YOU!*Your donations are greatly appreciated!***HONORS EVENTS****HONORS PICNIC DINNER**

May 9, 2007, 5:30 PM

HONORS DESSERT HOUR

May 23, 2007, 5:45 PM

HONORS SENIOR RECOGNITION DINNER

May 31, 2007, 7 - 9 PM

ALEXANDRA LOPEZ*Honorgram Editor***DR. PAUL MALLERY***Honors Program Director***PATRICK GARRET YORK***Dr. Robert Dunn interview***LYNNETH SOLIS***Scholarship Project information***DR. ANNEMARIE HAMLIN***Dr. Paul Mallery interview***LYNNETH SOLIS***Scholarship Project information***J SILPANISONG***Freshman perspective***CLAYTON KOH***Senior perspective***DR. GARY CHARTIER***Faculty perspective***ZACHARY JAGGERS, RICO LEGASPI,
NELLY MONTOYA, AND DIANA
KRUEGER***Artwork & poetry***UNIVERSITY RELATIONS***Layout & Design*

THE HONORS PROGRAM began at La Sierra University in 1983. It strives to give special attention to undergraduates of outstanding intellectual and creative ability and aims to charge the imagination in an environment where students initiative is the guiding force. Students are given the opportunity to recognize their potential through encouragement, discussion and interaction. The overall objectives of the program are focused on the La Sierra University mission *"to Seek, to Know, to Serve..."*

LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY

Honors Program
4500 Riverwalk Pkwy.
Riverside, CA 92515
951.785.2310

www.lasierra.edu/honors**CONTRIBUTORS**