

University
Honors
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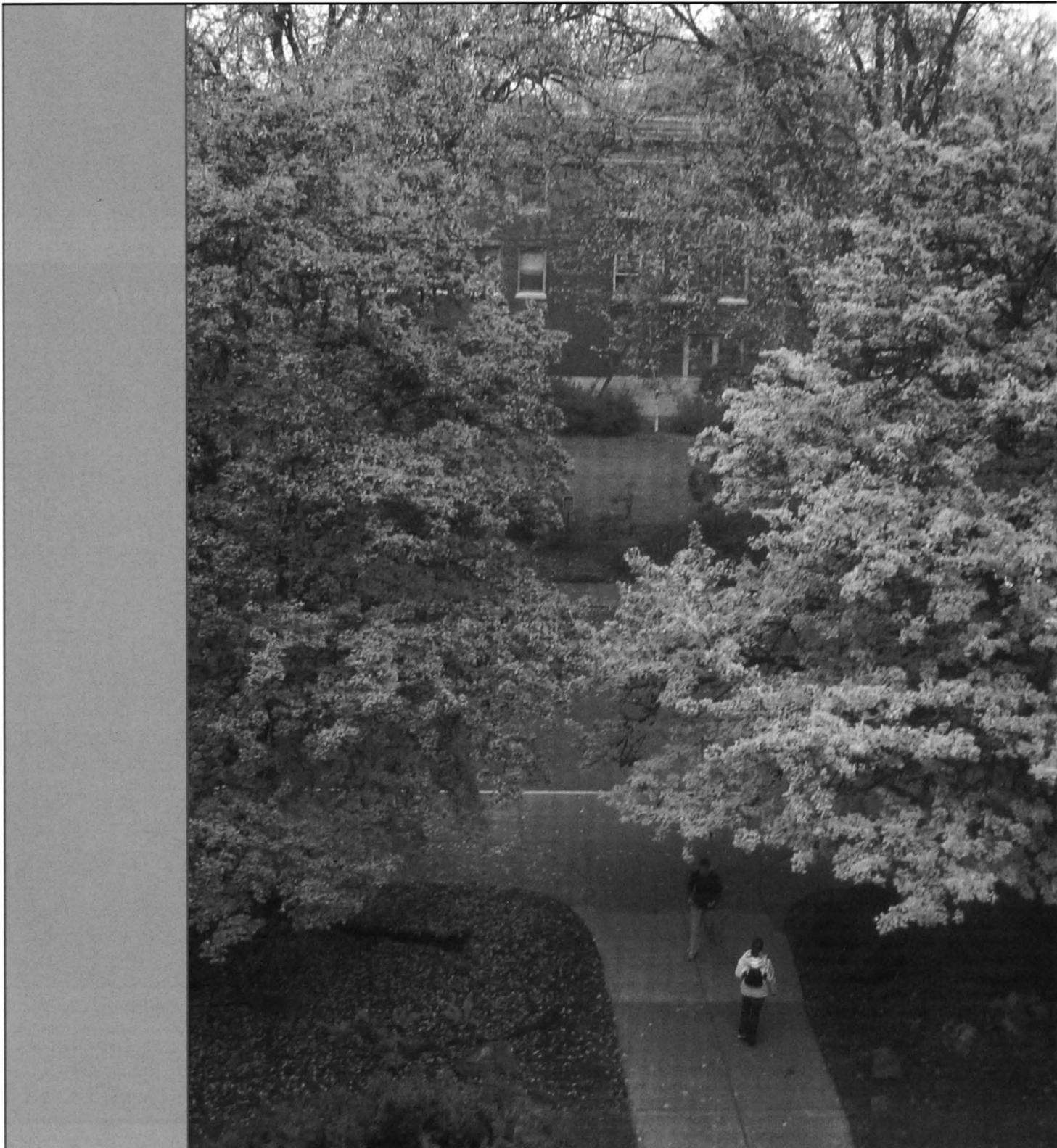
The Chronicle

The Official Oregon State University
UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE
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Cover: Fall passes from a window in Milam Hall. Photo by Lea Wilson.

The Chronicle

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Jenny Moser

After much fruitless brainstorming for a topic for this letter, I finally came up with an idea and pitched it to my fellow senior staff, joking “And if you don’t like this, I’ll just write 300 words on cheese!” Well, Casey dared me to do it. Casey really ought to know better by now...

I’ve had a longtime interest in the making of cheese. At the age of four, I didn’t understand what the “curds and whey” were that Little Miss Muffet was eating in the nursery rhyme. Mom explained that it was something like cottage cheese, and that all cheese starts out as lumps of curd (soggy cheese) floating in a liquid (whey) that has to get removed before the curds can become “normal” cheese like cheddar or parmesan. Mmm, parmesan.

The curds and whey incident was just the beginning. As a microbiology major, I’ve become fascinated with the ubiquity of bacteria and other microbes. One of the most seemingly bizarre sources of micro-life is, precisely, cheese.

While staffing the microbiology booth at OSU’s “Discovery Days” science outreach

program this fall, I was talking to a boy about seven years old. I showed him a Petri dish full of fuzzy white *Lactobacillus* colonies. “These are a kind of bacteria that help make cheese and yogurt,” I told him. “Every time you eat cheese and yogurt, you’re eating these!” “EWWW!” he replied, eyes wide with shock. I reassured him that the bacteria wouldn’t hurt him, and he cheerfully went on to inspect our microscopes.

Yes, it seems a little disgusting, but I think it’s cool. In fact, after taking MB 110, Orientation for Microbiology Majors, two years ago, I decided that I wanted to become a food microbiologist precisely so that I could learn how to regulate the production of cheese.

That, however, was before I became co-editor of The Chronicle and fell in love with journalism. I hope to go into scientific journalism someday, so even if I’m not supervising cheese, I can still write about it!

Casey Woodworth

The other day I went to OMSI, and everything seemed smaller.

Don’t even get me started on the Earthquake Room. They replaced it! No longer is the Earthquake Room a trailer filled with nifty demonstrations (remember the fish tank with the rolling water?) and an earthquake that could knock you off your feet. Now, it’s a very mod-looking metal structure that shakes just enough to...do nothing. The kids didn’t seem to mind, but then again they never experienced the mind-boggling original.

I learned a lot of things at OMSI. Among these is the fact that at 46, I am going to look like an old woman. Take your picture, drag and click, and bam! You’ve got wrinkles. A lot of the exhibits have to do with health, like hearing, life expectancy, healthy eating, and the human body. And they have this neat mongoose puppet

show that you can put on, and so many cool facts about wildlife and dinosaurs that a kid could spend hours learning in there.

After the Jane Goodall exhibit (I love monkeys--I am, after all, an anthropology minor), we spent quite a bit of time at the mind teasers. A series of booths with puzzles are set up in the hallway outside the exhibits, and you’ll never guess who was absorbed by them...the college students. In all, about ten college-age people stood around trying to figure out how to arrange the red blocks in a square and get the ring off of the horseshoes. As the kids ran around upstairs, screaming in front of the green screen and climbing through the giant ear, the college “kids” stood downstairs, still enthralled by the power of learning.

OMSI’s lesson? The kids have it right. Never stop learning.

WINNER!

**National Collegiate Honors Council
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13 November 2004**



Obscure Majors or Packed Classes?

Student experiences in small majors vs. large majors

by Jessica Varin

I'll be honest, I laughed a little when I heard that Outdoor Recreational Leadership is a major offered at Oregon State. Quite frankly, it sounds like one of those catchy phrases students use on resumes, like "professional food service associate" or "independent labor contractor."

Fortunately, this is just one of a myriad of disciplines to be explored at OSU, but Outdoor Recreational Leadership is actually applicable—think ecotourism. From Agricultural Business Management to Zoology, over 200 undergraduate majors are offered at Oregon State.

Rare gems include American Studies majors, Rangeland Resources majors, Radiation Health Physicists, and future Nuclear Engineers.

On the other hand, students in the College of Business make up a huge portion of the undergraduate population at OSU. Currently, more than 2,000 students are seeking undergraduate degrees in business administration. By far the largest single major at Oregon State, it's hard to miss our Starbucks-wielding compatriots in the College of Business.

All stereotypes aside, the academic experiences of students in huge majors versus those in smaller majors are phenomenally



different. With such an emphasis on smaller learning communities in education, I wondered whether students in larger majors felt short-changed or students in smaller majors felt limited by the size of their program.

As it turns out, there are advantages and disadvantages of both large and small majors. Kara Christenson, a second-year business administration major, acknowledges the resources of being in a large department but also believes that the College of Business would be better if smaller.

Other undergraduates cite sizeable lectures, "business-oriented" advising, and limited relationships with other students as staples

of larger majors such as Human Development and Family Sciences (HDFS), psychology, and business administration.

Yet, these programs have an abundance of resources that aren't as prevalent for those in smaller majors. "It always helps to have it bigger for the resources...but the small department is great and really supportive," says Julie Cherry, a first-year music major. Cherry cites excellent faculty and close relationships with other students as the main advantages to being in a smaller major.

Stephanie Watson, a fifth-year HDFS major, recalls her experiences as an entomology

Continued on page 6 . . .

Teaching Magic

by UHC Professor Eric Hill

Faculty: Cornered



There is a wonderful story in Hindu tradition that goes like this: Narada, an ascetic, asks the god Vishnu about the meaning of *maya* (which can be loosely translated as "illusion" or sometimes "as the world as measured"). Vishnu tells Narada to jump into a nearby lake. Narada does so, emerging from the water as a young woman named Sushila, the daughter of a great king. Sushila eventually meets and falls in love with a young man who is also a king. She goes on to live a long and happy life, bringing up two generations of family. Near the end of her long life, however, her father and husband wage war against each other's kingdoms and she watches all of her family on both sides die in battle. As she burns their bodies in the funerary pyre, she is so overcome with grief that she dives into the flames . . .

How many times have I put down a book or walked out of a movie crying or laughing (or both)?

only to emerge from the water as Narada once again, sobbing for his loss. "For whom are you weeping?" asks Vishnu.

One of the reasons I love this story so much is that it dramatizes the power of language, which can create a kind of illusory world. How many times have I put down a book or walked out of a movie crying or laughing (or both)? I think most of us forget,

at least at moments, that language is symbolic, that it is a description or representation of our own perceptions. We fall under the "spell" of it, sometimes confusing the symbol for

the thing. As the linguist Alfred Korzybski once suggested, we confuse the map with the territory. For me, language (reading, writing, listening, speaking) has always been magic. As in the

case of the sorcerer's apprentice, however, we can misuse (or be used by) the magic.

I remember many years ago trying to impress my cousins in Rome with my Italian. At one point in our conversation a friend of theirs (to whom I found myself slightly attracted) asked me how old I was. I responded with, "I have twenty-three asses." The room broke into laughter. I was confused. "And every year," she

Continued on page 7 . . .

Slug Trails—UHC Staff Comings and Goings

Carolyn Oltman, Admissions Specialist

With Rebekah Lancelin now concentrating on advising, Carolyn will be responsible for processing applications and coordinating projects and publications. Carolyn, a Corvallis native, is "looking forward to getting to know the college and the people here, and finding my place." She previously worked in the Dean's office in the College of Science.

Bill Bogley, Assistant Dean

Bill is a familiar sight around the UHC, having taught Honors math courses for several years. As Assistant Dean he is in charge of curriculum development and helps Dean Hendricks with UHC development efforts. He also still works half time teaching over in the math department.

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Studying at the Universität Konstanz

by Ashley McDonough

Photos by Ashley McDonough



Students at the Universität Konstanz.

Slug Trails, continued

Kristin Price, Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA)

Kristin Price studies College Student Services Administration. After she graduates she wants to work in student affairs or student life. As GTA she advises the steering committee, coordinates numerous student activities, and assists with academic advising.

Chris Chambers, Student Data Administrator

Chris' official job is to maintain the website and manage the databases. The data administrator is also the guy the office goes to when they need technical assistance of other sorts. Chris, a senior in computer science, says that his job is "a good way to further [his] skills in a way that school doesn't always provide."

Yvonne Egendoerfer, Academic Liaison

Yvonne's smiling face will now greet students, staff and visitors when they come into the UHC office. Yvonne moved to Corvallis from Ashland with her husband Benjamin, who is a student in the College of Pharmacy here at OSU.

Andrea Leaming, the UHC's Academic Liaison, is retiring after 30 years at OSU. We wish her all the best and we will miss having her in the UHC office!

Before I came to OSU, I spent a year abroad in Germany. It was a wonderful experience, and I honestly did not want to return home. But I did, and I ended up at OSU, with the intent of spending another year abroad. Things worked out perfectly, and I found myself in Germany once again, this time at the Universität Konstanz (University of Constance).

On the first day of classes I held three slips of paper and a pamphlet, all of them different colors. Each of these was a different schedule, for each of the different biology degrees. Unlike our system where we get the benefit of creating our own schedule with a variety of classes, students in Germany are told when and where they show up to class. There are more or less the same students in every class so students tend to know everyone in their class and year of study. It was probably for this reason that I got some odd looks in my first class and was asked if I had been there last term because no one recognized me.

Another difference is that courses are not offered for an hour three times a week but rather for a block of two hours. However, there is some variety to this system. There are some compact one-month courses offered two hours a day, five days a week, for a month or other courses offered twice a week for half the term in conjunction with another class offered the second half of the term. According to an old tradition designed to allow the professors a brief respite between lectures, classes start *cum tempore*, or fifteen minutes after the full hour, unless the course is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. in which case it begins at 12:30. Furthermore, after the first hour of class is complete, it is common for the professor to give the class a fifteen-minute break.

There are a wide variety of differences between the American and German systems, such as student requirements, exams, structure of the degrees, professor-student interactions, living arrangements, and transportation. A whole thesis

Continued on page 9 . . .

Varin - Small vs. Large Majors, continued

major being vastly different in terms of relationships with people. Watson's change of major resulted in a shift from a major with 6 people in it to HDFS, the 4th largest undergraduate degree program at Oregon State (as of Fall 2003).

Like most students in smaller majors and/or within the Honors College, Watson says the main difference she sees is a "difference in relationships between other students, advisors, and instructors."

One commonality among students in smaller programs is the inclusion of professors as a part of the learning experience. When asked nearly identical questions, every student in a small major mentioned his or her professors as an asset while professors in larger majors were rarely mentioned.

"The professors lend you a sympathetic ear... Oh wait, I'm trying to sell my major—but it's so true!" jokes Kenny Barrese, a second-year math and mathematical sciences double major.

Among Honors College students, mathematics majors are not unusual. However, as a percentage of

the student body, math majors are far less common and mathematical science majors are almost unheard of. Barrese says he has never met another mathematical science major but believes, "The more math majors there are, the better the world will be."

For the most part, students in smaller majors view their interactions with others in their major as positive and a large part of the academic experience. Strangely enough, the sheer size of traditionally people-oriented fields appears to be wreaking havoc on actual human interaction in academia.

As an environmental engineering major, I have met the majority of first-year students in my major. For the next few years at Oregon State, I will be collaborating, struggling and enjoying my major with these people.

Composite shots aside, there is far more to a program than size. Opportunities, interaction and passion for the subject will make or break any major. Large majors have their appeal, as do smaller majors. Our experiences will be different, but with more than 200 choices, so are our majors.

Every student in a small major mentioned his or her professors as an asset, while professors in larger majors were rarely mentioned.

Hill - Teaching Magic

said, "you grow a new one!" More laughter. When it was explained to me what they were laughing at, my confusion turned to humiliation. I have since worked on my pronunciation, but I don't visit them anymore.

When I worked as a waiter I noticed that the more I made customers laugh (intentionally this time), the larger the tips were. There was something powerful in the realization (or equation) that laughter could equal money. At the urging of friends (and as the result of a wager), I eventually got into stand-up comedy, making considerably less than I had waiting tables. It wasn't long before I grew weary of the set-up/punchline formula of stand-up (as well as most of my colleagues who were an insecure, unhealthy, and generally unpleasant lot) and began doing monologues. I found myself inspired by

people like Lily Tomlin, Tom Bodett, Rick Reynolds, and particularly Spalding Gray. A comedienne I was writing for at the time started to accuse me of performing "therapy with a two-drink minimum." Nevertheless, I think my rationale was this: If I can

A comedienne I was writing for at the time started to accuse me of performing "therapy with a two-drink minimum."

make people laugh, why not make them think as well? Language is powerful. As it says in Proverbs 18:21: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." Why not tap into that power? Shortly thereafter I found myself performing less at clubs and at more art galleries and converted warehouses, mostly to scant audiences. Things were getting bleak (picture Lenny Bruce in the late years, rambling through court depositions – only sans the heroin).

Right about this time I was also working as a paralegal in a large Los Angeles law firm (Lillick, McHose, and Charles). I was helping put together cases where we were defending large corporations

Read the conclusion on page 9



The Graduate— Rebellion, Sex, and Why People Watched

by Katy Nixon

The Graduate, directed by Mike Nichols, was one of the most controversial movies of its time. When it was released in 1967, Lyndon B. Johnson was the president of the United States of America, *The Andy Griffith Show* was the most popular show on television and large scale war protests were being held amidst growing opposition to the war in Vietnam.

It is this rebellion, especially among the youth of the generation that *The Graduate* spoke to the strongest.

Despite being released during an era of great cultural distress and rebellion *The Graduate* doesn't directly address the major social or political issues of the time it was released. It does however give the viewer a character they can relate to and follow along his journey of being discontent with the world in which he lives and his pursuit for happiness and something "different". This analysis will look at *The Graduate* and how it reflects the views and struggles of the youth during the 1960's without explicitly setting itself in that time frame.

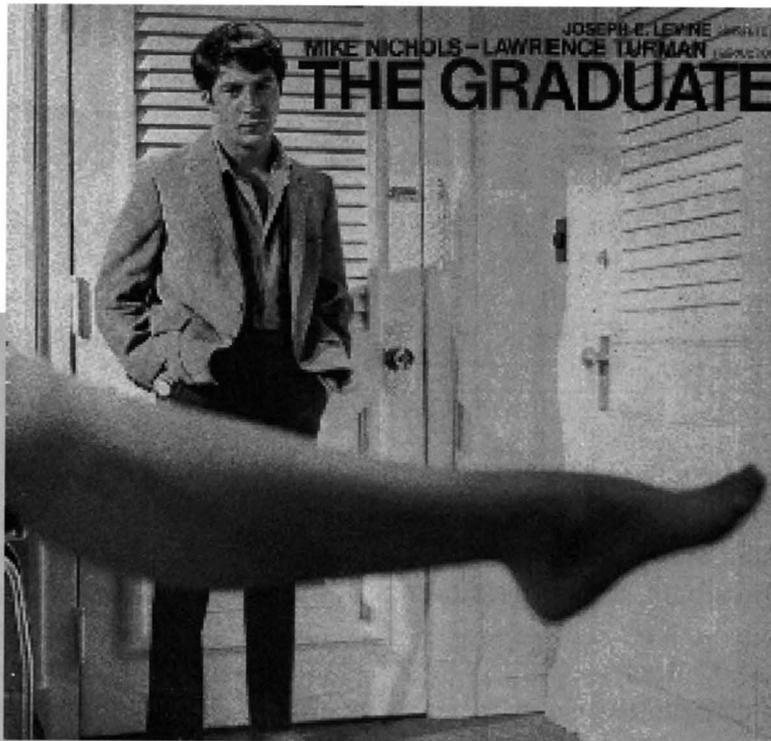
The Graduate tells the story of a young college graduate, Benjamin Braddock, who has just come home from college and is feeling uncertain and worried about his future. The only problem with this is that none of the adults around him care or even take notice of his concern. A prime example is when a

family friend pulls Ben aside to tell him something very important, then only says one word... "Plastics." This leaves Benjamin feeling lost and drifting through life, that is until seductive family friend Mrs. Robinson begins making advances towards him. This ultimately leads to the two becoming involved and having an affair. Unfortunately for Ben

this gives him no more direction in life and just perpetuates his stagnation. The only thing that ends up giving Benjamin any motivation or direction is Elaine Robinson, Mrs.

Robinson's daughter. Despite the obvious flaws in the situation Ben is resolute that he wants to be with Elaine and is willing to do anything to be with her, including barging into her wedding ceremony to another man AFTER she is officially wed. After stealing

Elaine away from her wedding ceremony Benjamin and Elaine climb onto a bus and ride away. Not looking at each other. Not kissing or talking. Not sure of what will come next, just riding away. For many people watching movies is a form of escapism. It's a chance to get away from everyday life and watch superheroes perform amazing feats and change the world for good. Mike Nichols described Benjamin Braddock as being "...not particularly bright, not particularly remarkable..." If movies are supposed to be about extraordinary



people, why would Benjamin being so unremarkable be so remarkable?

When *The Graduate* was released the youth of the culture were themselves living remarkable lives during a very remarkable time in our history. Young men were being drafted to serve the country in Vietnam; others were burning their draft cards in protest of the war. These young people who had grown up in the shadows of the calm and prosperous 50's were suddenly being thrown into uncertainty. They had their goal firmly within their sights and participated in the civil upheaval of the time in an attempt to achieve that goal. In much the same way, after feeling the initial sense of purposelessness, Benjamin gains a strong sense of motivation and drive once he realizes Elaine is the woman he loves and wants to

marry, going through extreme measures to achieve his goal. Benjamin was a figure the members of the youth culture could relate to. He showed that you don't have to be Superman to fight for a cause.

The Graduate affected the youth not only by portraying a character they could relate to in their feelings of being lost in the materialism of the current society, but also in its revolutionary portrayal of sexuality. Prior to this movie the topic of sex and sexuality was not addressed in the media. However, during this same time the mentality of the youth was changing, ushering in what we now refer to as the

"sexual revolution." Benjamin's illicit relationship with Mrs. Robinson came as a shock to moviegoers in its frank portrayal of their interactions; it was certainly a far cry from *The Andy Griffith Show*. Benjamin's metamorphosis through the film is quite possibly one of *The Graduate's* most timeless elements. The awkwardness and uncertainty Ben has

regarding his future are feelings anyone can relate with when they are faced with a major life change. Throughout most of the movie Benjamin is lost with what he wants or who he wants. He doesn't know what he needs to do to achieve these things that seem like they should be so easy to attain in the materialistic society in which he lives. Not until he met Elaine did Benjamin find his direction and know what he wanted. He came to realize that people are what are

important in life and that material objects and "plastics" are not the key to true happiness.

The cultural significance of *The Graduate* is undeniable and its impact in media and in our culture can still be felt today. What at the time was a shocking and groundbreaking film is now a classic movie after which many others have been modeled. During the late 60's amidst an unpopular war and a time of social upheaval, *The Graduate* gave the youth a glimpse of an unremarkable man, lost and unnoticed in his society who stood up for himself and fought for what he believed in; which is quite remarkable.

If movies are supposed to be about extraordinary people, why would Benjamin being so unremarkable be so remarkable?

The above piece was a sample from the Fall 2004 honors colloquium HC 299: Writing about Film.

Hill - Teaching Magic

(mostly automobile manufacturers) against individuals who had been maimed or paralyzed in rollover accidents. I was watching the magic of language being used for things I found ethically revolting. Only I wasn't just watching; I was actually helping. I was making more money than I had ever made (or will likely ever make). I felt like Albert Speer. The case I had just finished working on concerned a 20 year-old girl who had been turned into a paraplegic for the rest of her life. We won. I quit.

At my next job, writing and helping to pro-

duce documentaries, I got to talking to a neurologist (we were working on a documentary about a surgical procedure for Parkinson's disease) as we went over the voice-over. He said he found it incredible that we can physically transform the landscape of each other's brains through invisible means. I asked him what he meant by that. "Language," he said. I don't think it gets any more magic than that.

Not long afterward I wound up teaching writing at a community college and I haven't looked back since.



McDonough - Study Abroad

could probably be written on these differences.

But even foreign universities retain some elements of familiarity. A university is, after all, an institute of higher learning and all universities serve the same fundamental function no matter which country they are located in. Students everywhere also have the same basic needs and interests, so it is not surprising to see that universities in different countries have developed similar solutions to encourage their students to be physically, socially and mentally active outside of their studies.

A student association exists that is in charge of organizing parties and movie nights, which differ from our parties in that they allow alcohol to be bought and consumed on campus. This student association also puts on various cultural and informational events, such as "Gay Café" to raise awareness and tolerance, and international forums to draw connections to other countries. Although the university does not possess facili-



ties as marvelous as Dixon Rec Center, there is a fitness area that provides boat and equipment rentals for students. There are also courses similar to PAC courses, such as dance, gymnastics, running, snowboarding, archery, swimming, and scuba.

Although my first week was difficult, since schedules are rarely available online, course descriptions are almost non-existent, and the whole advising concept is completely different, I was still able to get to my courses and get information. At the end of my second week now, I do believe that I have settled into this system and found a sort of routine. All of you have the chance to go abroad, and you should definitely go. In the past four weeks that I have been in Konstanz, I have met so many people from other countries and experienced so many things.



Ashley, Tristan (PSU student, left), and Collin (UO, right) ride in the Tübingen on the Neckar in a gondola, or, "one of those funky boats that they propel with a long stick."



Hey UHC Students!

What's up? Are you doing anything cool in one of your honors classes? Have a burning topic you want to write about? How about your thesis, got a neat idea? Keep checking your Monday Message and watch for our periodic call for submissions. At *The Chronicle*, you're our favorite subject, and we like to stay caught up.

Ask Naaman

by Naaman Horn

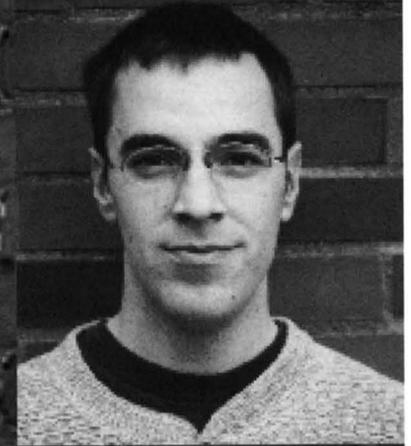
Dear Naaman,
What is the meaning of life?
Sincerely, ~Who Ami~

Dear Life Lamerter,
Members of the human race have been pondering this very question ever since the first cavewoman pointed her club up toward the sky and grunted her discontent. Cavemen at the time were too preoccupied with sports (like Pin the Tail on the Mammoth) to develop any sort of philosophical thought. Ever since that time philosophers, poets, honors college students and average Joes have all been asking the very same question. Many have posed solutions, with varying degrees of eloquence; however, no two answers are the same. You present a question that I can not fully answer in this column. I will nonetheless provide a couple solutions to the meaning of life that I have found inspirational in my own quest for true knowledge. Monty Python's *The Meaning of Life* defines it in this way: "Well it is nothing very special . . . try and be nice to people, avoid eating fat, read a good book every now and then, get some walking in, and try and live together in peace and harmony with people of all creeds and nations." Then of course there is Douglas

Dear Naaman,
What are your thoughts on tofu?
~Veg E. Tarian~

Dear Soy Seeker,
Many believe that tofu exists only as the staple of the vegetarian cuisine. Although it remains an important element in vegetarian culinary practices, its practical uses extend well beyond this realm. I myself enjoy the consumption of meat. I eat vegetables as well, but often my vegetable intake is secondhand. Cows consume vegetation, and I in turn consume cows. It seems to work out well for all involved. But, even though I enjoy eating meat, I will not discount the value of tofu. For those of you who may not know, tofu is to soybeans what cheese is to cows. Milk is extracted from the cow and/or soybean. The milk is then processed and packaged and sent to stores in some quasi-solid gelatinous state ready for human consumption. Tofu is the chameleon of the

Adams, who asserts that the meaning of "Life, the Universe and Everything" can all be boiled down to the computer-generated number 42. He then suggests that perhaps it is not the answer that we should be concerned about, but rather the question. I like these examples because they're simple. Some people get so carried away trying to unlock the secrets of life that they fritter away the good parts of life they should simply be living. No one knows for sure what this thing we call life is all about. But, something that I do know for sure is that life is amazing and beautiful and should by no means be frittered away. Discovering the meaning of life might make our existence a lot simpler, but it would not be nearly as entertaining.



culinary world. Inside the package it has little taste and a spongy texture. However, if prepared correctly, tofu can assume a plethora of textures and flavors. Tofu will take on just about any flavor. With the right marinade or spices, tofu can magically change to fit the diner's taste. Tofu can be manipulated to resemble the texture and flavors of most meats. But, the best samples of tofu dishes are not when it is disguised, but when it is simply tofu in its entire splendor. The only limit on what a chef can do with tofu is the chef himself. Is tofu a legitimate replacement for meat? That is a question that you will have to answer yourself. Regardless of your decision, appreciate tofu for what it is... a healthy and exciting addition to any meal.



Recommended Reading from Honors Students

C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*
Alan Paton, *Cry, the Beloved Country*
Jonathan Kozol, *Amazing Grace: The Lives
of Children and the Conscience of a
Nation*

~Mandi Wilson, Liberal Studies

Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*
Lois Lowry, *The Giver*
Robert A. Heinlein, *Starship Troopers*
Douglas Adams, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to
the Galaxy*

~Elizabeth Cash Spencer, Psychology

Bryce Courtenay, *The Power of One*
Gabriél García Márquez, *One Hundred
Years of Solitude*

~Jeremy Gregory, Biochemistry/Biophysics

Edward Conlon, *Blue Blood*
John Knox, *The Forgotten Memoir of John
Knox*

Richard Russo, *Empire Falls*
John Irving, *A Prayer for Owen Meany*
~Nick Huggler, Political Science

Michael Pollan, *The Botany of Desire*
Sue Monk Kidd, *The Secret Life of Bees*
~Amy Christeson, Liberal Studies

Joseph Heller, *Catch 22*
~Mollie Holmes, Mathematics

Fyoder Doestoyevsky, *Brothers Karamazov*
George Eliot, *Middlemarch*
Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

~Angie Bergh, English

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