

Areté

Newsletter of The Honors School

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Wilson Hall Bomb Threat

by Derek Bruno and Michael Edwards

"The number one fear in America is public speaking. The number two fear is death. That means a majority of Americans would rather be in the coffin than giving the eulogy" (Anonymous). It seems like life was much simpler before the September 11th attacks. Public speaking, getting to class on time, and friendships topped the list of priorities at the turn of the millennium. Macroscopically, the country dealt with balancing unemployment and inflation and focused on mostly domestic issues. The occasional suicide bomb story somewhere in the Middle East was quickly forgotten in favor of upcoming holidays and dates. In a positive aspect, September 11th forced us to forget petty squabbles with our neighbors and united us. Unfortunately, it also necessitated a constant state of alert and suspicion, as evidenced by the reaction to the Wilson Hall bomb threats.



In a way, the Monmouth community's reaction to the news that there was a threat on Wilson Hall parallels the response of citizens of the United States to terrorism. The news began when everyone connected to the Monmouth emergency email system called the "NTI Connect-ED system," received word of the threat, and evacuated the building at 11:33 a.m. on September 10th. Past that, the word spread like wildfire, everyone warning their friends to stay clear and searching for any new information. I don't know anyone on campus that didn't know about it by 1 p.m. What was most interesting about the incident was the student response. A few remained in their dorms, crying out of fear that terrorism found its way to our serene campus. Most expressed a level of concern, making sure all of their friends stayed away from the building, but they remained emotionally stable. The rest tried to downplay the incident as yet another empty threat that should disrupt their day as minimally as possible.

I tried to imagine the student response if a similar threat was made to a building in Baghdad University. In a city where there seems to be a suicide bomber every week (imagine such a statistic in Monmouth County), students still go to school and adults refuse to let the markets and workforce shut down. Being human, it's impossible for them not to be in fear whether they experience a specific or nonspecific threat. I believe the breakdown of responses would be somewhat similar to what we experienced on September 10th here: most students doing their part in warning and protecting the rest of the community, ignoring fear and uncertainty.

It seems that the response to horrific terrorist threats is similar worldwide. In the streets of Baghdad, the boroughs of New York, or the mid-sized university on Larchwood Avenue, we're all here for each other in time of need, which is a reassuring notion. When midterms have claimed your last bit of sanity, your favorite football team starts out 2 - 4, and your boss is being far too demanding, it's a comfort to know that when push comes to shove, you belong to a community that will stand as one in the face of adversity.

New Orleans: Finding a Way Back Home

By Sasha Goldfarb

More than two years after Hurricane Katrina wrought destruction on the Gulf Coast, many charities have moved on to new concerns, news cameras have shut off, volunteers return in fewer numbers, and the crisis in places like Louisiana and Mississippi continues virtually unnoticed. There are still places that have visible wind and flood damage, as well as massive amounts of debris that initial clean-ups never reached. Furthermore, in other parts of New Orleans, like the 9th ward and surrounding areas, mold and biohazard material are becoming an increasing concern. Unbelievably, there are still houses to be mucked and gutted before they can be restored or rebuilt. And while political backlash ensues and there is well-deserved finger-pointing at the government's disaster relief system FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), there are many left displaced, homeless, and in desperate need of help.

With this at heart, fourteen students from Monmouth University's chapter of NJ Community Water Watch packed up two rental vans and drove twenty-seven hours down to the southern coast for spring break this last semester. Taking what is now being coined an "alternative spring break," our group along with many other students and schools across the country gave up their free time over spring break in order to volunteer for a service organization. The alternative spring break has proven to be a change from the stereotypical drunken, oversexed teens that can be seen hanging at the MTV® Beach House, as well as a meaningful way for college students to encounter the world as dedicated and proactive citizens in order to provide services to those who need it most.

Our group stayed with a small mission called Camp Restore, a Lutheran organization that established a strong volunteer base to restore the surrounding community. Each person fundraised \$200 to cover travel costs, fuel, and lodging at Camp Restore. Our fundraisers included the sale of Mardi Gras beads, asking for personal donations from family and friends, door-to-door solicitations for any food or money donations from local businesses, and "can-shakes" at the Shop Rite in Long Branch. Camp Restore was actually a school that had been remodeled to hold lodging and equipment for volunteers after Hurricane Katrina.

On our first day, our group was split into different teams based upon our abilities and interests. I felt lucky to be assigned with a couple of other girls from our group, one of whom was my best friend and roommate, who had decided to share this adventure with me. Our task was to clean up a local boulevard, a large median on the main street with trees and grass, similar to a small park. We gathered trash, broken glass, lumber, and other debris before raking, shoveling, and mowing the area back into a presentable state. During this time I wondered how anyone could imagine the clean-up after Katrina being anywhere near over. Some of the things we discovered on our way, like shoes, keys, an abandoned pickup truck, and other possessions that were now turned trash, told us that many people had not even been able to return to pick up the pieces. One of the images that struck me the most on our first day was the sight of a rusted over basketball hoop standing alone on the corner of the median. I imagined it having been a place for children in the neighborhood to gather while families and neighbors enjoyed a nice day in town together. Now a witness to one of the worst storms in history, it was merely a relic of what I imagined had once been a warm and vibrant community. **(continued on page 7)**

INVITATION TO JOIN THE HONORS SCHOOL

Not everyone is aware that students may join the Honors School even if they did not come into Honors as freshmen. If you have a 3.5 or better GPA after completing 12 credits at Monmouth University, and you are interested in more information about joining a tailored curriculum to suit your needs, please contact the Honors School Office at 732-263-5308.

Annual Honors School Pizza Party: *GOOD TIMES!*



The Charlatan's Séance

By Sasha Goldfarb

Around the time of year the first cold nights come to our door and the summer sunshine is replaced with longer nighttimes, the first shivers and tingles of Halloween begin playing in my mind. I know there are pumpkins to adorn our doorsteps, "haunted houses" that make for dizzy entertainment, the changing leaves of earthy hues that crunch under my feet, and costumes prepared with care. But of all things I most delight in during this time of year (as many people might at the twinkle of an approaching Christmas) is the **scares** of Halloween. For those of you who can't understand what it is I'm talking about, then my story isn't for you, and you can read on for less frivolous things. But if a creeping nostalgia brings a smile to your face to remember the ghost and ghouls of Halloweens past, I hope you enjoy my account of a spine-tingling adventure of *The Charlatan's Séance* at Two River Theater.

As it was first described to me from the Two River Theater Company's website, *The Charlatan's Séance* is "Part magic, part mentalism, part shamanism, and all sham..." I was immediately intrigued, and reserved tickets for opening night. Driving to the theatre was somewhat of a hassle, especially with a late start and the bustling nightlife. But the TRTC offers a sizeable amount of free parking for its patrons, a definite plus in a busy downtown. A marathon run from the parking lot to the double glass doors put my date and me in our seats literally moments before curtain time. On our way in, my nostrils were greeted with the heavy aroma of dry ice that covered our trail as an usher escorted us into the auditorium. Black lights and candles for an even more suspenseful entrance.

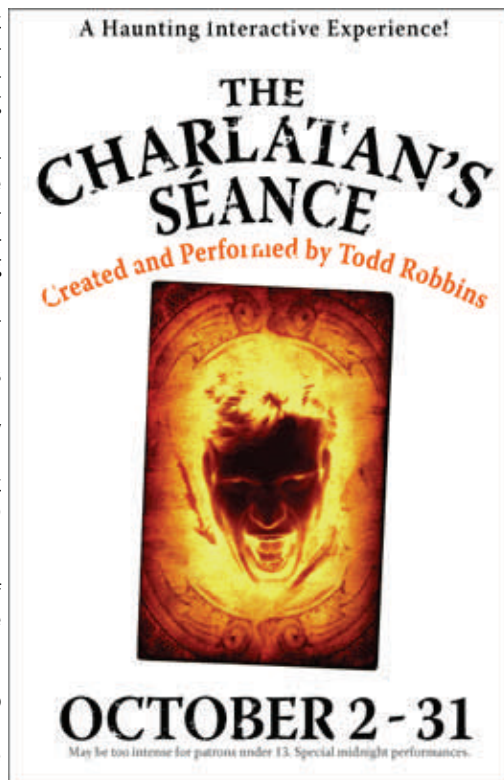
I was surprised by the size of the auditorium itself, seating perhaps sixty-five people at the most. The theatre has more than one stage, many times hosting more than one show a night. Our seats were situated stage left in a corner that minimized visibility of the performance. When the illusionist, Todd Robbins, opened his act with a few simple parlor tricks to gain the audience's attention, I found myself craning my neck and sitting on my knees in order to see. The magic was only a taste before Mr. Robbins transformed into the renowned Rev. T.L. Robbins, and officially began the séance.

The experience related back to the historical movement of spiritualism, started by the Fox sisters of Hydesville, New York, who in 1848 began to make claims that they could communicate with the dead. The first séances were conducted by asking simple 'yes' or 'no' questions that could be answered by a "knock" from a spirit, or movement of the pointer on a Ouija board. The audience was involved in the entire charade, including group hypnotism, singing and chanting, and even a "communing" with the spirits reminiscent of a TV episode with psychic, John Edward. The best tricks were turned when the audience was kept in total darkness for several minutes. My senses were tingling while I was "touched" by passing ghosts, or whispered to by an unknown presence. There were even the occasional olfactory complements and offenses when the stench of corpses swarmed nearby, or when we moved into a valley of spiritual peace.

The experience was, from start to finish, an exciting ride. While it by no means can compare to the glitz and gore of modern haunted hay rides and ghost tours, I still found it to be full of the jumps and gasps that still bring me back to my most fun memories.

For more information about all of the free future productions at Two River Theater, visit <http://www.trc.org/>. Contact the Honors office to reserve tickets.

On our way in, my nostrils were greeted with the heavy aroma of dry ice that covered our trail as an usher escorted us into the auditorium. Black lights and candles for an even more suspenseful entrance. "



Study Abroad: Traveling the Americas

By Alexandra Bartlom

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Mexico has very hot weather.

Neither words nor pictures can fully capture my experiences while traveling this summer. I explored eight countries in Central and South America within a two month time frame. I took nearly a semester worth of credits on a boat (the MV Explorer), through its academic sponsor: the University of Virginia, a top ranking state school. The program is called Semester at Sea. Classes are conducted while the boat is traveling to the next port destination, and exploration on land is your own curriculum.

Mexico

Here, I went to the beach, night clubs, the Chapel of Peace, a hotel John Wayne stayed at, a beach club, checked out the local markets, saw a free orchestra performance (when does that happen in the US?), took a class in making Mexican cuisine, and went swimming with dolphins.

Ecuador

On my first night in Ecuador I went to the Universidad Espiritu Santo reception, where local students performed dances for us. The following day I went to the Galapagos Islands, where I spent most of my stay while in Ecuador. What a majestic place, with such a diversity of animals that are unafraid of close contact with humans. Ecuador has made it a national priority to keep these animals protected.



At the Galapagos Islands, inside an actual tortoise shell.

Chile

In Chile I went wine tasting in Casablanca, visited Vina del Mar and Santiago, and spent some time with local students from the University Federico-Santa Maria. Chile was the most economically developed country we visited.



Seen in real life, Machu Picchu is most breathtaking.

Peru

Peru is such an amazing country in my eyes. I went to Cusco, Machu Picchu, and the Amazon. Cusco is such a beautiful place to visit, with plenty of markets filled with exquisite handcrafted merchandise. Nothing can describe Machu Picchu sufficiently; you need to go there yourself! There is a reason why it is among the 7 Wonders of the World. The Amazon was such a fun experience, with black and brown rivers, and all of its animals.

Panama

On my second day in Panama I went to Kuna Kingdom, a matriarchal, indigenous society. Apparently, economic class differences do not exist here. Furthermore, the people living in this society seem to be doing well for themselves! To some, maybe they are "poor," but I beg to differ. I think this society is rich in many aspects, especially culture and community.

The Kuna people take good care in avoiding exploitation. We were advised to ask permission to take pictures of these people, and if they allowed you to they would typically charge you \$1 per picture. The tour guide explained to our group that the Kuna people suspected that these photos would be posted online or advertised for the world to see. I suspect that the Kuna people are not looking for that type of publicity, as they not only regulate the photos taken, but also how many outsiders come to visit them. They don't want to be a showcase.

Nicaragua

Nicaragua was one of my favorite countries. It was the least economically developed country that I visited, and the safest! I walked to the center of the volcano Cerro Negro, climbed up to the top, and sandboarded down. I visited bubbling mud pots, unbelievable! I saw colonial



Here I am with a group lying on an active volcano in Nicaragua. We surfed down the volcanic ash using sandboards.



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Traveling the Americas

(Continued from previous page)

ruins and other noteworthy buildings. I visited a preventative/treatment school for street kids vulnerable to drug use. The little girls did a dance for us. I ate the best meal ever here!

Guatemala

I went to a variety of places in Guatemala (including Antigua and Guatemala City), but I want to focus my attention on the garbage dump that I visited. While there are many pleasant aspects of my trip to Guatemala, the dump impacted me the most out of all the places that I visited during this past summer. People live at the garbage dump, under terrible conditions. This is an appalling reflection of the disconnection society creates between the elite and the poor. Nobody should be subjected to such standards of living, but it is the case here and in many other places in the world. There were two tour guides that spoke with my group. The first one was a woman who lived a privileged life. She told us that it is not fair to compare the rich and the poor in Guatemala- the poor, after all, are not educated.

Does that mean they do not want to be? The other tour guide came from an underprivileged background. He grew up in extreme poverty and was lucky enough to have risen above such circumstances. He had a completely different attitude about the poor in Guatemala. He said, "If you have nothing here, you are part of the trash." If you are born poor, you will more than likely stay poor as a consequence of social handicaps. You will be regarded as part of the trash, as the trash, and discriminated against as a consequence of this prejudice.

Lesson Learned

I learned one very important lesson throughout my travels and my classes: it is essential to look at *all information* with skepticism. In a number of the countries that I visited, local people called the war in Iraq genocide! How does one dismiss or even address such a statement? Furthermore, where can I find valid, unbiased information on current events? All this made me consider how wary I actually need to be of *all* media sources. After all, censoring the news isn't even against the law in the USA or any other part of the world. For example, the US sponsored coup in Chile, which resulted in the assassination of democratically elected President Salvador Allende, is not something my history classes have ever brought to my awareness- going there did. The real question then becomes: how much important, accurate information am I lacking from my consciousness? Ariel Dorfman's "The Lost Speech," which I read for my Transamerican Encounters class, truly captures a global perspective on terrorism. Dorfman describes the parallels between Chile's September 11 (1973) and US's September 11 (2001): "how sadly familiar the current state of affairs was to me," and the terrorism and intolerance toward liberals that ensued, "...the secrecy and corruption, the cowed and submissive press..." Looking at the society I live in from another person's perspective may not give me an easy feeling in my stomach, but it certainly gives me a more holistic view of the world. Perhaps one real solution to real problems of our day is not killing each other, as the popular belief has been, but recognizing and accepting other versions of the truth (that's what academic history stands for right?). I think there is something to be said about tolerance, the tolerance of ideas. While many people reading this may react negatively to the idea that people view the war in Iraq as genocide, I think we need to recognize and consider how fundamentally the war has negatively affected the way that many peoples of the world view the United States. Instead of dismissing this notion as false, we need to add it into our understanding of the world. Isn't that the definition of tolerance? "...when we are being fed black and white...the need for uncertainty and ambiguity...to be more tentative...is crucial at this time in history." That was one of the points Ariel Dorfman tried to drive home. [Ariel Dorfman is Walter Hines Page Research Professor of Latin American Studies at Duke University.]



When I visited **Costa Rica**, I had the opportunity to go zip-lining.



This is a "house" by the Guatemala garbage dump, where about 15 people reside.

"In a number of the countries that I visited, local people called the war in Iraq genocide! How does one dismiss such a statement?"

Contact Me

If you would like to engage in a conversation with me about international affairs, or about the Semester at Sea program, please feel free to contact me. My email is:

s0533752@monmouth.edu.

Meet Your Honors Professor: Dr. Lewandowski

By Jarrett Van Ollefen

Hoping to gain a more personal understanding of one of the honors professors here at Monmouth University, we have included a "Meet Your Honors Professor" section of *Arête*. For this issue, I interviewed Dr. Gary Lewandowski. The courses he teaches include Introduction to Psychology, both honors and regular, Intimate Relationships, Senior Thesis, Senior Psych, and Senior Seminar focusing on the "self." His main focus in Psychology is love and relationships. I sat down with him after class one day and asked him a few questions to try and get to know him better and see what makes him tick.



Dr. Gary Lewandowski

"While doing research, you get to ask questions that no one's asked before and see how things turn out. Researching like this can create new knowledge and bring it into the world- not many jobs involve that."

Van Ollefen: What made you decide to become a psychology professor?

Dr. Lewandowski: I had a really good Psychology professor in undergraduate school, and it really just seemed like a good thing to do. After getting the opportunity to teach a class, I became sure that this is what I wanted to do. Experience is important.

J: Where did you go to school, and from where did you graduate?

L: My undergraduate school was Millersville University of Pennsylvania, and I got my PhD from the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

J: Why did you choose to teach here at Monmouth?

L: The school matches my priorities - students always come first, as does teaching. The level of research here also involves students, and I really enjoy helping the students with their career goals.

J: What do you like most about teaching?

L: Having a positive influence on people's lives. You never know what to expect- every new group of kids for a class is different and poses a new challenge. Psychology is an everyday application - you can use it every day of your life. It can help you make changes in your daily life. In relationships you can learn something to help make positive changes in your life.

J: What is your favorite theory in psychology?

L: Self expansion. This theory states that we are all motivated to grow as people- we add on

to our sense of self in order to become better people. It ties into teaching; approach every day to better who we are.

J: What do you enjoy most about the field of psychology?

L: While doing research, you get to ask questions that no one has asked before and see how things turn out. Researching like this can create new knowledge and bring it into the world - not many jobs involve that.

J: What do you like best about the honors program?

L: The group of students are motivated to learn for learning's sake - just to gain more knowledge. I enjoy seeing people decide to complete their Senior Thesis in Psychology and seeing people develop and progress throughout their years here at Monmouth.

J: Do you have any life goals beyond Monmouth?

L: To be a good person, be a good father, be a good husband and continue to be happy. I'm currently working on writing a book about relationships with a few friends of mine. It's currently under review at a publisher right now. I've also been featured in a book, *Survivor and Psychology*, in which I wrote two chapters. Writing is just another way of teaching.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF MONMOUTH COUNTY

Have fun!

Be a friend and a

leader among

your peers!

Do your part to make

your community and

your world a better

place!

INTERESTED?

**Contact the
Honors School
at
732-263-5308**

New Orleans: Finding a Way Back Home

(continued from page 2)

We were also fortunate during our work that week to meet a few families that lived along the boulevard. Many of them needed help mowing, raking, and cleaning their lawns, and we of course jumped at the chance to help after being confined to one long task. I was even more excited to interact with some of the real people, finally enabling me to see the faces and names behind this tragedy. A few neighbors described the events leading to Katrina, and how nothing could have prepared them for what was waiting around the corner. One woman spoke about the night the storm began to take on its full force, and officials began warning residents to evacuate their homes. The woman told me she had left that night with nothing but "...the clothes on my back and the slippers on my feet," believing that she would return to her home the next day to begin assessing and repairing the storm's damage, as had happened so many times before. The area in which we were stationed was actually fortunate, as I was told, having only seen between 6-10 feet of water throughout. Places like the lower 9th ward had seen upwards of 16-20 feet of water and were not receiving half of the help necessary.



The first question on everyone's mind was why we were not doing more to help, tackling the tremendous and backbreaking work of cleaning, gutting, and hauling away debris, or sawing and hammering up the frames of new houses. The mission explained that even the seemingly menial tasks allowed greater work to be done elsewhere. Even volunteers who might have been assigned to duty in the dining hall or cleaning bathrooms played an important part. While this is true for many volunteer groups, the truth is that funds are just not available. Many volunteer

groups require fees in order to afford tools, coverall suits, and respirator masks in order to work safely and efficiently, as well as room, meals, and lodging for volunteers remaining in the area. The ACORN (The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) website keeps an active list of volunteer stations and housing as well as resources to prepare potential volunteers (<http://acorn.org/index.php?id=9703>).

Monmouth University Water Watch's new campus advisor, Katie Feeney, can provide information regarding the many activities and even newer ways to get involved with the local environment and beyond. Activities both on and off campus include beach sweeps and clean-ups, trash removal, water monitoring, projects for media coverage, and environmental education and awareness. Feeney has also mentioned plans for another trip to the Gulf Coast in the spring. Water Watch at MU is a fantastic opportunity to gain meaningful and even life-changing experiences through volunteerism and social action.



Alumni Corner: Krista Langkamer—Class of '02

by Nicole Stevens

HONORS ALUMNI

WE WOULD
LOVE TO HEAR
FROM YOU!

E-MAIL US AT
arete@monmouth.edu

AND LET US KNOW
WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN

DOING
SINCE YOU LEFT
MONMOUTH.

TO CONTACT
DR. GARVEY
DIRECTLY, E-MAIL
garvey@monmouth.edu

WE LOOK FORWARD TO
HEARING
FROM YOU.

Member of the Honors School, sister of Zeta Tau Alpha, and Residential Assistant were just some of the ways in which Honors alum Krista Langkamer got involved during her time at Monmouth. A graduate of the 2002 class, Krista has since gone on to graduate school at George Mason University, where she is now working on earning her PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology.



After entering Monmouth as an undeclared major, the Allentown, Pennsylvania native chose to study psychology, realizing she could one day apply her interest and knowledge of psychology to help solve real-world problems and enter into one of the many careers which such a field offers.

Consequently, she wrote her Honors thesis on a psychological study of personal space, in which she observed the ways in which the distance between two people affected their personalities and behaviors. She calls finishing the thesis one of her most rewarding academic moments.

Now Krista is working on an even more daunting task—her dissertation, which she hopes to complete by May of next year. Krista says that writing the Honors thesis helped prepare her for her dissertation research, which examines how and why employees participate in self-development activities to develop their leadership skills.

“I chose this topic because of my interest in leadership,” says Krista, adding that she hopes to discover the best methods for developing effective leaders within an organization. Although her research is coming along slowly, “it will be worth it in the end,” since it will be Krista’s final step towards gaining her doctoral degree.

Aside from better preparing her for graduate school, Krista truly enjoyed the many opportunities and exciting trips which the Honors School offered. “Going on the trips to NYC to see a show each year was great!” Krista also appreciated the benefits of the Honors courses, as some of the university’s “best professors” held high expectations and therefore challenged her to work even harder. Socially, Krista enjoyed the benefits of having the same students in many of her classes, an especially helpful advantage during her first year at Monmouth.

Now, as the former Honors student busily moves even closer to attaining her career goal as an Industrial-Organizational Analyst, she unfortunately does not have many opportunities to return to Monmouth. However, she does hope to see the Honors School continually recruiting high-quality students, who can have the opportunity to grow both socially and intellectually through the School’s challenging classes and various events, just as she did only a few years ago.

Editor’s Note: The Honors School would like to wish Krista good luck on finishing her dissertation and graduating in May.