



Political Challenge

By EMILY BURKETT
Features editor

Uncritical thinking

Any student looking to transfer to a four-year school has reviewed the IGETC standards. Advanced Placement classes taken in high school can opt you out of almost any requirement if you have a high enough score in that area. Except one: ENG 101C, Critical Thinking.

Colleges are clearly placing a huge emphasis on developing students' ability to think critically, but the current system isn't allowing for critical thinking to be rewarded. Instead, simplicity has become the way to an A.

Schools across the country attempt to encourage critical thinking, but the actual practice is falling short of standards, as students are increasingly taught to limit themselves.

The value of factual information can't be denied; however, a simple memorization of facts ignores insights into the intrinsic nature of events and lacks the understanding that is crucial to true education. Standardized tests are a product of this information-trumps-insight attitude. I'm not against standardized exams as a legitimate form of evaluation, but again, one of the basic assessments given to students doesn't measure understanding or analysis.

Of course, the usual answer to the question of standardized tests is the essay. Again, this form of assessment fails due mostly to user error; students are rewarded for boxing themselves into the simplistic, five-paragraph structure based in deductive reasoning.

The harm of the structure lies in coaching individuals to limit their thinking process and consider only three aspects of any issue. Worse, the five-paragraph essay also comes with the added baggage of the thesis-first mentality. I understand the purpose of giving a clear road map and controlling idea for the reader to grasp, but it has its drawbacks. The thesis-first strategy ingrains biased and unjustified thought processes as opposed to an inductive, judicious approach which looks first to examples and circumstance and then reaches conclusions based on the given evidence rather than manipulating the evidence to fit a predetermined assumption. Thesis-first writing also undervalues the intelligence of the reader, assuming that without a cut-and-dry, idiot-proof statement, the reader won't grasp key concepts and thus damages the reader's development.

Factual retention should be qualified, but it should no longer be the primary determinant of intelligence. The solution I propose is to propagate multiple forms of reasoning and structure, to reward creativity and to give the standard, five-paragraph essay what it deserves: a C.

Former student displays his art



Photos courtesy of Jerome Engelberts

By EMILY BURKETT
Features editor

Former Ohlone student Jerome Engelberts began indulging his interest in painting last year and has since been consumed by his art.

His 40-odd works place an emphasis on shape, line, texture and a limited palette, a style derived

in part from the abstract works of Vassily Kandinsky.

Engelberts studied art at the Amsterdam Grafische School in Holland and has had success in several other artistic areas such as illustrations and photography.

Engelberts currently has an exhibit of 14 of his paintings on display at the Beanery café in Alameda.



Former Ohlone student Jerome Engelberts's paintings are currently featured in a coffeehouse art gallery in Alameda.

Jo Rainie Rodgers plans trip to Sydney

By BARRY KEARNS
Staff writer

When asked about some of the more exciting things she has observed, Jo Rainie Rodgers mentioned the Stockman's department store in Helsinki, Finland. About 20 years ago, when Rodgers went to the store, she noticed that there were closed spiral staircases found in the far corners of the store where one couldn't see if a person was ascending or descending the stairs. After watching people emerge or enter various staircases, she saw that without any signs or markings people just knew which of these staircases was for going up or going down. This observation is the basis of cultural anthropology.

Rodgers knew from the age of 8 that she wanted to pursue a career in the field of anthropology so as to better "know the story of people and humankind." This interest was fueled, as her father purchased books for her in the fields of archeology and human evolution during book drives. She went on to University of California, Berkeley for her degree in anthropology and then to California State University, Hayward to get her Master's degree in the same subject. She also holds an M.B.A. in International Business. Learning is a lifelong passion for Rodgers, who is currently enrolled in the Alliant doctoral program. Rodgers is also a fellow with the Leaky Foundation, a group founded to support human evolution research



Staff photo

Jo Rainie Rodgers moved to a part-time position this fall.

and paleoanthropology. Rodgers, along with her husband George, also plans trips with students every spring around the world; so far they've gone to China, Egypt, Peru, Costa Rica, Scandinavia, Russia, Italy and all over Europe. Rodgers met her husband on an archaeological dig in the Mission San Jose to find the original foundation of the mission, which was destroyed in the earthquake of 1868. Together they went on to run an archeology firm for eight years where she focused her efforts in the physical anthropology aspect of cultural resource management. The firm provided consulting for the government and for developers in the form of possible cultural resources and the impact of building in Northern California. Rodgers has been teaching at Ohlone College since 1984, when she started with some weekend and night courses. In her cultural anthropology class, she is discussing the cultural landscape with topics ranging from tattoos

and piercings to social taboos like cousin marriage. Her favorite part about teaching comes from the stimulating conversations that arise in the classroom where values and cultural viewpoints are expressed. Rodgers looks for what she calls the epiphanic "a-ha!" moments when she comes to understand why other cultures act in a certain way. Rodgers recalls a particular lesson she teaches to simulate culture shock - the class would be split into two groups and learned about a culture for about three hours. After becoming comfortable with that culture, some students would go into the other classroom to observe the other culture and then report back to their own group.

Rodgers explained, "The thing about people is, you tend to look at your own culture and think it's human nature."

Cultural anthropology is the study of cultures and, in the classroom, Rodgers strives to instill a "cultural sensitivity" in her students. In teaching, she hopes to take away a cold clinical approach to the discipline and to allow students to use what she has taught and view how it impacts their lives or beliefs when one views the distinction of human nature vs. culture. In many cases, it is easy to fall into an "us vs. them" perspective when it comes to other cultures, but with the perspective that cultural anthropology provides, one can better understand a different culture, even if they don't agree with it, Rodgers said.

Rodgers currently teaches an online cultural anthropology course and a course on the survey of North American Indians. Next fall, both she and her husband will be going to Sydney, Australia where she will continue to teach her online cultural anthropology course.

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Former student in parliament

By **ANDREW CAVETTE**
Staff writer

Peter Alroy Charles Hendrickse, a member of Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, visited Ohlone's Fremont campus on Monday. Hendrickse attended Ohlone in 1978 and 1979 before transferring to the University of California, Berkeley.

He currently belongs to the African National Congress political party and is the regional representative of the Eastern Cape province in South Africa. While attending Ohlone in 1979, he won the presidency of the ASOC, making him the first foreign student to head a student body. Hendrickse will be visiting friends near Sacramento this week and decided to stop by the campus to see some of his old professors.

He also visited the president's office. Assistant to the President Sarah Zentner met with Hendrickse.

"I was really impressed that a man from so far away, who had risen so high [in his own government] would have such fond memories of Ohlone. It was a wonderful day," she said.

During a phone conversation Monday, Hendrickse said his favorite class was the political science course taught by Alan Kirshner. "I enjoyed it tremendously [because of Kirshner's] off-the-wall stories, which made the class very interesting," Hendrickse recalled. Kirshner said Hendrickse was "a very good student...and was ac-



Photo courtesy of <http://book.co.za>

Former Ohlone student Peter Hendrickse now serves in the Republic of South Africa's parliament.

tively involved in the Democratic Party here."

Hendrickse was a founding member and president of the Ohlone International Club. At least once a month, its members would get together, have a party and get to know each other. They would also discuss their experiences. "There were students from different counties; some were communist, some

were socialist, some were capitalist, some Muslim, some Christian," Hendrickse explained, "But we all loved music, we all loved food." He also said that sometimes people would be from countries that were at war with each other.

"We were supposed to hate each other, but this was not the case," Hendrickse said.

"I learned more [about America]

outside the classroom than inside the classroom," Hendrickse said. Coming to the United States from a small town in South Africa, where his father was a well-known activist and politician took some getting adjustment.

"Everybody knew my Dad, or me as the son of my father and then to come to the United States with 300 million people [where] not one person knew me... it was quite an adjustment," Hendrickse explained.

Kirshner has met Hendrickse's father, Rev. Allan Hendrickse and described him as "sort of a Martin Luther King of his era." In 1987, Allan Hendrickse was a cabinet minister under Prime Minister Pieter Willem Botha, who was a member of the right-wing National party. In a time of apartheid, A. Hendrickse became famous for swimming at a "Whites Only" beach to protest against the Separate Amenities Act. His son, Peter, came to Ohlone during a time of political turmoil in South Africa; a time when his family was not welcome at home. Kirshner said Peter Hendrickse was well known around campus "with very little ever being said about his father." Hendrickse's father died of a heart attack two years ago at the age of 77.

Kirshner thought Hendrickse would be an excellent candidate for the outstanding alumni award this year. "It's not too often Ohlone can say they have [a former student as] a member of parliament in any country," Kirshner explained.



Devil's Advocate

By **ANNA NEMCHUK**
Editor-in-chief

Truth is relative

The other day at work, a particularly smelly customer asked me what truth was. She said her mother found it in Ann Rule. I told her to read Plato.

Recently, our district hosted the annual big-wig get-together. In preparation, we did spring cleaning in September. The entire store was turned inside out, polished, dusted, scrubbed, pooper-scooped, primped and waxed. We disturbed dust bunnies the size of small Labradors. We assigned greeters and welcomees, handshakers and quakers. We fed the beta.

The visit was a success. Our manager lost the panicked look he'd been sporting for the past month and the district manager quit sporadically hanging up pictures on all available surfaces.

Through it all, I felt a bit hypocritic. I've always been proud of our store, but the last few weeks left me feeling like I was on the inside of a giant poodle. Powdered, lacquered and primped to within an inch of life, the result as closely resembled the day-to-day reality as a Calvin Klein ad.

So which is the truth? Most people will say there's nothing wrong with putting your best foot forward. However, increasingly popular of late is the cult of take-me-as-I-am. Seemingly born of a mix of exasperation, desperation, laziness and bad Margaritas, the prevalent philosophy maintains that to hide one's true nature from either date or mailman is to stifle any chance at true intimacy and to set the stage for a lifetime of lies.

Armpit hair comes to mind. Three witnesses to the same accident will see three different things. Is truth relative?

The three main religions say no. Many philosophers say yes. Plato said no.

I say yes. Beauty, so often said to be in the eye of the beholder, is just another kind of truth.

So is the truth found in a cleaner bookstore any less valid than that in a messier, dustier one? Does it make that store's employees better? Does it prove its own existence in a way pure sale numbers cannot?

Is the truth occurring in the middle of a forest with no one around any more valid than one proudly on display in front of a crowd?

And just because your angle affords you a view of a tumbling leaf turned pumpkin-gold by the sun, does it make that leaf any less green to the man three feet to the left?

Or is it simply that each one of us holds at any given point only a tiny piece of truth, a bite-size morsel meant to be assembled into a greater salad, not eaten alone?

Truth. Great with red wine.

Famed pianist to perform

By **INEZ BLACK**
Staff writer

Concert pianist Teresa Walters will perform a Franz Liszt program Saturday, Oct. 13, as part of the Smith Center Presents series.

Walt Birkedahl, Dean of Business and Fine and Performing Arts, said, "Teresa Walters specializes in Franz Liszt - one of the most important romantic period composers for the piano.

She's acclaimed internationally. She is performing a repertoire that I don't believe has been heard in piano recitals at Ohlone."

Walters was the first American pianist to be invited by Hungary to present the prestigious Anniversary Concert in honor of the Hungarian composer Franz Liszt birthday at

the Franz Liszt Academy of Music, Budapest, Hungary.

In addition, Birkedahl chose Walters as she enjoys speaking to audiences-- from the musically sophisticated to the first-time attendee. She offers insightful and entertaining keynote comments to more fully share her music in college, community, and lecture settings, says Birkedahl.

"Smith Center Presents is a professional artists' series that serves both students and the general public," said Birkedahl. It was initially started to augment music appreciation classes at Ohlone, he stated, "to expose students to great art, but they have to listen with an open mind!"

Although Walters tours the world performing, she and her minister

husband, call Manhattan, New York home. She earned her doctorate at the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, and studied in Europe at the Paris Conservatoire. She has served as an Artist in Residence in locations such as Lima, Peru, and teaches master classes.

Having performed in Eastern Europe before and after the decline of Communism, Water's comments and travelogues are cited as entertaining and can be found on the Smith Center home page.

She often shares comments on Franz Liszt pianos, as well as on the pianos she has used on tour.

For tickets, visit www.smith-centerpresents.com or call the Smith Center Box Office at (510) 659-6031.



Concert pianist Teresa Walters will perform at the Smith Center on Saturday, Oct. 13 at 8 p.m.

India trip planned

By **MARGARITA KITOVA**
Staff writer

Another semester program abroad is planned for June 1- July 31, 2008 to Bangalore, India with Professor Kay Harrison.

The price of the program is to be determined. Students will spend their first week in New Delhi, Agra, the location of the Taj Mahal, and Jaipur. Then they will move to the International Center for Management and India Studies (ICMIS) in Bangalore.

Bangalore is India's comparative reference to the Silicon Valley as a

hub for most information technology companies.

The program includes excursions to Coorg, famous for its coffee plantations and tropical forests, Belur and Halebird with their exquisite temples and Jain shrines. There is another optional weekend in Mysore, famous for its palaces and gardens.

The courses that are offered at ICMIS are from the fields of anthropology, business, English, and philosophy. Students require individual visas.

For more information go to: www.ohlone.edu/org/studyabroad.

Ohlone Chamber Orchestra to play

The Ohlone Chamber Orchestra will open its fifth season with a performance on Sunday, Oct. 14, at 2 p.m. in the Smith Center's Jackson Theater. The annual fall concert will be under the direction of Larry Osbourne and will feature pieces like Brahms's "Academic Festival Overture," compositions by Purcell and Elgar's "Enigma Variations."

The pieces by Brahms and Elgar use classical music in an unorthodox manner, Brahms to transform drinking songs, Elgar to give descriptions of his friends.

General admission to the performance is \$15, seniors and students may attend for \$10 and admission for children is \$8. Tickets can be purchased by calling (510) 659-6031.