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360

Storytime Scholars. Children's literature grows up.

It's All About Kids. Sandra McBrayer wants to rearrange your priorities.

The Coryell Legacy. How an Aztec coaching legend changed the NFL.

Work of Art. Linkletter shares the lessons of a life well lived.

360

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SDSU to Develop A Greener SUV

Students and faculty from SDSU's Department of Mechanical Engineering have been chosen to participate in a high-profile competition to develop a more environmentally friendly sport utility vehicle.

The competition, called Challenge X: Crossover to Sustainable Mobility, is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and General Motors. The 17 selected universities, announced at a press conference last week in Washington, D.C., will re-engineer a 2005 Chevrolet Equinox, a new compact SUV. The competitors have three basic goals: reduce energy consumption; decrease emissions; and maintain the performance and utility features of the stock model.

Jim Burns, associate professor of mechanical engineering, who will direct the SDSU team. "We intend to build the best new hybrid-electric SUV powertrain – period," he said.

Burns expects several dozen students per year will have the opportunity to work on the Challenge X project. "Work has already begun on the conceptual design," he said.

More information is available at www.challengex.org.

Shower Curtains Host Microbial Mayhem

Taking a shower hasn't been this scary since Norman Bates.

A study out of the San Diego State University Center for Microbial Sciences reveals that hundreds of millions of colorful bacteria thrive on shower curtains, waiting to attack those who think they are getting clean.

The bacteria hide in the scummy buildup at the bottom of shower curtains, according to the study by SDSU professor Scott Kelley and colleagues at two other universities.

"People with weak immune systems are especially susceptible to these opportunistic pathogens," Kelley said, adding that healthy adults are unlikely to face a seri-



ous threat from microorganisms found on shower curtains.

But for children, or patients with AIDS, or those undergoing chemotherapy or people with open wounds, some of the germs can be extremely dangerous.

"If these pathogens get into the body of someone who doesn't have a strong enough immune system, the symptoms can be serious," Kelley said. The bacteria can cause urinary tract infections, pneumonia, abscesses in the gut and more.

Kelley recommended that shower curtains be cleaned or replaced regularly. "Or better yet, install glass shower doors, as these opportunistic pathogens don't seem to thrive on glass like they do on vinyl," he said.

CLASS ACTS

Aztec Baseball Team Wins Title

Congratulations to the Aztecs baseball team for winning the 2004 Mountain West Conference regular season title! Under the direction of second-year coach Tony Gwynn, the Aztecs finished with a 19-9 record and the No. 1 seed for the MWC postseason tournament. The winner will advance to the NCAA Regional Tournament.

Environmental grand slam

Transform 500 acres of surplus federal property into an outdoor classroom. That was the idea in 1966 behind San Diego State's Fortuna Mountain Field Station, one of four "living laboratories" dedicated to environmental research and education.

But, over time, Fortuna Mountain didn't really work as a field station. Although conveniently close to campus, its location within popular Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP) left sensitive experiments vulnerable to public access. And building restrictions prevented construction of lab, classroom or overnight facilities.

So when Sedra Shapiro, executive director of SDSU's Field Station Programs, learned that the San Diego Zoological Society needed to acquire a parcel of natural habitat to offset expansion of the Wild Animal Park, she saw an opportunity and seized it, initiating negotiations with the Zoo and the City of San Diego. In March 2003, the City Council approved the resulting win-win-win transaction.

The zoo purchased 266 acres of Fortuna Mountain and deeded it to the city as an expansion of Mission Trails. SDSU realized \$2 million from the sale, enough to set up a healthy endowment benefiting the Field Station Programs.

"This transaction was a great benefit for everyone," Shapiro said. "It more appropriately aligns our respective missions and expertise. It strengthens the partnership between the city and the university, and it enables the zoo to comply with mitigation requirements."

Community leaders were equally pleased. "Creating a mitigation area in Mission Trails Regional Park was a wonderful way to secure land in perpetuity and to generate income for the SDSU Field Station Programs," said Dorothy Leonard, chair of the MTRP Citizens Advisory Committee.

"It was a wonderful opportunity partnering with San Diego State University to provide additional land for Mission Trails," City Council Member Jim Madaffer agreed.

And for once the environment came out ahead, too. "It is a nice consortium," Shapiro said, "because we all have an interest in the natural world, land stewardship and making decisions based in science."

— SMY



Why?

Acts of Terrorism May Be Expressions of 'Collective Madness'

By Liese Klein

As a boy in a small Indian town in the foothills of the Himalayas, Dipak Gupta watched in fear as Bangladeshi refugees staged a protest at his home, objecting to decisions made by his father, a magistrate.

"It's one of my earliest memories. These people were doing a sit-in protest all around our house; we couldn't get out," Gupta recalled. "It was a very threatening situation, an uneasy situation for a child."

A few years later, Gupta watched as a violent leftist movement engulfed Bengal, his home state in India. He saw many of his friends and even a close family member drawn into the strife. Some were tortured by the police; some, jailed; some, forced into exile; and several were killed.

The situation made Gupta wonder. "What causes people to join collective movements?" he wanted to know. "I was very interested in what causes people to be in that mode where you don't think about your own well-being."

Now a research associate at the Fred J. Hansen Institute for World Peace at San Diego State University, Gupta credits those early experiences with sparking a lifelong interest in political extremism, genocide and terrorism.

Eventually, that obsession led to a distinguished academic career that blurs the disciplinary distinctions among political science, economics, sociology and even psychology. The roots of political violence are not easily traced to one discipline or labeled by one definition, he argues.

A KILLING FRENZY

Crucial to Gupta's scholarship and helpful to anyone struggling to understand the motivation of terrorists is the concept of "collective madness," a killing frenzy that can impel entire populations to commit acts of terrorism and other atrocities. The "madness" he describes is not a psychological disorder, but instead a powerful, primordial group mindset intrinsic to the human species.

Early humans survived by forming groups to protect themselves from predators, Gupta explained. This contributed toward a mindset that creates a strong sense of "us" and "them," and can easily turn into violence.

"What I call collective madness is when people try to harm another person because their very existence as a part of a particular group is odious [to them]," he said.

Collective or group thinking has been marginalized and devalued in Western societies and was thought to have suffered a mortal

blow in the collapse of the Soviet Union. But many societies still embrace collective religious and ethnic identities that can easily be mobilized into action, Gupta said.

Collective thinking is not always a negative force, he emphasized. The same self-sacrifice and group thinking motivates firefighters, social-service workers and members of the military.

"It doesn't have to be sinister," Gupta said. "You can be an environmental activist and try to save the environment. You may be like Mother Teresa. It's a force; it can be good or bad."

DIFFERING VALUES

Gupta believes the West mistakenly assumes other societies with very different values will someday eagerly embrace the concepts of individualism and enlightened self-interest we hold dear.

"They thought that when communism fell," Gupta said. "They all assumed that we are all motivated by individualism. But we are finding out that a large part of the world doesn't work that way."

As evidence, he points to the social status of the Sept. 11 terrorists. Most came from middle-class or wealthy families.

"There are lots of other places where people live in abject poverty, and they are not out to kill us," Gupta added. Instead of economic deprivation, he suggests malignant political leadership is more likely to instigate collective madness.

Middle Eastern political leaders preach this intolerance, Gupta said. "They view anything Western as a threat. If people think that by nation-building we [will] solve these problems, we won't."

In Islamic nations, the sense of collective identity is heightened by the religious concept of *ummah*, or Islamic brotherhood, reflected in a strong commitment to social justice and extreme sensitivity to attacks against other Muslims, Gupta said.

"It's the collective identity, 'us' and 'them,'" he said. "When you have a strong concept of us, and you hit some of them, it creates a condition where the entire Islamic world starts looking at the U.S. and its allies as the aggressors."

Gupta's expertise has been in high demand since Sept. 11. He's been interviewed by the media and participated in a panel discussion on the terrorist attacks at an SDSU town hall meeting held Sept. 25.

Gupta outlines his theories in *Path to Collective Madness: A Study in Social Order and Political Pathology*, published late last year. It's his fifth book, and adds to a bibliography including more than 50 articles in scholarly journals and newspapers.

He has been a professor in the School of Public Administration and Urban Studies at SDSU since 1977, serves as the co-director of the university's Institute for International Security and Conflict Resolution and occupied the Fred J. Hansen Chair of Peace Studies from 1998 to 2001.

Gupta was named Professor of the Year in 1994 and honored as the Albert W. Johnson Distinguished Lecturer in 1997. Starting in fall 2002, he will join the department of political science faculty.

NO EASY ANSWERS

There is no easy solution to the problem of collective madness, Gupta said, and he's not optimistic about the outcome of future conflicts between the U.S. and terrorist groups and the nations that harbor them.

"There is hardly an answer on the horizon," he said. "If there is going to be a long-term solution, it must come with the cooperation of the Muslim world."

Western nations also have to come to terms with the cultural factors that both encourage terrorists and at the same time limit Western reactions to terrorism.

"A large loss of life on our side or pictures of people suffering on the other side can quickly turn public opinion against any war," Gupta said. "For us, every life is precious. How do you wage a war like that?" ■



Storytime

Kids' Lit Isn't

Once upon a time, the realm of wizards, ogres and enchanted sprites rarely extended beyond the boundaries of childhood, but today children's literature enjoys unprecedented popularity on adult best-seller lists and in the display windows of leading booksellers.

Scholars at San Diego State, where the study of books written for youthful audiences has long been a credentialed field of academic endeavor, see the shift in public opinion as welcome—and overdue.

"We won the battle [for legitimacy] long ago," said Alida Allison, whose course, "Adolescence in Literature," tackles the work of James Joyce, Sophocles, J.D. Salinger, Russell Hoban, Pam Muñoz Ryan and Zhai Zenghua. "At San Diego State, children's literature is prized for its intrinsic value as literature, not primarily as a stepping stone to literacy."

That distinction undergirds the College of Arts and Letters' long-standing and broadening support for the children's literature program. This fall, the Department of English and Comparative Literature will offer a new specialization in the field for master's students. And plans have been approved to establish a National Center for the Study of Children's Literature on campus.

A \$2.7 million campaign to fund the project is now under way.

"What it amounts to is recognition that we're a powerhouse in this area," asserted Jerry Griswold, one of the first English professors hired to teach children's literature at SDSU nearly 20 years ago.

Faculty envision the center as a beehive of international scholarship and activity, sponsoring study-abroad exchanges and attracting leading specialists such as Maria Nicolajeva, a former Fulbright recipient and past president of the International Research Society for Children's Literature. Nicolajeva taught at SDSU from 1999 to 2001.

The center would also develop curricula to train thousands of California teachers to expand their use of children's literature in the classroom. This effort would build on the work of the SDSU Children's Literature Circle, a group of teachers, librarians, writers, booksellers and alumni that meets occasionally to discuss books or hear leading children's authors, such as Russell Hoban, Lawrence Yep and Gary Soto.

The link between children's literature and teacher education at SDSU was forged years ago. Professor Emeritus Peter Neumeyer developed the chil-

dren's literature specialty within the Department of English and Comparative Literature in the late 1970s, making SDSU one of the first universities to offer this field of study. With Ramon Ross and George Mehaffy from the College of Education, Neumeyer then designed courses with liberal studies students in mind. His six-unit block of children's literature courses is still a requirement for San Diego State students planning to teach elementary school.

Today, about 200 liberal studies students enroll in these courses each semester. Liberal studies program coordinator Phoebe Roeder estimates that up to 70 percent of students in the program go on to earn teaching credentials and eventually find positions in San Diego area schools, a factor that children's literature faculty consider an added responsibility.

"We are very aware that many of our students are teachers and future teachers, that we're talking to people who are going to be using these books in their own classrooms," Allison said. "We recognize how formative that is."

June Cummins, the newest of SDSU's children's literature specialists, hopes the center will also engage a broader audience in

Scholars

Kids' Play

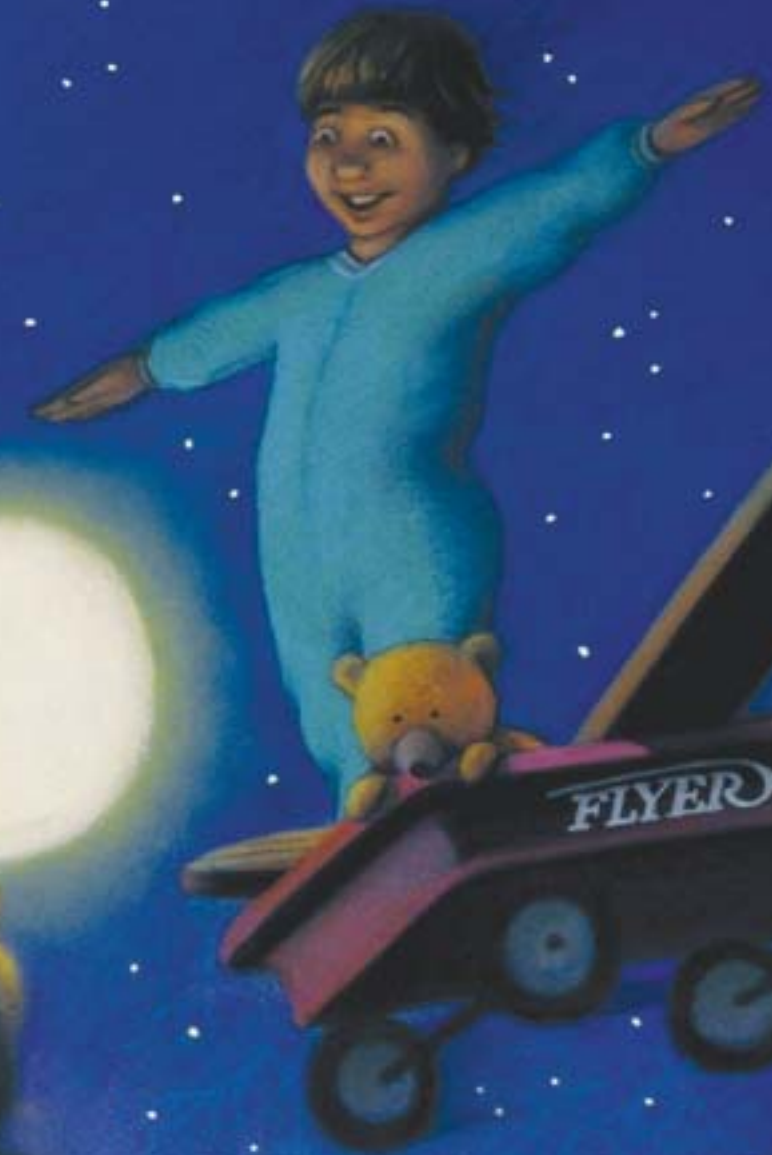


Illustration: Tom Voss

By Coleen L. Geraghty

Once upon a time,
the realm of wizards,
ogres and sprites
rarely extended
beyond the bound-
aries of childhood,
but today children's
literature enjoys
unprecedented
popularity on adult
best-seller lists.

an ongoing discussion of the "shaping role" of children's books; that is, how a child's early encounters with literature shape his view of the society around him.

Even before the children's literature curriculum took root here, San Diego State had already produced two nationally recognized authors of books for youth. Alumni Pam Muñoz Ryan and Newbery Medal winner Sid Fleischman both specialize in historical fiction.

Ryan's "Esperanza Rising," a novel based on the life of her Mexican grandmother, is taught increasingly, both in elementary grades and at the university level, as educators search for more culturally relevant reading material

to enrich the curriculum. A former teacher herself, Ryan meandered into writing at the suggestion of a friend.

"From the moment I started that first book for adults, I knew that I wanted to write for children as well," recalled Ryan, who spoke on campus in March. "I find it an enormous challenge to take complex issues and characters with multifaceted emotions and weave them into a format that a youngster comprehends and appreciates."

Fleischman's novels, though based on fact, are peopled with eccentric, larger-than-life characters whose adventures recall classic children's tales like "Treasure Island." Fleischman's heroes flout convention – and prevail.

Jerry Griswold, who often reads "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" with his classes, enjoys these kinds of subversive elements in children's literature. He reminds students that Tom plays hooky and disrupts church services. Popular heroine Jo March from "Little Women" refuses to grow up and become a woman in the conventional sense.

"These classic books, if they're read thoughtfully, as we do in class, question the essential values of this culture and raise thoughtful citizens," Griswold noted.

Recognized as leaders in children's literature even to the international level, SDSU faculty members often have opportunities to share their perspectives with other scholars around the world. Griswold was a 1999-2000 visiting Fulbright lecturer at the National University of Ireland in Galway. Carole Scott is past president of the International Research Society for Children's Literature in Stockholm, Sweden. Alida Allison was invited to address an international book publishing conference in China in 2000. And Lois Kuznets, professor emerita, won recognition in 2002 for service to the field from the Children's Literature Association.

Despite the international attention, the children's literature faculty are perhaps most gratified to see their work bearing fruit here at home. Said Griswold, "I have seen some of my former students shaping the San Diego schools in a positive way, like fighting to get fairy tales and fables into the K-12 curriculum. I don't teach people how to teach in the classroom, but the things we do here have a ripple effect ... because we develop in our students a love for children's literature."

Kids are a tough audience says Sid Fleischman ...and he should know

Now in his fifth decade of writing for children, SDSU alumnus Sid Fleischman has accumulated the awards and recognition that come to the best creators of children's literature. Some of his fanciful, eccentric books, like "By the Great Horn Spoon!" and "The 13th Floor: A Ghost Story," have become classroom standards. Another, "The Whipping Boy," won the 1987 Newbery Medal, the American Library Association's coveted prize for the year's most distinguished children's book.

Fleischman's characters are vividly drawn; even their names evoke strong images. General Dirty-Face Scurlock from "Jingo Django," for instance, and Hold-Your-Nose Billy from "The Whipping Boy." Some critics contend that creating Josh McBroom, an Iowa farmer who stretches the truth, distinguished Fleischman as the first modern writer to add to the American genre of tall tales.

Sid Fleischman didn't set out to be a writer. He began as a magician, performing in vaudeville acts and publishing a book of original sleight-of-hand feats. But World War II interrupted his career and changed his life's path. Afterwards, he began reporting and writing novels. He graduated from San

Diego State with a B.A. in English in 1949.

Here are a few of Fleischman's thoughts on writing for children:

There is a different commitment when you're writing for children. You have a heavier responsibility, and you have to be much sharper and clearer. Kids will simply not tolerate fuzzy thinking and fuzzy dramatization. And they're impatient with description, so your descriptions have to be extremely sharp and cogent.

Some of the best historical fiction is certainly in the children's book field. I was a history minor at State, and I love poking around in the dark corners of history. I can cut loose when I'm writing in a historical period; my imagination seems to be richer. I can exaggerate the characters and have a lot more fun with them.

When I was writing only for adults, I never got letters, was never asked to speak. Now that I'm writing for children, I get letters all the time and two or three invitations a week. There's a whole new field that's bubbled up in the 40 years that I've been writing children's books. Programs like the one at San Diego State are multiplying throughout the country.





Sandra McBrayer

Photo: Marc Tule

It's All About Kids

By Sandra Millers Younger

By his own admission, James R. Allen III was "going down a bad road." Ditching school. Running with gangs. Dodging the law. Then he met Sandra McBrayer. She was a different kind of teacher, and she ran a different kind of school.

"She stayed on you," Allen remembered. "Most teachers would've gave up on me, but Sandy didn't." Like many of McBrayer's students at "The Place," the unique San Diego school she established in 1987 for homeless and unattended youth, Allen responded to a teacher's unwavering faith in his ability to succeed. In 1994, against formidable odds, he graduated from high school.

Today he is a civilian supervisor for the Navy, proud to be supporting his young family and grateful for the enormous difference one teacher made in his life. "I love her," Allen said every few sentences. "If it wasn't for Sandy, I'd be somewhere else, doing something different. She was a big help to me."

Sandra McBrayer, '86, '90, moves mountains every day to help kids like James Allen. Honored in 1994 as National Teacher of the Year for her trail-blazing work at The Place (now known as The Monarch School), she has used that pulpit to galvanize support for children's issues. In her current position as executive director of the Children's Initiative, she leads the charge to effect family-friendly public policies and integrate child-oriented community services. And as an alumna and instructor in SDSU's College of Education, she is convincing a new generation of teachers it is okay to care.

Sandra McBrayer cannot tell you exactly why she decided to enter the teaching profession. She can, however, tell you why



President Bill Clinton honors McBrayer at the White House as 1994 National Teacher of the Year.

she stayed and why, ultimately, she decided to leave. "I did not mean to be a teacher," she said. "It just happened. And when I began teaching it was so easy to love and believe and give; it was second nature."

And it worked. McBrayer's success in reaching a population of students other educators had considered unreachable brought her national acclaim as Teacher of the Year. But winning the highest award in her profession at age 33 left her conflicted. "Who are you after that?" she wondered. "What are you supposed to be next? It was almost as if my profession was taken away."

The dilemma was not that McBrayer had achieved the ultimate, but that she had suddenly been catapulted into a new realm of responsibility. "I was given this platform and the knowledge," she said. "Can I pretend I don't know all this stuff and go back into a classroom and shut the door?"

Obviously not. In 1996, McBrayer accepted the reins of the Children's Initiative, a non-



Sandra McBrayer

profit consulting firm representing the children of San Diego County. Taking a holistic approach, the Initiative specializes in bringing education, health and justice resources together, often for the first time, to meet the needs of children, youth and families.

“Is your responsibility just to your kids or is it to all kids?”

“What we really are is a neutral convener,” McBrayer explained. “We bring people together who historically don’t work together but serve the same population. We always joke that we teach grown people to share, and they don’t like it.”

They may not, but they will do it anyway for Sandy McBrayer. “Sandy is in my experience clearly the most effective advocate for kids, particularly at-risk kids, I’ve ever met, and I’ve seen some pretty good ones,” said Robert

Ross, M.D., president and chief executive officer of The California Endowment, a health services foundation. Ross worked with McBrayer as San Diego County’s director of health and human services. “There are people who are very good at eloquently speaking on behalf of children’s needs, and then there’s a list of those who can speak and get things done. That’s a

very exclusive club, and she clearly belongs in that latter group.”

McBrayer’s track record at the Children’s Initiative bears out Ross’ assessment. Under her leadership, the organization wrote the legislation and secured more than \$44 million in state funding to establish 330 free afterschool programs throughout San Diego County. Seed money for the project came from a surprising source: the county health department. Health dollars for afterschool care? Why not, McBrayer and her team asked, backing up the

request with statistics showing that most teen violence, including suicides, occurs during unsupervised afternoon hours.

Never mind that no one had ever crossed those ledger lines before. When it comes to helping kids, Sandy McBrayer loves to challenge the system. “Oftentimes I hear from agencies or organizations, well, we’re not allowed to do that; well, that isn’t done that way,” she said. “And I say, well show me why not. Our job is to eliminate the perceived barriers.”



McBrayer meets with Mother Teresa.



Sandy McBrayer brings enough passion and charisma to her work to moderate a Middle East Peace summit. But the secret to her success, she says, lies in a simple philosophy. “It’s all about kids. I keep saying that to people: it’s all about all kids.” In practice, her kids-first philosophy usually comes down to a single searing question: “Is your responsibility just to your kids or is it to all kids?”

Part of the Initiative’s mandate depends on recruiting San Diego businesses to help fulfill that universal responsibility. “We’re a small-business town,” McBrayer said, “and many of those businesses don’t know they’re supposed to be responsible for children, or they don’t know how.”

So McBrayer’s team makes suggestions. “Can you open your shop to job shadowing? Can you mentor a kid? Can you buy a little league uniform?”

Some companies, of course, can do more. And some do. McBrayer points to Mission Federal Credit Union’s unsolicited contribution: converting a storage area above its Pacific Beach branch into 6,000 square feet of rent-free, furnished office space for the Initiative.

From that home base, McBrayer takes her kids-first message nationwide and beyond as a speaker and member of numerous boards and commissions spanning the fields of education, health and justice. She has testified to Congress and visited the White House; she has worked extensively with Secretary of State Colin Powell and met with the late Mother Teresa. In every case, in every context, Sandy McBrayer’s agenda is the same. It’s all about kids.

McBrayer, who earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education at SDSU and was honored in 1992 as Alumna of the Year, also returns to the College of Education each semester as an adjunct instructor. Dean Lionel (Skip) Meno especially values her dual perspective as both educator and youth-services expert. “She’s a partner with us in improving conditions for children,” Meno said. “She brings us incredible insights into youth services that are unique [because of her involvement] on the education side. She can bridge those two worlds.”

She can also bridge the disparate worlds of idealistic new teachers and street-savvy students. No sugarcoating here. McBrayer poses real-life classroom scenarios — disrespect, profanity, even violence — to help her students develop advance strategies. “As a college education professor, those are tough things to broach, and yet I believe it’s our responsibility to do it,” she said. “If I don’t prepare you, when you’re standing there and it happens, I’ve failed you.”

To practicing teachers, McBrayer offers two suggestions. First, don’t try to solve your students’

personal and family problems on your own. Develop a network of service groups and community agencies you can call on to provide medical or social services. And second, don’t be afraid to get involved.

“Caring is not wrong,”

McBrayer said. “Kids will perform for you and do for you only and strictly because you care.”

Tim Halley, a student of McBrayer’s at SDSU, can vouch for that. Now a science teacher at Monroe Clark Middle School in City Heights, Halley calls McBrayer’s influence on his approach to teaching “monumental.”

“She showed me about teaching from your gut,” he said. “It’s a real visceral thing, not an intellectual pursuit. It’s a follow-your-heart thing. If you care about the kids and they know it, it makes a huge difference in them.”

And that, Sandra McBrayer would say, is the whole point. ■

“Kids will perform for you and do for you only and strictly because you care.”



McBrayer joins U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, then chair of America’s Promise, to encourage businesses to support youth. Also pictured (l. to r.): Judge William Pate; Judy McDonald, The Parker Foundation; and Robert Horsman, San Diego National Bank.



The Coryell Legacy

“Air Craft” Rekindles Memories of an Aztec Coaching Legend

Dubbing a new San Diego State football era “Air Craft” is more than coining a clever phrase. For longtime Aztec fans, it harkens back to the heyday of the legendary Don Coryell. Head football coach at SDSU from 1961 through 1972, Coryell won fame for his unbeatable passing offense and his winning seasons. Memories of the “Air Coryell” era at San Diego State still delight fans and former colleagues from Montezuma Mesa and throughout today’s National Football League.

Several of Coryell’s former assistants have gone on to shine as NFL coaches, some even taking their teams all the way to the Super Bowl. Joe Gibbs won three Super Bowl championships as head coach of the Washington Redskins. John Madden took one with the Oakland Raiders. And NFL assistant coaches Jim Hanifan, Rod Dowhower and Ernie Zampese all own Super Bowl rings. Also apprenticing under Coryell at SDSU were longtime NFL assistant coaches Tom Bass and Sid Hall.

Breaking the mold

Former Coryell colleagues believe their mentor’s intensity, devotion to the game and willingness to take risks set an invaluable example for other coaches. “Don was a master at what he did,” said Gibbs, who now owns the Joe Gibbs Racing NASCAR team. “I don’t know if I was ever around anyone who was more dedicated, focused and intense.”

John Madden, a television sports analyst who will soon join ABC’s “Monday Night Football” crew, agrees. “Don Coryell was the originator of focus and a one-track mind,” Madden said. “Football was his life. He gave great pre-game talks. He’d turn out the lights, and when you’d listen as a coach, you were ready to go out there and play.”

How successful was the Coryell coaching formula? His record at SDSU speaks for itself. In 12 seasons with the Aztecs, Coryell won 104 games,

PHOTO: ERNIE ANDERSON. COURTESY OF SDSU ATHLETICS DEPT.

By Steve Dolan

lost 19 and tied two. It was a showing that helped him make a career move unheard of at the time: jumping from a small college to the National Football League. Coryell went on to coach 14 successful years in the NFL for the St. Louis Cardinals and the San Diego Chargers, and he remains the only coach ever to win 100 games at both the collegiate and professional levels. In 1999, he was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame.

Now living in retirement in rural Friday Harbor, Wash., Coryell, 77, says nothing in his long career compared to coaching at SDSU. “My wife and I often talk about how those were the best years of our life,” Coryell said. “I think it was because of the people there. Next to that, it was the university...When



PHOTO COURTESY OF SDSU ARCHIVES

Coryell leads an Aztec strategy session during the late '60s with assistant coaches (left to right) Al Baldock, Ernie Zampese and Claude Gilbert.

I was there, our funds were very limited,” Coryell continued, “[but] I was allowed to do what I wanted and recruit the people I wanted. Everything was perfect.”

Coryell, in fact, delivered two perfect seasons at San Diego State, with his 1966 and 1969 teams finishing 11-0. His 1968 team went 9-0-1, its only “blemish” a 13-13 tie against Tennessee State. The Coryell-era Aztecs posted winning streaks of 31 and 25 games. Only once in 12 years did they lose more than two games in a season.

Pro scouts took notice. Despite San Diego State’s small size at the time, Coryell saw 42 of his players drafted into the NFL. Among them was defensive end Fred Dryer, whose 1967 and 1968 Aztec teams turned in a 19-1-1 overall record. Dryer, also known for his leading role in the television series, “Hunter,” went on to play 13 years in the NFL and was elected to the College Football Hall of Fame in 1997. He credits Coryell for teaching him the right way to play the game.

“When I went to the New York Giants in 1969, I was dismayed at how unsound they were,” Dryer said. “I learned more about defense at San Diego State than I did in my first three years of pro football.”

Innovations in offense

Coryell drew particular notice for his offensive strategy, which literally introduced the modern passing game to college football. Not surprisingly, SDSU quarterbacks Don Horn (1965-66), Dennis Shaw (1968-69) and Brian Sipe (1969-71) all went on to make their marks in pro football. Receivers Gary Garrison (1964-65), Haven Moses (1966-67) and Isaac Curtis (1972) did likewise.

Sipe, who played for the Cleveland Browns from 1974 through 1983 and earned the NFL’s most valuable player award, believes his SDSU career had “everything to do” with his

John Madden, asst. coach – 1964-66



Brian Sipe, quarterback – 1969-71

Fred Dryer, defensive lineman – 1967-68



Joe Gibbs, asst. coach – 1964-66

The Coryell Legacy



PHOTO COURTESY OF SDSU ATHLETICS DEPT.

success as a pro. A very low draft pick in the 13th round, Sipe says his SDSU experience in the Coryell offense put him miles ahead of the competition.

"I ran a more sophisticated offense at San Diego State than what the Cleveland Browns had," said Sipe, now a high school football coach who took Santa Fe Christian to a San Diego County title last fall. "Other quarterbacks were stronger than me. [But] they were not as comfortable as I was in a passing offense.

"What we did at San Diego State is common now," Sipe went on. "Back then, it was revolutionary. The fans really appreciated it. We even outdrew the Chargers [in attendance] some years."

Before Coryell came to SDSU, he had concentrated more on running the ball, and even introduced the popular I-formation running attack as an assistant coach at the University of Southern California. In time, a majority of college teams used the same offense, but Coryell was in the vanguard.

"Every place he went, he was a pioneer," Madden said. "He was an innovator long before he was known as an innovator. He's a brilliant mind, coach, teacher and motivator."

A players' coach

Players and coaches alike describe Coryell as an extraordinary man. They say he was honest, straightforward, dedicated, intense and fun to play for. Tom Nettles, a wide receiver for Coryell at SDSU from 1966 through 1968, remembers him as the ultimate players' coach.

"I talked to [former Chargers quarterback] Dan Fouts about that, and he said Don was the same way with the Chargers," said Nettles, now an on-air talent with The Golf Channel. "Don only said good things about his players. He took the blame for a loss and gave credit to the players for a win."

Today Coryell adds that the overall atmosphere on Montezuma Mesa contributed to his success with the Aztecs. "The faculty at San Diego State was just tremendous when I was there," he said. "They were interested in the team because we had a bunch of guys who ... were there to get an education and didn't cause problems. The faculty, administration and everybody else were so helpful. I think our players responded to that because some of them had been to other schools that were not as good to them."

Coryell won the respect of his assistant coaches not only because of his reputation on the field on game day, but also for his dedication and focus away from practice and games. Joe Gibbs remembers seeing Coryell

studying plays in a dark room, not even noticing the lack of light because he was so focused.

"He was so intense," Gibbs said. "That kind of set him apart from most people."

Madden remembers a time he was talking to Coryell when the coach pulled an apple out of his desk and started eating it. Madden had to ask why he was munching on an old, half-eaten apple before Coryell noticed as much and threw the fruit away.

Making it fun

Coryell was also a skillful delegator who transferred responsibility to his assistants and let them make decisions without ever second-guessing them. "Don had a lot of camaraderie with his players and coaches," said Ernie Zampese, who coached under Coryell at SDSU from 1967 through 1972 before later rejoining him in the NFL. "It was fun to be around him. I don't know what I would have done if not for Don Coryell. I had a wonderful career, and it's because of him." Zampese is now a special consultant to the St. Louis Rams.

Jim Hanifan, current offensive line coach for the Rams, worked under Coryell at SDSU in 1972 and also followed him to the pros. "The most enjoyable years of my career were with him," Hanifan said. "He made it fun. So much of what we do today emulates Don Coryell. He had a tremendous legacy not only at San Diego State, but also in the game of football. I know he's in the College Football Hall of Fame. He should be in the Pro Football Hall of Fame."

Rod Dowhower, who retired earlier this year as offensive coordinator of the Philadelphia Eagles, seconded that opinion. Dowhower played for Coryell at SDSU in 1963 and 1964, and later coached under him both at SDSU (1966-1972) and with the St. Louis Cardinals.

"He should be in the NFL Hall of Fame," Dowhower said. "He's really innovative. A lot of what's being done now needs to be credited to Coryell. If you pull out films of our 1966 championship team at San Diego State and what is being done today, there's probably not a lot of difference. A lot of things Don did at San Diego State were probably before their time."

With characteristic modesty, Coryell passes the praise for his great success at SDSU to dedicated and skilled players and assistant coaches. "It was just a wonderful bunch of years there," Coryell concluded. "Every year was a great year." ■

SDSU Coaching Record

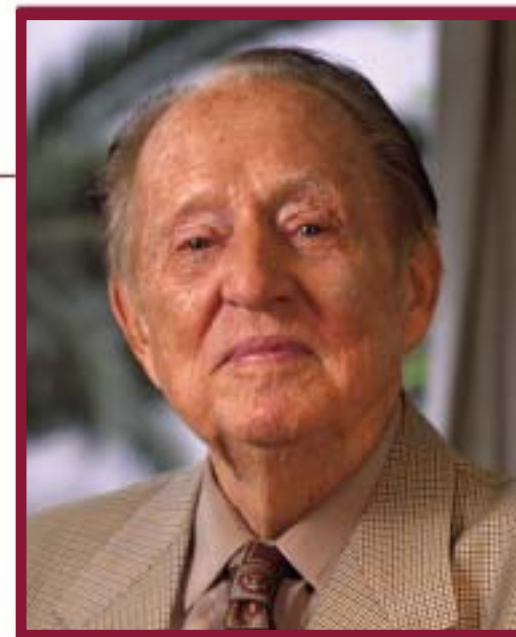
	Wins	Losses	Ties
1961	7	2	1
1962	8	2	0
1963	7	2	0
1964	8	2	0
1965	8	2	0
1966	11	0	0
1967	10	1	0
1968	9	0	1
1969	11	0	0
1970	9	2	0
1971	6	5	0
1972	10	1	0
Totals	104	19	2



PHOTO: ERNIE ANDERSON. COURTESY OF SDSU ARCHIVES.

PHOTO: ERNIE ANDERSON. COURTESY OF SDSU ARCHIVES.

Work of *Art*



PHOTOS: MICHELE A. SMITH

*From future teacher
to television pioneer to business tycoon to inspirational speaker,
Art Linkletter's remarkable life has come full circle.*

By Sandra Millers Younger

PHOTO COURTESY OF SDSU ARCHIVES

*A*rthur Gordon Linkletter was just a kid at San Diego's Woodrow Wilson Junior High when he discovered his future. It unfolded before him in the grandiose words and gestures of a traveling speaker.

"He was a typical, old-fashioned orator – stentorian," Linkletter remembers more than 75 years later. "Everything was very broad and very loud and very exaggerated. I thought that was just wonderful. I went backstage and talked to him. He told me what a wonderful life it was to speak and read. And so now, I am that."

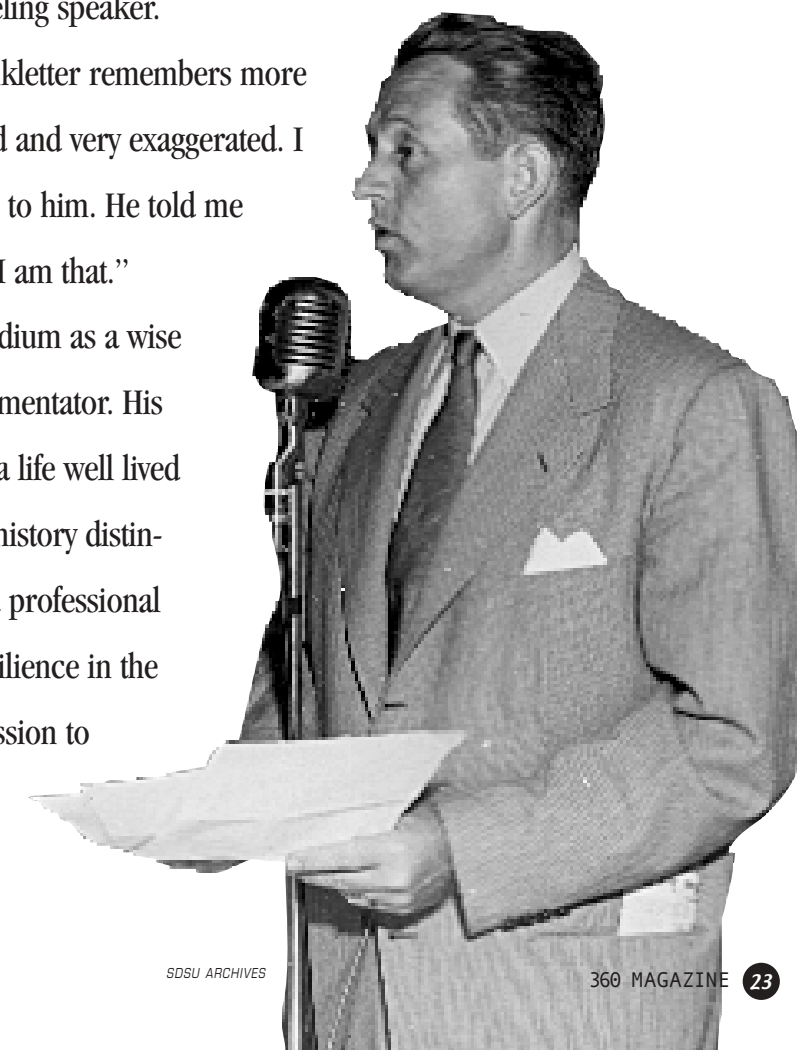
At 89, Art Linkletter in fact commands an international podium as a wise

and beloved senior commentator. His credibility springs from a life well lived and worth emulating, a history distinguished by personal and professional success, remarkable resilience in the face of tragedy and a passion to share all he's learned.



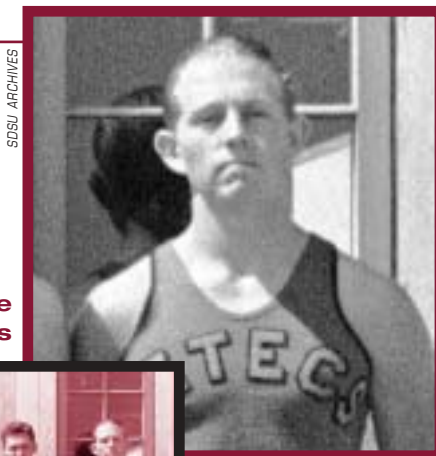
CBS PHOTO

Interviewing a "House Party" kid.



SDSU ARCHIVES

The 1934 conference champion Aztecs



SDSU ARCHIVES



Most people who know Art Linkletter remember him as a friendly face from a black-and-white television screen, the winsome host of long-running daytime hits, "House Party" and "People Are Funny." Before Oprah or Regis, it was Art Linkletter who ruled the ratings and won the public's affection,

along with two Emmys and a Grammy award.

But those who know him only from his television success know relatively little about Linkletter. He is a man equally accomplished in business, an astute investor and entrepreneur who still actively oversees a conglomerate of family-run ventures as chairman of Linkletter Enterprises.

He is a man devoted also to education and good works. Art Linkletter earned his bachelor's degree in English and psychology from San Diego State in 1934. He has since acquired 10 honorary degrees, including, in 1998, one of only eight doctorates of humane letters ever bestowed by his alma mater.

Among his many honors, Art Linkletter was named SDSU's Alumnus of the Year in 1980, elected to the Aztec Hall of Fame in 1990 and chosen as the first recipient of the Art Linkletter Award for Humanitarian Services, established by SDSU's College of Health and Human Services in 1997.

But of all his achievements, Art Linkletter is quick to say he's most proud of his family. With Lois Foerster Linkletter, his wife of 66 years, he has created a clan of 25 – five children (two are deceased), nine grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. "I count them when I write the checks," he jokes.

An inauspicious beginning

Logically, no one could have expected Art Linkletter to amount to so much. Born in 1912 in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, he was the son of unmarried sweethearts who abandoned him to the kindness of strangers. Enter the Linkletters, a kindly older

Work of Art

couple who took in the hapless infant despite their own desperate poverty. Following a tenuous trail of opportunity, the family eventually ended up in San Diego where Dad Linkletter eked out a living as a shoe repairman and streetcorner preacher.

Art Linkletter softens his memory of those long-ago hardships with humor now. "My dad saved 'souls' seven days a week," he quips. But at the time, bursting with energy and dreams, he felt stifled. So when he graduated from San Diego High School in 1929, Art Linkletter set off to see the world.

Traveling with a friend, he hitchhiked and jumped freight trains cross-country, braving knife-wielding thieves and picking up whatever work he could find. In a Minneapolis packinghouse, Linkletter hung beef entrails from meathooks. In New York, he took an office job on Wall Street. When the stock market crashed, the boys hopped a merchant ship bound for further adventures in South America.

Big man on campus

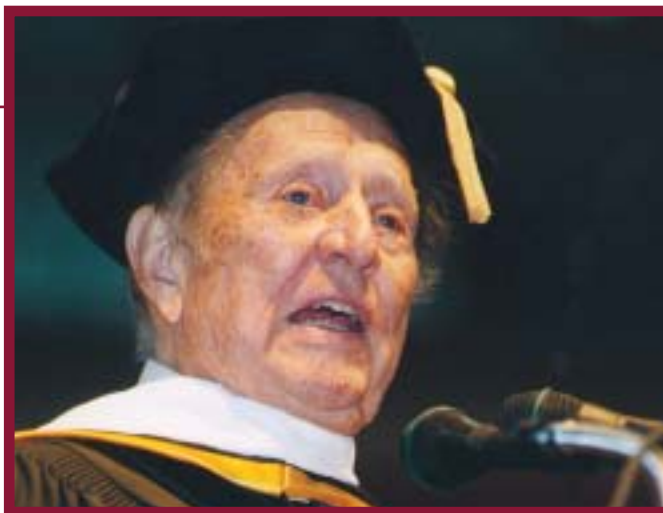
Eventually, with so many destinations behind him and so many options ahead, Art Linkletter came home to San Diego and enrolled in college. It was a gutsy move for a destitute 18-year-old during those difficult Depression years. But Linkletter's teachers had convinced him of his potential.

"They all said, you know, you have to go to college," Linkletter recalls, and he never doubted them. "I always knew I was going to go to college somewhere, and I came back and went to San Diego State, and it was a great thing for me."

He arrived just in time – 1931 – to help move the growing institution of 700 students into its handsome new campus, perched atop a plateau overlooking pristine chaparral canyons east of downtown. "It was an exciting place," he says of the fledgling Montezuma Mesa. "It was the talk of the town."

Linkletter must have contributed to the excitement. A natural athlete who still swims, skis and surfs, he set a record in the backstroke and captained the men's basketball team, leading the squad to the 1934 Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championship.

With energy to spare, Linkletter also served as president of the men's student body and of



SDSU ARCHIVES

Speaking at SDSU's 1998 commencement ceremonies.

Linkletter felt only slightly singled. "I just said, 'No, Miss Smith, I will never be that kind of a writer, because that is not where the market is.'" Art Linkletter went on to write more than 20 books, including the hugely popular, *Kids Say the Darndest Things*, hilarious excerpts from his 27,000 classic television interviews with children. *Kids* topped the best-seller lists for two years. "They're not great literature," he says about his published volumes, "but they're entertaining, and they're educational, and they're successful."

Broadcasting icon

Psychology professor Harry Steinmetz proved a better analyst than Smith of Linkletter's true talents. When the manager of local radio station KGB came looking for a student employee, Steinmetz suggested Linkletter, who, as always, jumped at the opportunity to make a few extra bucks. But the future broadcasting icon couldn't see his own potential in the new field.

"I decided I had no talent to ever be a star," he says, "so I decided to take a job with Woodrow Wilson Junior High School as an English teacher;" the first step toward his ultimate goal of becoming a college professor.

It never happened. Linkletter was listening when two radio guys in Dallas threaded a long microphone cord outside the studio window and started chatting with passers-by, the first "man-on-the-street" interviews. In that moment, he realized his next move. "I thought, that's what I can do," he remembers. Art Linkletter was soon interviewing entertainers, governors and presidents as radio director for a series of World's Fairs in major cities.

In 1942, he moved to Hollywood where he forged a lifelong business partnership with producer John Guedel. The two teamed up to invent a new approach to entertainment – radio shows built around audience participation. Persisting through early flops and setbacks, Linkletter and Guedel eventually hit pay dirt with simultaneous hits, "People Are Funny" for NBC and "House Party" for CBS.

When television developed into a mass medium, Linkletter moved to the small screen and celebrity status. "People Are

his fraternity, the progenitor of Alpha Tau Omega. He was a fixture at pep rallies and school dances, where he met Lois, then a San Diego High School senior.

Show me the market

But for all his success, Art Linkletter was still desperately poor, and by now his parents had moved again, leaving him homeless as well. So he "lived around town," staying with friends, sleeping on the gym floor at the YMCA, or in the garages of unfinished new houses.

He took every job that came along, sometimes as many as five at a time. He graded papers, made salads in the cafeteria, posed nearly nude for life drawing classes, even spied on dishonest dealers at a big casino south of Tijuana.

Linkletter credits his English professor, Florence Smith, for focusing him beyond those eclectic times. "She aimed me as high as she knew," he remembers with obvious gratitude. "She wanted me to be a Rhodes Scholar, and she wanted me to turn out to be a writer."

But Linkletter found himself better suited to the business world than the ivory tower. It was a realization Smith could never accept. A few years after graduation, with his broadcasting career taking

off, Linkletter returned to campus and proudly presented to her a copy of "The Cavalcade of Texas," a lavish outdoor pageant he'd written as radio director for the Texas Centennial.

"I put this thing down on her desk with all the pictures and the story and the history, and she said, 'This is very, very interesting, but it's not exactly what I had in mind for you. I thought you would turn out to be a great writer. This is commercial trash!'"



SDSU ARCHIVES

With Lois, leading the 1950 San Diego State Homecoming Parade.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF ART LINKLETTER

The Linkletter family, Christmas, 1948.

Work of Art

Funny” ran for 19 years; House Party, 26 years, making it the longest-running daytime variety show in television history.

Born before broadcasting itself, Art Linkletter couldn't have foreseen the communication revolution waiting in the wings for old-time orators to say their piece. Nor could he have been more perfectly suited to succeed in the new industry. He became the first of a new breed of Hollywood celebrity, an ordinary fellow who took a genuine interest in ordinary folks, even kids. In the process he laid the groundwork for whole genres of entertainment to follow.

A new direction

Looking back, Art Linkletter sees his show-business success as mere rehearsal for the time when tragedy drove him to the lectern and, ironically, the speaking career he'd envisioned for so long.

In 1969, the same year “House Party” ended, the Linkletters lost their youngest daughter, 20-year-old Diane, in a drug-related suicide. Turning his grief – and fame – into activism, Linkletter became a tenacious crusader against drug abuse, a frequent speaker and a presidential adviser on the problem.

Unbelievably, in 1980, the Linkletters lost a second child when their son Robert was killed in an automobile accident at age 35. Again Linkletter determined to bring good out of grief.

“I think that tragedy and unexpected defeats leave you either enhanced or minimized,” he says. “And I think that any setback I've had, including the loss of children, has made me a better person or able to do good things for others and made my life matter.”



CBS PHOTO

Approaching his 90th birthday, Art Linkletter still travels 200,000 miles each year to share the lessons of his years in as many as 70 lectures on health, business, education and positive aging. It's a potentially grueling schedule at any age, but Art Linkletter thrives on the opportunity.

“Each thing in my life, failures and successes, opened doors for me and rearranged my values and judgments so that I now, at this age, feel I am filled with the wisdom of life,” he says. “You only get it through defeats, getting up, persisting, learning from your losses, making judgments on ethics, values, morality, friendships and all the good things in life.”

When he's not on the road, Linkletter typically puts in four or five hours a day at his Beverly Hills office, keeping track of his business interests. At one time, the money thrilled him. But his heart is elsewhere now.

“I'm always juggling [my investments],” he says, “but that doesn't mean anything to me. What means something to me is that people are influenced by what I say or do. What I am involved in is going to change lives for the better.”

Charitable causes

Linkletter lends his name, his time and his resources to a number of educational and charitable causes. He serves on the Board of Regents of Pepperdine University and as president of the UCLA Center for Aging. He's active politically and supports organizations promoting research to fight Alzheimer's and eliminate leprosy. Those things, he says, “make me feel good.”

Still a loyal Aztec, Linkletter has signed a letter of intent to give the SDSU Library his personal and professional papers, including priceless archives from the infancy of the broadcasting and entertainment industries.

“We are delighted that Art has agreed to allow us to house this distinctive collection here at San Diego State,” comments SDSU President Stephen L. Weber. “The scripts, letters, photographs, film and mementos collected over the course of his remarkable career document his role as a pioneer in the television industry, and offer valuable insights into the cultural importance of television in American society.”

Most people fortunate enough to live 90 good years see more past than future. Not Art Linkletter. He's working toward goals – enhancing his speaking career, promoting a bold new approach to solar energy and spending more time with his family.

He's a happy man, pleased with his accomplishments, how far he's traveled from Moose Jaw. And how much opportunity still lies ahead.

“I would be very happy to start all over again at 20,” he says. “The next 50 years are going to be great; they're going to make the last 100 look like kindergarten.” ■

A Place to Call Our Own: The SDSU Alumni Center

Friendships formed during our years at San Diego State University often remain among the most lasting memories of our life experience. Then, despite good intentions, we graduate, go our separate ways and lose contact with the individuals – and the university – that made such an important difference in our lives.

“Of the thousands of SDSU alumni living in the San Diego region, less than 5 percent remain involved with their alma mater,” said Jerry C. Dressel, '76, president of the SDSU Alumni Association. “We need to do a better job of reconnecting with and engaging our alumni in meaningful ways. Key to this outreach is bringing them back on campus to see familiar places, tour new facilities and learn about all that is taking place here.”

The SDSU Alumni Center will become a cornerstone of the university's efforts to serve its alumni and the greater San Diego community. In addition to providing much-needed on-campus banquet and meeting space, the new facility will house all of University Advancement, including the Alumni Association, in one convenient location with ample adjacent parking. Located on 55th Street, between Parking Structure V and the SDSU Athletic

Center, the building will also offer a ballroom for large functions and a library/lounge featuring a rotating exhibit of Aztec and university memorabilia, curated by the staff of Love Library.

“I'm proud to be an SDSU alumnus, because of the university's rich past, tremendous academic achievements and outstanding legacy of community service,” Dressel said. “The SDSU Alumni Center will help us showcase our university while providing a venue for alumni to meet. And when SDSU alumni get together, great things happen.”

Because alumni are vital to San Diego State's long-term success, SDSU President Stephen L. Weber has made the Alumni Center his highest fund-raising priority. The majority of the \$10 million needed to build the facility must come from private donations. To date, more than 35 percent of this amount has been committed, thanks to the leadership of campaign tri-chairs Nikki Clay, L. Robert Payne and Tom Carter.

To learn more about the SDSU Alumni Center and how you can contribute to the building fund, please visit www.sdsualumni.org or call Andy Hanshaw at 619.594.6119.

SDSU recognizes these lead contributors to the SDSU Alumni Center Campaign for their support and vision (partial list): Leon and Barbara Parma, Dr. Dwight E. Stanford, The Lipinsky Family Foundation, Arthur R. Barron and Robert E. Barron, Art L. and Gwen Flaming Family Foundation, Jerry and Marsha Dressel, Jeffrey W. Glazer and Lisa S. Braun-Glazer, Benjamin G. and Nicole A. Clay, Bill and Nola Trumpfbeller, Eric Reifschneider, Richard R. Davis and Brita Colburn Davis, Randy Goodson and Maria Mical-Goodson, Douglas X. Patiño, Ph.D., and Walter A. Turner



A Gift of Land, a Legacy of Hope

Thanks to a generous gift of land, San Diego State University is moving ahead with plans to build a new campus near the Imperial County community of Brawley.

SDSU's existing Imperial Valley campus, located on the Mexican border in Calexico, is too far away for many residents in the north end of the county to commute to classes, explained Khosrow Fatemi, Imperial Valley Campus dean. The Brawley site 22 miles to the north will serve those areas, as well as the city of El Centro, offering many county residents their first chance to obtain a college education.

SDSU's plans for a second Imperial Valley campus became a possibility when the Bixby Land Co., long-time owners of the Luckey Ranch near Brawley, agreed to donate 200 acres for the project. "They offered us the best part of their 2,000-acre parcel," Fatemi said, "right on Highway 78." The donated land is appraised at approximately \$4 million.

Jean Bixby Smith, president of the Alamitos Land Co. in Long Beach, said the decision to donate acreage for the new campus fulfilled both business and philanthropic purposes. "We've been a member of the Brawley community for a long time, and we're interested in seeing them realize their dreams to grow," she explained. "We've worked closely with the city to make changes we thought would enhance their growth opportunities as well as ours. Since higher education is the key to economic development, one idea that came up was trying to attract the university."

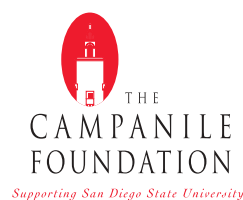
For Smith personally, there was yet another reason. "Education is a part of my life," she said. "I was a teacher for a while, and I served on the board of trustees of my alma mater, Scripps College in Claremont." Smith also maintains a special interest in California State University, Long Beach. Her father was one of the institution's original trustees.

The Bixby gift could help bring welcome, long-term changes to the Imperial Valley, a primarily rural desert region whose young, growing population is limited by the scarcity of educational and employment options. Only about 10 percent of residents 25 and older hold a college degree; nearly half have not even finished high school. The county's unemployment rate is just over 21 percent; by contrast, the statewide rate is only about 5 percent. And more than 22 percent of residents live in poverty, with per capita income averaging only \$18,469.

Fatemi hopes to see those numbers improve as educational opportunities expand. By 2008, with 1,400 students projected to enroll at Brawley, and 400 more at Calexico, SDSU's Imperial Valley enrollment could nearly triple – from 1,000 to 2,800. "The Brawley campus will significantly increase our ability to serve the community," he predicted.

That's just what Jean Bixby Smith intends. "Education is important, and it's important to expand its presence in the [Imperial] Valley and be able to offer it to the residents there," she said. "We were in the fortunate position of being able to help them achieve that goal."

—Sandra Millers Younger



The President's Leadership Fund Realizing the vision for the future

Remember your first day at college? Moving into the dorm? Meeting your roommate? Saying good-bye to Mom and Dad? You were finally on your own. Exciting, but also a bit frightening. Perhaps even overwhelming.

At San Diego State, it's easier now. This year, more than 4,000 first-time students and their parents were greeted with a first-class welcome at a special New Student/Family Convocation ceremony held Aug. 30 in Cox Arena. Lori White, dean of students, organized the new tradition, which she believes will yield mutual benefits. "Helping students feel they belong to San Diego State from their very first day on campus contributes to student success and fosters lifelong loyalty to the university," White said.

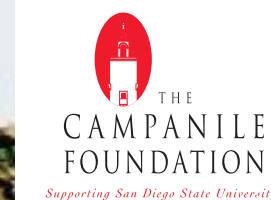
The convocation would not have been possible without financial support from The President's Leadership Fund, a new source of flexible funding available to SDSU President Stephen L. Weber to support strategic university initiatives. "We established The President's Leadership Fund in April to enable President Weber to seize emerging opportunities, encourage academic excellence and reward deserving individuals and programs, despite limitations imposed by shrinking government allocations," explained Joanne Donahoe, the program's assistant director.

Although most colleges and universities have long relied on such unrestricted funds, less than .003 percent of SDSU's overall budget was previously available to the president to invest at his discretion. With nearly 30 founding partners involved thus far, the program is working toward a goal of 100 initial donors. Serving as volunteer chair is Thomas E. Darcy, '73, executive vice president and chief financial officer, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) and a member of The Campanile Foundation board of directors.

"I believe in what Steve Weber is doing to develop and transform SDSU into a world-class academic institution," Darcy said. "I'm fully committed to helping him secure the necessary resources to achieve the university's vision."

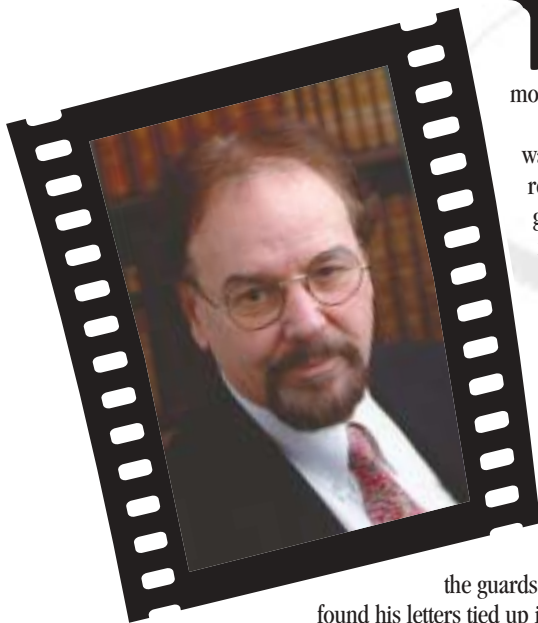
The President's Leadership Fund has also contributed to Project Lead the Way, a national training program linking SDSU with middle- and high-school teachers in an effort to interest their students in engineering. Currently, a shortage of homegrown engineering professionals is forcing area employers to look outside the county for new hires. "Engineering is the cornerstone to technology, our infrastructure and our future," said David T. Hayhurst, dean of SDSU's College of Engineering. "It's critical that we pave the way for future engineers, and at an earlier age."

The partnership of alumni and friends is essential in these efforts, Darcy emphasized. "We appreciate the support of our members in launching programs such as Project Lead the Way and the New Student/Family Convocation," he said, "which will allow San Diego State to reach new heights of excellence."
—SMY



SHORT AND SWEET

Emmy Winner Jack Ofield Fills a Tall Order for Short Films



To hear SDSU film professor Jack Ofield tell it, a recent business trip to India was more like a swashbuckling adventure.

"There were cows in the street. It was so wonderful and so exotic," he remembers. "There were soldiers guarding the gate...it was a beautiful gothic colonial-type building, heavy tropical jungle growth."

Ofield's adventure took him by train from Bombay to the Film and Television Institute of India in Pune where he hoped to discover new talent. Calls and letters had gone unanswered, so he'd decided to pay a personal visit.

After talking his way past the guards and into the school's office, Ofield found his letters tied up in a pile, unopened because he'd addressed them to a prior director.

Such surprises are nothing new to Jack Ofield. He travels the world in search of short films for "The Short List," a four-time Emmy-winning series that airs internationally on public and cable television. A project of SDSU's Production Center for Documentary and Drama, "The Short List" is marking its eighth season with broadcasts in Canada, New Zealand and South Africa. In the U.S., the program is usually carried by local PBS affiliates. In San Diego, look for it on Cox Channel 4.

EDITING "THE LIST"

Ofield, co-producer Helen-Maria Erawan, and SDSU graduate students work together to shape "The Short List," from the opening frames of spinning reels to the individual films that make up the program. Each show is a delicate

balance of comedy, pathos and drama, contributed by filmmakers from around the world.

A recent "Short List" broadcast, for instance, opened with "By Default," a parody on the persistence of student-loan officers, then segued into the "The Photographer," a moving meditation on aging and memory from Russia. The show finished with "Lifting," a clever, wordless short from France about an elevator that literally swallows passengers.

Despite PBS' high-art reputation, Ofield says he structures the program to aggressively compete for viewers. "We need to follow normal television practice, which is to hook you early and make you miss the beginnings of all the other shows," he said. "Then you'll stay till the end. We're competing with everyone out there, and everyone's got these remotes."

Ofield's own reputation as a connoisseur of short films is admired throughout the industry. "He's polished the art form," says Craig Prater, director of the Festival of Festivals film showcase in Palm Springs, Calif. "Jack's someone who is very well known and terribly well respected. Because of his knowledge of that particular genre of film, he's considered one of the experts in the field."

Prater believes the success of "The Short List" has given the short-film genre greater prominence and improved the overall quality of work being produced. Perhaps not coincidentally, Prater adds, short films are growing in popularity worldwide as an affordable showcase for aspiring filmmakers and as templates for longer films and commercials.

"Short films are an art form that allow a filmmaker to do something ... that shows their talent in a lot of areas - can they tell a story, the production values, everything," Prater says. "It allows more filmmakers to show their work to more people, to show their creativity. Short films are an art all their own."

But the increasing popularity of short films has a down side, too. Ofield must sit through hundreds of films a year to find his



By Liese Klein

"Short List" selections because 99 percent of what he sees at festivals and screenings doesn't make the cut.

"It's like fishing," he says. "You're looking for something you like." What Ofield likes is a combination of strengths. An ideal short should start fast, he explains, project good sound and picture quality, have well-written subtitles and a tightly structured story.

After Ofield culls the field, "The Short List" staff craft introductions for each film in their SDSU studio, which is outfitted with an imposing bank of digital editing equipment. "In some ways [the introductions] are the most fun to do," Ofield says, "because they're the really creative aspect for us."

It is Ofield's passion for the craftsmanship of film that's made "The Short List" a hit, says Ryan Quinn, M.A., '01, who works on the program's staff.

"The quality of the programming is the spine of the show," Quinn says. "[Ofield] really knows quality entertainment, and he knows television. The man has an exceptional eye for what will be appealing to watch. He's just a very talented person."

Ofield also shines as a teacher and mentor, Quinn says. "I've had the wonderful experience of being able to look over the shoulder of a professional filmmaker," he says. "Jack has given me more opportunities than I [could] imagine."

Ofield brings to his work at SDSU years of experience in New York's film and television industry, producing documentaries and short films of his own. A souvenir of those days hangs above his desk. It's a wooden shovel, a reminder of one of his favorite projects, a documentary about traditional craftsmen in New York State.

Looking for a change of pace, Ofield left New York and joined the SDSU faculty as filmmaker in residence in 1989. He and his wife bought a former tree nursery in Lemon Grove and have since restored it to a green oasis.

"The Short List" grew from a coproduction with KPBS, gaining the support of Cox Channel 4 and Eastman Kodak. Contributions from the Kodak Worldwide Independent Emerging Filmmakers Program enable Ofield to award grants of film stock to five "Short List" filmmakers each year and pay for their trips to the Cannes Film Festival. Similarly, the Soros Foundation supports Ofield's work with filmmakers in Eastern Europe.

European filmmakers are among the program's most dedicated fans. "They love to be on 'The Short List,'" Ofield says. "We're probably better known in Europe than here."

Beyond the professional accolades and world travel, Ofield is sustained by his passion for the craft of filmmaking. He can frequently be found late at night and on weekends in the SDSU editing studio, polishing a 30-second promo to perfection.

"I devote Saturdays to things I'm going to edit - it's a wonderful day," Ofield says. "I bring in a thermos of great coffee...I turn off the lights so it's kind of moody and dark. It's like driving some magical machine." And another adventure begins. ■



From top to bottom:

- "O Sandwiche" - Brazil
- "The Cage" - Great Britain
- "Aerobatics" - Germany
- "The Bloody Olive" - Belgium
- "Omnibus" - France

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