

[**HARDCOVER:** US]

How to live life to the fullest

Given only months to live, Randy Pausch set out to distill a lifetime of experience into lessons he wanted his children to learn

BY **ELIZABETH TCHII**
STAFF REPORTER

Randy Pausch, professor of computer science at Carnegie Mellon University, passed away this July at the age of 47. What he was best known for throughout the world was his inspiring and aptly titled Last Lecture speech given on Sept. 27, 2007 at Carnegie Mellon University, and later, his best-selling book titled *The Last Lecture*.

Diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer and told by his doctors he had only months to live, Pausch lived his life to the fullest.

In order to leave a loving legacy behind and impart his wisdom to his three children, Pausch worked diligently to assemble the chapters of what he believed to be all the important life lessons they could be taught when they were old enough to understand.

The book was born out of a 75-minute speech and co-authored by Jeffrey Zaslow, a columnist at the *Wall Street Journal*.

The Last Lecture is divided into three broad sections: achieving childhood dreams, enabling the dreams of others, and lessons learned along the way. This is one of a handful of books that inspired me to write and share and really take a hard look at my own life.

Reading this book in one stretch was a life-changing experience for me, and watching the actual speech on YouTube sent me chills down my spine.

Pausch had many dreams while growing up, most of them science fiction-related and extremely nerdy. But throughout life, he managed to pursue his passion in science and achieve small goals one at a time, leading to bigger milestones down the road.

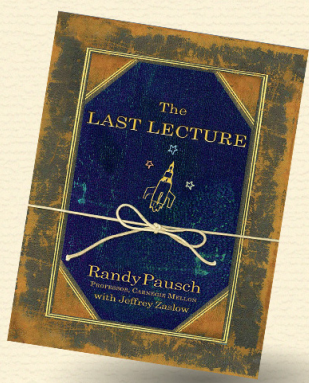
Many people were along the way to nurture, educate and shape Pausch, including his football coach Jim Graham, Walt Disney Imagineer Jon Snoddy, "Dutch Uncle" Andy Van Dam and Captain Kirk from *Star Trek*. Through humorous stories and anecdotes, Pausch indirectly helps his readers identify these valuable figures in their own lives.

A short example comes from Pausch's college professor Andy Van Dam, who is not really related to him, but Dutch nevertheless and very uncle-like. Van Dam said the following to Pausch one day: "Randy, it's such a shame that people perceive you as being so arrogant, because it's going to limit what you're going to be able to accomplish in life."

Van Dam's tactful use of words opened Pausch to criticism without directly calling Pausch "a jerk." Looking back, Pausch was able to understand the professor's wisdom. Even at the time, he at least was able to accept this negative feedback and moderate his behavior accordingly.

In the second part of the book, Pausch stresses the importance

Publication Notes



THE LAST LECTURE

BY RANDY PAUSCH
AND JEFFREY ZASLOW

206 PAGES
HYPERION

of enabling the dreams of others. Since he was a college professor, he was able to touch the minds and souls of many students through classes and projects such as Building Virtual Worlds, and Alice, a Carnegie Mellon software-teaching tool.

Pausch explains the importance of achieving one's dreams, but equally important is helping others achieve theirs. This act of selflessness greatly rewarded Pausch in his career and in life, and he learned invaluable lessons while helping his students shoot for the stars.

In his course Building Virtual Worlds, Pausch developed a system that enabled students to give and receive feedback from team members, which forced them to focus on their strengths and weaknesses and helped them become better teammates.

The last section of this book is devoted to several pieces of advice Pausch collected during his life. One that stood out the most for me — "no job is beneath you" — was given to him by his father when Pausch was working in the strawberry fields and complained about doing manual labor.

It is truly an enlightening statement because too many young adults and college graduates feel a sense of entitlement when they enter the workforce. Often they can't look past the initial tasks and end up failing at entry-level positions. To Pausch work is work and no job is beneath anyone.

I have gotten more out of these 206 pages than any other books I have read for quite some time. Pausch's optimism, his generosity and his love for life really come alive across these pages. If there is any book that can encourage a reader to become a better person, *The Last Lecture* is it.

SUNDAY PROFILE



Dissident rocker Gorki Aguila with his group, Porno para Ricardo, in his makeshift studio in Havana.

Despite arrests and intimidation, Gorki Aguila and his band continue to criticize Cuba's leaders

BY **MARC LACEY**
NY TIMES NEWS SERVICE, NEW YORK

“I am against everything that limits my personal liberty.”

— Gorki Luis Aguila Carrasco, lead singer of Porno para Ricardo

pretended to be a fan but really worked for state security. In that case, he emerged from custody even angrier than before.

A self-taught musician and the father of a preteen girl, Gorki, 39, once told an interviewer that he grew up listening to American and British rock, particularly Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin and the Clash. "My dad never liked rock 'n' roll," he said, "and since he knew that this type of music brought me problems, he used to advise me to listen to other bands."

His mother, an outspoken critic of the government, and his older sister left Cuba years ago for Mexico. Gorki married while he was in jail in 2003 so that he and his wife could have conjugal visits. They are separated now but share time with their 12-year-old daughter, Gabriella. "I try to tell her who I am, why I say the things I say," he said.

A decade ago, he organized Porno para Ricardo — named for a friend who loved pornography but could not get enough of it because of a government ban.

At a recent concert Ricardo himself, a 50-ish man who dresses like a transient, arrived pushing a bicycle and carrying a half-empty bottle of rum. He quickly became the life of the party.

Gorki's words are not the only rebellious thing about him. He had his nose pierced and often

wears a T-shirt that calls 1959, the year of the Cuban revolution, a "year of error." He was named after Maxim Gorky, the Russian author and founder of literary Socialist Realism.

The band's raucous rehearsals take place in the small apartment in the Playa neighborhood of Havana that Gorki shares with his 75-year-old father, Luis. The place is devoid of furniture, and the room in the back where the band gathers has egg boxes on the walls to help reduce the noise.

Concerts are held on the sly. Word of the next performance is spread through text messages or whispers. A few months back, it was in a remote location on the outskirts of the capital.

The group arrived at 5pm to warm up. A few hours later nearly 100 people had gathered, most of them young counterculture types who knew the words to song after song.

One of the teenagers in the crowd, who wore a Nirvana T-shirt, identified himself only as Daniel and said he was an aspiring punk rocker himself. Porno para Ricardo is one of the few bands in Cuba that has the guts to tell the truth, he said.

The group played for about two hours, taking one short break to allow a band member, Herbert Dominguez, to vomit off to the side — the result, it appeared, of too much rum.

"I am against everything that limits my personal liberty," Gorki declared in an interview this year. "The level of unpopularity of the Castro tyranny is so great. It's obvious. You breathe it. It's dense. But the people are afraid."

Gorki does not appear afraid. His recent songs include one called *Dinosaurs*, which refers to

the Cuban leadership. Another, *El General*, lambastes Raul Castro as a farce. After his release from prison, he told a reporter that he was at work on a follow-up to *El Comandante*, the song about Fidel Castro, which will be called *El Comandante II*.

Although Gorki is the front man, his fellow band members — Ciro Diaz Penedo on guitar, Renay Kayrus on drums and Dominguez on bass — are similarly rebellious. As a logo for their group, they use a Soviet hammer and sickle transformed into a pornographic image.

While Gorki was in jail, Diaz attended a concert of Pablo Milanes, a noted and far more conventional singer-songwriter, to press for his bandmate's release. He and some friends unveiled a banner that said "GORKI" and began shouting the singer's name. A dozen or more men in plain clothes moved in quickly, according to witnesses, pummeled Diaz and another man and whisked them away to a police station for questioning.

That episode prompted a response from the Bush administration, which has made no secret of its disdain for the Castro brothers.

"We condemn the regime's violent attack on peaceful concert-goers and arrest of Mr Aguila," Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez, who left Cuba as a boy with his family in 1960, said of Gorki. Gutierrez said the authorities' actions violated the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Raul Castro signed just days after replacing Fidel in February.

Left unsaid by Gutierrez was whether he had ever listened to Gorki's music.

[**PAPERBACK:** US]

Born into one culture, growing up in another

'Once They Hear My Name' details the struggles of Korean children who were adopted and raised by white families in the US

BY **SUZANNE STRUGLINSKI**

NY TIMES NEWS SERVICE, WASHINGTON From hearing "is he yours?" asked to a white mother walking with her Asian child, to playground taunts of "slanted-eyes" and unfair assumptions about being good at math, nine Korean adoptees tell their stories of growing up in American, white families in *Once They Hear My Name: Korean Adoptees and Their Journeys Toward Identity*.

As children, the book's featured adoptees, now ranging from age 25 to 53, said they did not need to look too hard to figure out they were different from others in their families. How they dealt with the differences — and the experiences these divisions produced while growing up — varied widely from person to person.

When Marilyn Lammert, an adoptive mother, traveled to South Korea to meet her son's biological family in 1996, she met other American adoptees searching for

their birth families along with some who had moved back to Korea to work or go to school.

As Lammert and Ellen Lee, a Korean-American friend who traveled with her, heard their stories, they sensed a common theme of longing for an identity and a strong desire to know more about their Korean roots. The visitors were amazed by the different paths that the adoptees took to get them to that point.

The two decided to interview Korean adoptees and collect life-experience stories that might help other adoptees through the struggle of being born into one race or culture but raised in another. Mary Anne Hess edited the taped interviews into the first-person accounts that make up the book.

The editors note that there are more than 100,000 Korean adoptees in the US. The oldest are now senior citizens and the youngest are still babies.

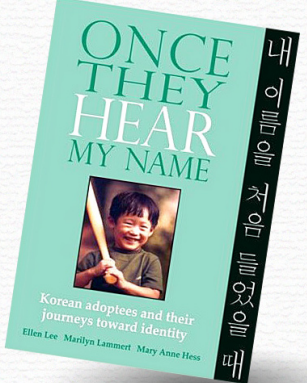
"They are part of the largest group of children ever adopted across racial, cultural and geographic lines," according to the book. The oldest came home with US soldiers stationed in South Korea after the Korean War (1950-1953); the youngest are infants babies still coming over today.

The US Census Bureau reports that South Korea is still the largest single-source country of foreign-born adoptees under 18 years old, at about 48,000 children, according to the book. But China, Russia and Guatemala are the top home countries for adopted children now entering the US.

"As these children grow, they and their parents can look to the long-time experience of Korean adoptees for guidance in coming to grips with the difficult questions of identity formation in families that transcend racial and ethnic categorization," the book says.

The adoptees' stories share similar traits of being teased

Publication Notes



ONCE THEY HEAR MY NAME:
KOREAN ADOPTÉES AND THEIR
JOURNEYS TOWARD IDENTITY

BY ELLEN LEE, MARILYN LAMMERT
AND MARY ANNE HESS

178 PAGES

TAMARISK BOOKS

as children for being different — many grew up in rural areas or places without large Asian populations — and seeking a comfort level about being adopted. At the same time, there are remarkable differences.

Some adoptees' parents went out of their way to teach their children about Korean culture, either through books, Korean food, special camps or trips to their home country. On the other hand, at least one adoptee "never had a bowl of rice."

Some had adopted brothers or sisters while others had siblings who were the biological children of their parents, creating an entirely different complication. Some families talked openly about adoptions while others did not really discuss it. Some families stayed together while others were separated by divorce or death of a parent.

Beyond examining how the mere knowledge one is adopted

(and of a different race) affects day-to-day life, the book also explores the adoptees' decision of whether to seek out their birth families.

Two in the book, including Lammert's son Adam Carlson, whose story makes up the first chapter, found their birth parents, while others have either come up empty or did not choose to begin an intense search.

While reading the stories, it is important to remember that those interviewed did not grow up in the age of the Internet, or adoption support groups, or having many of the resources available today. As everyone gets used to just clicking on their favorite Internet search engines, it is eye-opening to read about someone having to go to an actual South Korean orphanage to look up records.

Someone reading this book either thinking about adoption or parenting an adopted child of a different race may read between the lines as to what worked and what

didn't with the book's nine adoptee contributors. But the overall lesson is that what works for one child may not work for another.

The title comes from one of the interviewed adoptees, Todd Knowlton. He said that once he got to college he would tell people he was adopted right away.

"I would always bring it up — even today — because, I mean, there's no hiding," said Knowlton, now 33 and a consultant in Bethesda, Maryland. "It doesn't bother me, but once they hear my last name, people always ask uncomfortable questions."

The book itself can be uncomfortable — and thought-provoking — particularly when reading about the outright discrimination or stereotypes that the adoptees endured on top of their struggles to fit into their own families. The stories help answer questions that would normally be too hard or perhaps too rude to ask.