

Gifts of Speech News

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1. Randy Pausch's Last Lecture



In case you haven't yet heard of him, **Randy Pausch** is a virtual reality / computer science professor at Carnegie Mellon University. He is an extraordinarily inspirational teacher who learned late last year that, due to pancreatic cancer, he had only about 6 months to live.

It sounds dreadfully depressing, right? But listen. This incredible man took the hard knock life landed on him and created from that a talk called The Last Lecture which he delivered to students and fellow faculty at his school. The Last Lecture communicates Randy's lifetime of learning about how to live a life worth remembering. He is awe-inspiring in all the best senses of the word.

He condensed The Last Lecture for a half-hour appearance on Oprah. [Watching him on Oprah](#) will bless you and make you feel better for the rest of the week. But, in order to get back every moment you've ever had to waste sitting in a waiting room, watch the [whole lecture](#). It takes an hour and 44 minutes, but it will be some of the best two hours you've ever lived.

Randy's book entitled [The Last Lecture](#) will be

published next month. He may not live to see it come to bookstores. But his legacy is going to change a lot of lives for the better.

Some of the lives he has and will change for the better are the lives of young women. Randy has a passion for nurturing and encouraging young women to study and excel in math and science. He led the development of Alice; an innovative 3D programming environment that makes it easy to create an animation for telling a story, playing an interactive game, or a video to share on the web.

From the Alice website:

Alice is a freely available teaching tool designed to be a student's first exposure to object-oriented programming. It allows students to learn fundamental programming concepts in the context of creating animated movies and simple video games. In Alice, 3-D objects (e.g., people, animals, and vehicles) populate a virtual world and students create a program to animate the objects.

Alice appeals particularly to middle school girls.

In honor of Randy's dedication and leadership in educating women in technology, his colleagues at Electronic Arts created the Randy Pausch Endowed Scholarship Fund. The scholarship will be awarded annually to a female undergraduate at Carnegie Mellon University who demonstrates excellence in computer science, and a passion in pursuit of a career in video games.

Follow the links below to meet and appreciate this inspirational man.

His condensed lecture on Oprah:

<http://blip.tv/file/470635>

Video of full-length lecture:

[http://video.google.com/videoplay?
docid=3115188410730134929](http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=3115188410730134929)

Transcript of the full-length lecture:

[http://download.srv.cs.cmu.edu/~pausch/Randy/
pauschlastlecturetranscript.pdf](http://download.srv.cs.cmu.edu/~pausch/Randy/pauschlastlecturetranscript.pdf)

Alice

<http://www.alice.org/>

The Last Lecture at Amazon:

<http://tinyurl.com/23lwvu>

2. My Top Ten Feminist Blogs

In no particular order - these are blogs I enjoy traversing as I trawl for items to include in GoS News:

1. [Femisting](#) - A feminist blog written by young women.
2. [Feministe](#) - Feministe is one of the oldest feminist blogs designed by and run by women from the ground up.
3. [Pandagon](#) - Three blogger report on women's issues.
4. [Hugo Schwyzer](#) - A male gender studies professor blogs on women's and gender-related issues.
5. [Echidne of the Snakes](#) - There are at least two bloggers on this site. I don't know who they are but I like the topics they select.
6. [Bitch Blog](#) - Bitch Magazine's official blog
7. [Hollaback-NYC](#) - Street harassment is a form of sexual harassment that takes place in public spaces. Hollaback fights street harassment by encouraging women to send in phone photos of alleged perps and stories of sexual harassment on the street.
8. [Finally, A Feminism 101 Blog](#) - An information resource, for both feminists and

those questioning feminism

9. [Broadsheet](#) - Salon sponsored blog that cast a spotlight on news that puts women in the center.
 10. [PennyRed](#) is an interesting young feminist from the UK who posts an annual Carnival of Feminists.
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3. Female G Spot "Can Be Detected"

The BBC reported on February 20th that Italian scientists found a way to locate the G-spot using ultrasound.

From BBC Health News:

In the nine women who reported being able to achieve vaginal orgasm, the tissues between the vagina and the urethra - which carries urine out of the body - were on average thicker than in the 11 women who could not reach orgasm this way.

So perhaps all the hand-wringing over whether this area exists or not can be explained by normal anatomical variability? I think it's a little funny that the only graphic they could find for this article was a big toothpaste-advertising grin.

Read the whole article at the link below.

Link: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/7254523.stm>

4. Radical Revision of Islamic Text

From BBC News:

"Turkey is preparing to publish a document that represents a

revolutionary reinterpretation of Islam - and a controversial and radical modernisation of the religion.

The country's powerful Department of Religious Affairs has commissioned a team of theologians at Ankara University to carry out a fundamental revision of the Hadith, the second most sacred text in Islam after the Koran.

As part of its aggressive programme of renewal, Turkey has given theological training to 450 women, and appointed them as senior imams called "vaizes".

They have been given the task of explaining the original spirit of Islam to remote communities in Turkey's vast interior."

The courage of the people undertaking this project is astounding. Read more about it at the link below.

Link: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7264903.stm>

5. Site of the Month for March

[One H.E.A.R.T.'s](#) mission is to save the lives of Tibetan women and children, one birth at a time.

The organization was founded in 1998 by Arlene Samen in association with the University of Utah Health Services Center. **One H.E.A.R.T.** is an acronym for Health Education And Research in Tibet. Their role is to combat the high infant and maternal mortality rates in Tibet and around the world. **One H.E.A.R.T.** distributes simple birth kits which typically include a sterilized razor blade, a clean sheet, three towels for the baby, three fleece blankets, a string to tie around the umbilical cord,

gloves for the person delivering the baby and soap for hand washing. This kit is essential for women who do not even own one blanket for their newborn babies. The organization also provides classes and training for expectant mothers and their helpers.

Learn more at the link below.

Link: <http://onehearttibet.org/index.html>

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