Homework 2 Jean Carter

**Last Lecture Synopsis of Reactions**

MOST AFFECTED ME:

I was fascinated and positively affected by Prof. Randy Pausch’s speaking style and topics given his grim terminal diagnosis. As a professor, I was profoundly struck by the thought of giving a final lecture about topics I am passionate about and how that could create conflicting feelings – sadness of knowing I will never again get to talk about important ideas with a new generation of learners who will go on to exceed anything I could accomplish. His positive attitude and excitement was infectious and made the realization he would soon no longer be alive an almost forgotten issue until he gently reminds us at the end of his presentation. I didn’t particularly like the phrase “head fakes” but I understood what it meant to him and why he wanted to share it. I would have enjoyed his lectures if they were all that dynamic.

While reflecting on 9/11 and the current pandemic this weekend, I realize we never know when we may give our last lecture. In some ways, having an “expiration date” helped him prioritize and say his good byes the way he wanted. Some of us will know it is our last lecture because we are retiring or changing our career paths, but there are many who are taken unexpectedly and never get to plan a farewell lecture.

IDENTIFY WITH MESSAGE:

I think his awareness of the students he had already influenced was a nice but definitely incomplete list given his creation of Alice and education of others who will carry his influence forward. It is difficult for anyone who teaches or shares knowledge to ever fully comprehend the influence they have on others (or the influence the learners have on them). This is one of the great mysteries of education and mentoring. We know who influenced us but not always who we influence.

My high school math teacher at Hellgate High School in Missoula was the first person to introduce me to coding in the early 70s. It was just enough of an introduction to give me confidence to tackle SAS coding in grad school in the 90s before they had a Windows version of the software. There was a vague familiarity about the process. That made me comfortable with learning HTML coding for web sites in the early 2000s and is currently supporting my efforts to learn R for data analysis and (apparently) for creating art as well as taking this creative coding course and a data arts course this fall. The confidence to code began with learning some simple codes in 1974.