

TITLE IX OFFICE INTRODUCES NEW COORDINATOR AND CHANGES

Brianda Gasparini and Abel Medel **Staff Writers**

During the 2016 spring quarter, La Sierra University received several public emails alleging the university of mishandling sexual assault claims from students. La Sierra established the Title IX office to handle cases of sexual misconduct both on and off campus on July 1, 2015 with a part-time coordinator. On Sept. 1, 2016 Laurel E. Brown, Ph.D. was appointed as La Sierra's full-time Title IX coordinator.

Brown was approved unanimously by La Sierra's Executive Committee on Aug. 17 and was selected after a nationwide search. She was provided Title IX coordinator training with the National Association of College and University Attorneys. In addition to hiring brown, La Sierra has provided more training for students, faculty, and administration on Title IX.

"I am excited about the opportunity to strengthen La Sierra University's commitment to an educational environment free from sex discrimination and sexual violence," says Brown.

Those accusing La Sierra of mishandling a sexual assault case, including the student movement called Unsilenced La Sierra created a website and petition demanding change. The website included students' accounts of experiences with sexual assault and how the university responded. Also, a list of requests was sent out via email to students and university leadership. Among these requests was the desire for La Sierra to hire a full-time Title IX coordinator. A protest was held in front of the campus on May 3, 2016, by the Unsilenced La Sierra movement in hopes to have these demands addressed.

The Student Association of La Sierra University (SALSU) hosted a Town Hall meeting on May 5 and intended to provide a safe space where students could talk about their concerns related to Title IX and provide suggestions to administration. Throughout the meeting, survivors shared their stories of sexual assault, along with opinions about responses from the university in addressing these assaults. During this meeting, the university affirmed that the Title IX coordinator's position, which was presently a part-time post, would transition to a full-time position as of July 1.

According to Brown, the university is committed to providing a learning environment in which all members of the campus community are safe and free from sexual misconduct in any form. Brown reports to the associate provost, Cindy Parkhurst, and

oversees the university's compliance with the mandate issued by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. Title IX requires that universities and colleges actively prevent, "discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities," encompassing sexual harassment and sexual assault in schools.

La Sierra continues to work to achieve their goal of an open and educated community, free of sexual misconduct. "I am glad to have the opportunity to fulfill La Sierra University's commitment to an educational environment free from sex discrimination and sexual violence," says Brown. "While I was not involved with last year's events [...] I know the Provost and the leadership want a supportive environment, and this year we hope to achieve that."

Her mission, along with her leadership within the community, is to develop infrastructure in the Title IX office. Brown hopes to educate the La Sierra community and bring sexual assault prevention to the forefront.

"My focus for this year is to develop a community prevention program. I want to create an atmosphere that allows for a helpful, effective, and supportive process when aiding those that experience sexual assault," says Brown.

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Photo by Max A. Gutierrez

EDITORS NOTE

Max A. Gutierrez Editor-In-Cheif

La Sierra University is a bubble with its own community, beliefs, and standards. However, the world around it is active and constantly relaying messages that may differ from inside our bubble. Media is

filled with sex and the message is usually pro-sex.

This sexual awareness issue is important, because we need to figure out a way to openly discuss sex on our campus. Choosing not to talk about sex awareness is no longer an option when it has become a dominating theme in music, film, and basic television.

Educating others about sex doesn't just include encouragement of abstinence or contraceptives, but includes informing others about how to look at the messages in the media more critically. According to the Western Journal of Medicine, teenagers see 143 incidents of sexual behavior on network television each week. They also found that 80 percent of all movies shown on network or cable television contain sexual content.

Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD's) rates are starting to rise again. As of 2015, there were more than 6,000 reported cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and early syphilis in Riverside County. According

to the Riverside County Department of Public Health, there are an average of 240 people a year diagnosed with HIV.

The Western Journal of Medicine also reports that most adolescents claim that they receive education about sex and STDs from television shows, movies, and other entertainment media. They conclude however, that adolescents absorbs values and information from the families, school, religious teachings, and other respected adults more than from the media.

It is our goal at Criterion to open a discussion on sexual awareness. This issue will look at sex in a broad sense and provide multiple perspectives on the subject. We encourage you to carry on the discussion with your classmates, friends, faculty, and family. Don't be afraid to challenge your beliefs. Welcome to the sex talk.

The Criterion is a publication of the Student Association of La Sierra University

THE CRITERION

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Criterion is a student-run newspaper published by the Student Association of La Sierra University (SALSU) for the students, faculty, staff, and alumni of La Sierra University. As a service for the La Sierra community, the Criterion seeks to empower community members to be more informed and engaged citizens by reporting campus and opening ongoing campus discussion.

Because the Criterion promotes active citizenship, the editors welcome the sharing of campus news for potential reporting and the submission of letters, articles, and artwork from members of the La Sierra community, but reserve the right to publish and edit submissions at their discretion.

The views and opinions expressed in the Criterion are those of individual writers, and do not represent La Sierra University, its faculty, staff, administration, or students. All communication may be directed to criterion@lasierra.edu.

STATISTICS ON SEXUAL ASSAULT IN COLLEGE

As of June 2016, there were 246 ongoing investigations by the US Department of Education into how 195 colleges and universities handle sexual assault reports under the gender equity law - Huffington Post



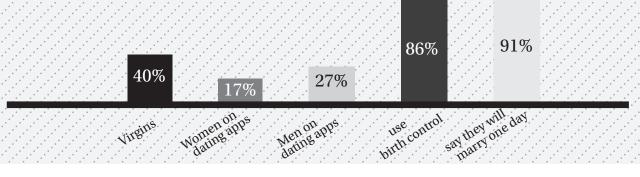
1 in 5

25%

women were sexually assaulted while at college - US News

of college students will contract an STD during their time in school - Nursingschools.net

Out of 784 College Students Across the US, a New York Magazine Found that:



NEWS

LGBT+ SEEKS **ACCEPTANCE ON CAMPUS**

Jyremy Reid **News Editor**

Recently, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI, landed a spot on Campus Pride's "shame list" - a non-profit website dedicated to, "identifying the absolute worst campuses for LGBTQ youth and who have requested Title IX Exemptions," in the United States. Andrews made the list for its refusal to allow an official LGBT+ group on campus. Although AULL4One, an unofficial gay-straight alliance, is present they are not allowed to meet on campus or advertise to find help from others.

According to Campus Pride's website, Andrews made the list because it opposed student advocacy for LGBT+ homeless youth, as well as prohibiting same-sex relationships and official LGBT+ student organizations. Early in 2015, there was a standoff between Andrews administration and AULL4One, that spread proudly proclaim their homophobic on social media. The administrators told the leaders of AULL4One that a planned fundraiser could not be held on campus. In the previous se-

mester, AULL4One planned a fundraiser to support LGBT+ homeless youth in Chicago. Campus Ministries stepped in to help because the unsanctioned group needed to hold the event under the guidance of an official school club.

"I think one of the hardest times is when you're just sitting in vespers or church and everything is fine... until the speaker says something negative about homosexuality and how wrong and sinful it is. Suddenly the people around you and the congregation echo with amens and you've never felt so small before. And then you truly feel alone," says Jonathan Doram, Intercollegiate Adventist GSA Coalition (IAGC) President.

The Shame List did not mention the growth that has recently happened on Andrews' campus. Doram mentions how the university is blessed with a Student Life team that is open to work with students and want to engage in dialogue with them.

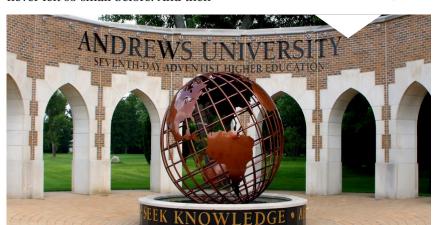
IAGC is a non-profit organization made up of student leaders that is committed to providing a safe space at universities where open discussion is allowed. This campaign was

other Adventist institutions, PRISM seeks to bring its LGBT+ students together to create a safe environment and give back to the community.

"One very important goal for PRISM is to get further networked with the IAGC. Together we can create an even larger conversation as we settle into a loving environment based on the SDA faith. We, along the other universities involved with IAGC, are coming together to stand above the discrimination we face as a community with the support of one another in and out of our university," said Doram.

One of PRISM's prime goals is to get more connected with the IAGC. It is their hope that they together can form a larger conversation in a safe environment based on the Adventist faith. All universities in union with IAGC are working together to fight against discrimination.

"I think it's just a wake-up call - we can keep working harder [...] view it as a chance to grow and learn from this," says Doram.



in the dorm and on campus people slurs/comments and your friends laugh along. You feel like no matter how good, how friendly, how Christlike you try to be, no one will like you created to motivate LGBT+ students on Seventh-day Adventist (Adventist) colleges and universities who also feel alone.

La Sierra's own LGBT+ group PRISM falls under the IAGC. Like many



FEATURE

THE WAY WE TEACH SEXUAL ABSTINENCE BEFORE MARRIAGE NEEDS TO BE REEXAMINED

Courtney Ray Adventist Pastor

The following story is reprinted with permission from the Adventist News Network.

It's time for our families and churches to re-evaluate how we teach about premarital sex.

While we should continue to teach abstinence and God's plan regarding sexuality, a more comprehensive approach in teaching people to think critically is necessary to foster good decision-making. Merely teaching abstinence is not enough.

One young church-goer was a financially secure, emotionally stable, ivy-league graduate from a loving Christian home. Not exactly the poster child for unplanned motherhood. Yet, she found herself pregnant and unmarried. When asked why she hadn't used some form of contraception, her answer was interesting, but upon examination, unsurprising.

All her life, she had heard, understood, and believed the church's teaching on the sanctity of sex only within marriage. But she felt there was a difference between premeditated and "accidental" transgression. She believed having sex outside of marriage was wrong. Taking precautions would be "planning" to do it anyway, which would be more wrong than if it "just happened."

Who knows how frequently these "accidents" happened or whether her pregnancy was the result of one errant decision inserted in a lifelong pattern of chastity. Really, it's irrelevant. What is significant is the fact that her rationale is not uncommon.

Many young people are embarrassed or ashamed to seek answers about sexuality within our church communities. They either get misinformation from less reliable but more approachable sources like peers or the Web, or they don't take responsibility for critically thinking about sexual behaviors.

Not everyone has had a parent who was ready, willing and able to have these discussions with them. Even open and frank parents are most likely not the only source sought out for answers to questions of sexuality. Media, peers and other role models provide a constant stream of information about sex.

To help counterbalance some of the negative things they might be hearing, the church should be ready to lend its voice in shaping the perspectives of our youth and young adults.

Families and churches should work together on this. This issue demands our attention because we all know youth and young adults in our churches who've had sex resulting in unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. They've heard the sermons, lectures and Bible studies advocating abstinence before marriage. Yet they've decided to have sex anyway. The key phrase

is "they've decided."

The first time I learned one of my unmarried young parishioners from a previous congregation was going to have a baby, I admit I was upset. I began reviewing my ministry: what should I have said or done differently? How could I have made the message of sexual purity take root? What had I done wrong? And if I felt all these emotions, I can only imagine how the parents felt.

Finally, a colleague reminded me: no matter what anyone is taught, ultimately, they're in charge of themselves. I couldn't bear the guilt of someone else's choices. Everyone makes their own decisions. In that light, how can the church ensure that our young people and singles make decisions that are the most well-informed and well-educated?

I believe, practice, and teach sexual abstinence, but I also observe many youth and singles choosing to have premarital sex anyway. By making abstinence the full extent of our message, our church does a disservice.

There are congregations outside of our denomination trying to creatively address this dilemma. Some set aside times for health professionals to come answer questions and provide information on contraception access and usage. Other churches conduct STD screenings for the community and congregation. They provide condoms for those in attendance. I know of one pastor who talks to his teens individually about relationships and dating. He stresses biblical principles of sexuality and that abstinence is the best choice. After discussion and prayer, he gives them a condom with the church information and pastor's picture printed on the wrapper! He hopes that even if they choose to disregard Biblical council, they'll have the condom and use it. One of his young congregants later testified about an instance with his girlfriend where arousal was high but reason was low -- having a tangible reminder of his conversation with his pastor gave him enough pause to contemplate his actions. He and his girlfriend decided not to have sex

I'm not necessarily advocating these particular methods. Yet, I'm tired of our churches being home to young women contracting cervical cancer, young men covertly self-medicating genital infections, "healthy-looking" people unwittingly spreading venereal diseases, and parents ashamed to admit their child's sudden illness is a complication of AIDS. At the very least, we can make people aware of individuals within our congregations who are safe, non-judgmental sources of information. Whatever they decide, people deserve the ability to be pointed to the right places for health resources -- including condoms.

There are those that believe this is tantamount to advocating premarital sex: by giving young people a "safety net," they'll believe sex has no consequences. I disagree. True, engaging in pre-marital sex isn't the best option. However, should we compound errors by allowing them to become accidental parents, become exposed to carcinogenic pathogens, and contract STD's? Some say yes: "they should experience the brunt of their actions, come what may!"

But not even God does that. We each have a choice to fully follow God or to disobey -- beginning with Adam and Eve's choice in Eden. God's design for them was clear. Still, they had free will. They elected a course that wasn't in God's plan for them. Nevertheless, God provided a path-



Image from Pexels

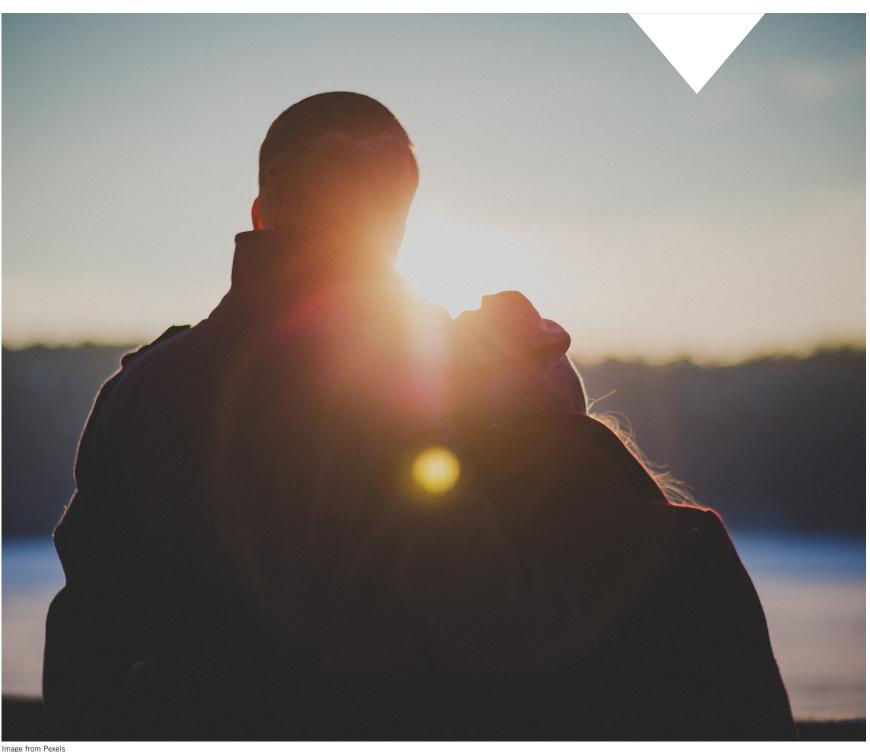


Image from Pexels

way to mitigate the repercussions of those choices -- for them and for us.

If some people make the unwise choice to have premarital sex, even if they use contraception, they won't experience it unscathed. There are long-lasting emotional and spiritual consequences. How is it "better for them" to additionally endure physical (and sometimes financial and educational) penalties, if those

might be avoided or lessened?

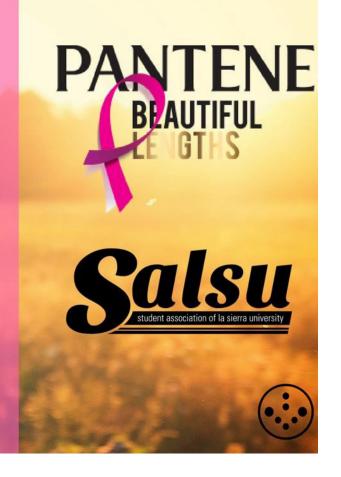
We should teach discernment and critical thinking. And we should also provide comprehensive resources to facilitate good decisions.

Sometimes people make choices we disagree with. But in the end, the choice is theirs.

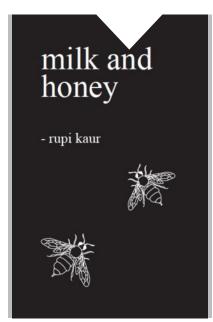
Arielle T. - 8 Inches Jessie J. - 8 Inches Christalyn E. 13 inches James V.M. 10 inches Linda V.M. 8 inches Mike V.M. - 8 inches Ariela C.- 11 inches Cindy Wen - 10 inches Hestrella M. - 10 inches Samuela T. - 8 inches Rachelle H. - 8 inches Ashley D. - 8 inches Natalie G. - 10 inches Jessica A. - 8 inches

Natasha L. - 8 inches Paulina W. - 12 inches Isabella E. 10 inches Thank You! Together La Sierra donated 175 inches!

Alejandrina C. - 17 inches



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Milk and Honey

MILK AND HONEY: A CONTEMPORARY LOOK AT SEX

Shauna Ashlock Staff Writer

The contemporary Canadian poet and writer Rupi Kaur's milk and honey is not only an ode to strong feminist ideals, but the book also cycles through different expressions of violence, abuse, love, loss, and healing. A brilliant little collection of poetry dealing with taboo issues expressed through raw, intense emotion felt by women everywhere, milk and honey is a book about coping and survival. It is split into four chapters, and each segment serves different purposes dealing with different pains and healing different heartaches.

"You have been taught your legs are a pit stop for men that need a place to rest a vacant body empty enough for guests but no one ever comes and is willing to stay," says Kaur in a passage from her book.

As I flipped to the first section of the book: The Hurting, I was surprised to find the first poem enveloped in a Shel Silverstein-esque pen illustration of a woman with her legs wide open, the poem between the parts of the female body that would have been exposed. The fact that this image is the reader's first introduction to the book is a fitting representation of the material, content, and ideas portrayed throughout the book. The rest of the section is no different: it describes the pain, loneliness, and ache that comes when people try to fill the void within themselves. Whether through silence, drinking, violence, or sex, they inflict pain on others because they do not know how to handle the wrong that has been done to them, except to perpetuate the cycle.

Kaur does a phenomenal job of voicing how society constantly tries to diminish feminist consciousness by encouraging women to redefine, rather than remove, oppression. For instance, rather than embolden legal action against rape, women are encouraged to alter their behavior to avoid being raped. Throughout the book, the author expresses the idea that male supremacy is still an issue in regards to female oppression.

"When my mother opens her mouth to have a conversation at dinner my father shoves the word hush between her lips and tells her to never speak with her mouth full this is how the women in my family learn to live with their mouths closed," says Kaur.

After the heavy content from The Hurting, the second chapter of the book comes as a small relief. The Loving brings a sense of calm to the rage in the form of light and warmth. It works to somewhat mend the soreness felt by the first section of the book. It allows for a breath of fresh air and healing to envelope the reader after feeling the pain from the poems prior. But it doesn't last long as the poem content once again changes in the third section.

"I didn't leave because I stopped loving you I left because the longer I stayed the less I loved myself," says Kaur.

The third part of the book, The Breaking, is another nosedive into the sadness and disparity brought about by the beginning of the book. It replaces the sweet nothings and small-talks of love with loneliness and defeat. The topics of the poems in this section are not as dark as the ones in The Hurting, but they are just as miserable. These poems peak the thoughts of love lost and sadness claimed in the place of the people who do not see others for their true potential. It gives light to the fact that fate and love are really more tragic than we give them credit for, and Kaur captures the essence of that idea in each poem in this section.

"I want to apologize to all the women I have ever called pretty before I've ever called them intelligent or brave," says Kaur.

The final chapter of "milk and honey" is The Healing and is by far the most empowering and relatable section of the whole book. The narrative takes on a lighter mood as it turns to reflection, self-love, and a sense of merit. Poems of strength, endurance, resilience, and self-understanding was a beautiful way for the author to wrap up her little black book of sexual promiscuity and heavy, raw emotion.

The honest words of Kaur leave the reader continuously wanting more as she writes with eloquence and poise. Her work will send the reader to past thoughts and realities they might not have known they had. The inspirational content and controversial topics about female injustice, suffering, and love in milk

and honey have easily become every feminists' personal anthem. The Toronto native has used writing to become the voice for women everywhere who are not strong enough to stand up and speak for themselves. She is so unapologetic about her view and stance that she makes it evident she is not afraid to speak her thoughts, even if they leave a bad taste in society's mouth. As a feminist writer, speaking on behalf of womanhood, Kaur never intended for her literature to be easy to swallow.

REVIEW: MOONLIGHT

Brandon Tenda Staff Writer

Once upon every few moons, there comes a film that is not a mere film, but an experience. This is one of those films.

Moonlight, yet another gem in the stellar repertoire of the A24 Studios, chronicles the life of Chiron, a young black male living in the slums of Miami, Florida.

The reason why Moonlight touched me so much is because despite all of its technical wonder and solid execution, it is one of the most heartfelt films I have ever had the joy of experiencing. The story and central characters, though deeply molded by their surroundings, are people we can relate to, grounded by the realistic dialogue and stellar acting by the lead actors portraying Chiron as he shifts from one period of his life to another. It doesn't occur to the audience that this man, and the people around him, are mere characters on a screen.

Grounded as it is, there's still something fantastical at play here. From the very first few seconds of the film we are swept into a magnificent tracking shot, establishing a sense

of symphonic wonder that is upheld throughout the film's runtime. There are many shots that still haunt me; long, lingering shots that brand themselves into my mind's eye. Fast, lateral tracking that fluidly pulled my attention without seeming out of place. Jenkins' masterful cinematography is a crucial cog in this gossamer machine, weaving euphoric webbing to aid in every step we take along with Chiron during his journey to manhood.

Color also plays a crucial role in this dreamwork. Every phase of Chiron's life is painted a certain tone, settling into his struggle for growth. At times, the film turns into a live action painting, further illustrating Chiron's exploration of his soul. Beauty of this magnitude is wholly absent in today's cinema, but again, Jenkins utilizes this color in a way that isn't there just for show, but is implemented as yet another lens for the audience to experience what Chiron is experiencing.

Beauty aside, the film is possibly the best coming-of-age film ever created. Never before have I seen such a heartfelt story about a boy's growth into manhood dedicated to film. Chiron's difficulty in his discovery of his soul, the struggle of wrestling with his ambitions and his surroundings, and even the raw, visceral exploration of his sexuality, we experience all of it with him, feeling every frustration, every euphoric revelation, every heartbreak.

Moonlight is an exquisitely crafted film on all of its multifaceted layers. Every single component is utilized to propel the theme and the narrative of this story. From the sparse but rapturous soundtrack, to the subtle yet compelling delivery of lines from the lead actors, Moonlight is tenfold the sum of its parts. A testament not only to the medium of film as an artform, but also to the difficult yet beautiful journey we all experience during our transition from children to adults.



Moonlight

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

ADVENTIST FILM SHARES NEW PERSPECTIVE ON LGBT+ **INCLUSIVITY IN** THE CHURCH

Charles Clayton **A&E Editor**

The La Sierra University community had the opportunity to view the new Adventist dialogue film, Enough Room at the Table. This follow-up to Seventh Gay Adventists is a raw and open discussion on the controversial, but necessary topic of LGBT+ inclusivity in the Adventist church. Viewers witnessed as pastors, educators, parents, and LGBT+ Adventists discussed their personal experiences in hopes of helping each other look past labels and begin to see fellow children of

The audience was presented with stories from a transgender woman's personal hardships within society, as well as her journey within her church. Similarly, an Adventist pastor searched for ways to teach his congregation to be more welcoming of the LGBT+ community. The participants discussed the possibility of staying true to oneself while staying true to God. At the end of the film, directors and producers, Stephen Eyer and Daneen Akers, opened the floor to discussion and the conversation on screen continued through the audience. La Sierra University students and faculty expressed how the film had changed their perceptions of the LGBT+ community as well as the necessity of inclusivity and understanding within the Adventist church.

The intent of the director was to show how many LGBT+ persons have been ostracized and excluded by their families, friends, and even their own church. Condemned

with scripture, members of the LGBT+ community featured within the film felt as though a choice must be made between God and their identity. This pressure to make a decisive choice was shown to be detrimental to one's understanding of religion and his or her relationship with God. Showered in sensitivity and controversy, the topic of LGBT+ persons within the Seventh-day Adventist Church is often dismissed, ignored, and disregarded. Enough Room at the Table is a perfectly executed attempt at encouraging the Adventist community to understand that there is no need for division, but rather unity.

Enough Room at the Table is available for purchase for \$0.99 at enoughroomfilm.com. Along with the film, customers also receive more than 45 minutes of additional special features, as well as a facilitator's guidebook & resources to assist them in hosting their own small group dialogues.

SEXUAL REPRESENTATION AND MEDIA

Aysia Nealey Staff Writer

The media often depicts minorities, women, and LGBT+ persons in a stereotypical or misconstrued way. The way the media portrays these marginalized groups can be very misleading to viewers, especially if the media is their main source of understanding and learning about these groups. The media often neglects these characters and reflects their experiences inaccurately.

Angel Becerra, a junior at La Sierra University, believes the media does not portray the Hispanic community in a positive light. "Unless it is the first Hispanic to do something, such as becoming the first Hispanic senator, we're often



Orange is the New Black

viewed negatively," Becerra stated.

Becerra also believes Latin women are seen as sexual objects and are fetishized in the film and television industry. On the Emmy award-winning television series Modern Family, Gloria, a Hispanic woman, is often shown in revealing clothing and comments about her appearance are in almost every episode. Later in the series her character develops into a more intelligent person, however she was first depicted as the "sexy step-

Jasmin Sadajji, a sophomore at La Sierra University who is half Hispanic and half Iranian, often sees Iranian women as caretakers, mother figures, or terrorists. who is trying to survive in a prison There are very few roles where Iranian women are seen as leaders or in positions of power. This continues to support the perceived stereotype that Iranian women are submissive or violent terrorists.

Film and TV are beginning to make a shift from the negative stereotypes of Middle Eastern individuals. In one hit television series The Blacklist, two Middle Eastern individuals are members of the FBI and are both viewed as highly intelligent.

Eric Marquez, a junior at La Sierra University, believes the LGBT+ community is represented often and accurately. This is due to the

entertainment industries' open advocacy for LGBT+ persons. In the popular show How to Get Away With Murder, there is an interracial gay couple whose characters stay at the forefront of the plot. This series also brings awareness of the importance of HIV testing within the LGBT+ community. Marquez also enjoys The Fosters, which has a lesbian couple and diversity within their foster children.

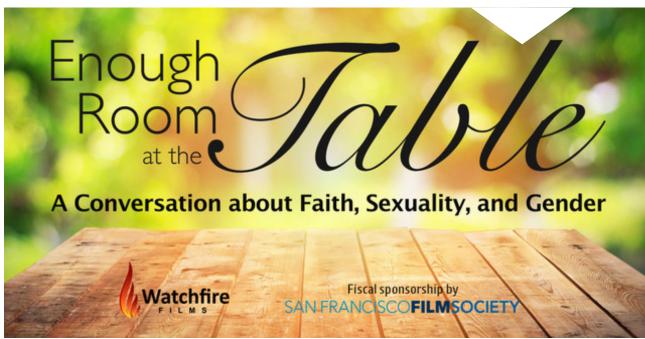
"If I can't relate to a show, I'm not going to watch it," says Marquez

Television shows are also bringing in more transgender characters. In the hit Netflix original series Orange is the New Black, Laverne Cox plays a transgender woman that cares little about her needs. The emergence of transgender individuals in media has brought awareness to the use of proper pronouns. When Caitlyn Jenner first appeared as a woman several people continued to call her a man. However, many took to social media to describe the harm that mis-pronouns cause.

There have been recent discussions on the lack of Asian representation in the media. When the movie The Great Wall was first announced there was an outcry over the whitewashing of the film. This movie, which is about the Song Dynasty, takes place in China and has a Chinese director but has cast a white male, Matt Damon, as the lead role. According to David Simms, a writer for The Atlantic, "The Great Wall is a huge step in the wrong direction."

Hollywood often casts white actors in place of Asian ones. Another upcoming film, titled Ghost in the Shell adapted from a Japanese-comic, is stirring up controversy. The film casted Scarlett Johansson in place of an Asian actress for a Japanese character.

Media can shape our society, so the way people, ideas, and sex are represented in the media should tell all sides to every story in every light.



Enough Room at the Table



UPCOMING EVENTS

