Kristen Winters

William Ozdal

SECTION ONE:

Person interviewed: Helena Kolenda

Interviewee title: Director for the Henry Luce foundation's Asia program

Date/Time/Length: November 21st/10:05am/1:01:40

Objective for conducting interview: Gathering a better understanding of what Ms. Kolenda does within the Henry Luce foundation and to better understand the role that both Ms. Kolenda and the foundation play in U.S. Asian relations.

SECTION TWO:

Prior to our interview with Ms. Kolenda, we conducted some preliminary research on her as well as the Henry Luce foundation and its Asia program. This preparation allowed us to ask more specific questions which took a more in depth approach to Ms. Kolenda's life and work experiences. For instance, going into the interview, we knew that Ms. Kolenda had spent time in China between 1981 and 1996 as a volunteer English teacher and later was hired as a paralegal for a law firm in Beijing. In addition, we were aware that shortly after she returned to America she was hired in 1998 as a program officer for the Henry Luce foundation's Asia program. She worked as an officer for ten years until she was appointed to director of the program in 2008 which is the title she still holds today. In terms of the Henry Luce foundation's Asia program itself, we were aware through prior research that it pursues the two goals of fostering culture and intellectual exchange between the United States and Asia and creates scholarly resources which look to improve the understanding of Asia within the United States. In addition to conducting

prior research, we also prepared a few questions in advance which we sent to Ms. Kolenda via email so she had an idea of what approach we would be taking. The questions we based our interview off of which includes the ones we sent to Ms. Kolenda in advance are as follows:

Biographical/Background

- What is your name and current job title.
- Tell me about your family, what professions did/do your parents hold. Are they in similar fields?
- Education (public/private school and higher education)
- What was your first job, did it influence where you are today?
- Did you do any kind of internships/volunteer work before working with the Henry Luce Foundation? (Time in China)
- What nations in Asia have you visited, can you tell me about the impact of U.S. – Asian relations within them?

Foundation

- How did you come in contact with the Henry Luce Foundation?
- Have you held any previous positions in the foundation? Do you have any plans to change positions in the future?
- What would you say, is the most satisfying aspect of your job?
- What are some of your most accomplished successes with the foundation?
- What are some of your failures, and what did you learn from them?
- Have you ever met any memorable people through your foundation work?
- Has this political season effected the way that your foundation has been supported?

Future

- What are your future goals for both yourself, and the foundation?
- Where do you see the foundation going, after you have retired?

SECTION THREE:

1. Did you get complete answers to your questions?
    - Ms. Kolenda answered our questions fully, even expanding on many of them, providing us with a great deal of opportunities to ask follow up questions.
2. Was your interview structured, unstructured, or mixed?
    - It was mixed. While we had a list of questions prepared to ask Ms. Kolenda, even sending a few to her in advance so that she could have an idea of what we would be discussing, the conversation took a more natural path. This unplanned path allowed us to not only ask questions from the list we prepared, but also to delve deeper into questions that we had not previously thought of.
3. What probing questions did you use?
    - At one point Ms. Kolena was talking about how the foundation receives money, through their endowment, which allows them to not worry about fundraising, and to focus only on giving back to the public.
4. Explain your team approach. That is, who did what?
    - Our approach to conducting this interview was to ask Ms. Kolenda questions and allow the conversation to progress naturally. We didn't really have specific roles during the interview, although we did make a point to ask specific questions that we had come up with ourselves.

5. Did the interviewee give you any documents or references to articles to read, or did she mention other people for you to talk to (or research)?

- Near the end of our interview, Ms. Kolenda recommended a book given to her by a dear friend of hers Dr. Wang Zheng titled : “Finding Women in the State: A Socialist Feminist Revolution in the People's Republic of China, 1949-1964”. Ms. Kolenda also invited us to visit her in NYC to tour the foundation and meet the people who work there!

SECTION FOUR: Interview Transcript

Will: Please state your name and title for the record.

Helena: Hi I am Helena Kolenda, I am the program director for Asia at the Henry Luce foundation.

Will: We wanted to start off by getting a little background about you. Maybe early life as a child, if that had any influence on your life today in terms of working with the Henry Luce foundation. Growing up as a young woman, can you tell us a little bit about (your) family life such as parents and siblings?

Helena: I was born and raised in Houston, Texas. My mother worked in the medical center, supporting research by different doctors in things like genetics and psychiatry. Her last position was assistant to the president of MD Anderson cancer hospital. My father was a professor at Rice University in the philosophy department. My parents were divorced when I was quite small. My father remarried a professor who was an anthropologist and her area of research was India. So, I grew up in a background of academics. My mother was not an academic but she did work in that type of research area. I traveled a lot when I was small with my father in the summers because he and my stepmother Pauline Kolenda would have sabbaticals and they liked to spend the sabbaticals travelling so I was lucky to get exposed to travel as a youngster. And because of the

stepmom's work in India, I also had the opportunity to spend a little time in Asia starting with a trip when I was sixteen. I went with her to India but on the way to India we stopped in Japan and Hong Kong. I was already in high school beginning to get interested in East Asia philosophy, particularly Buddhism, and through the poetry that linked to zen, I got interested in different languages, Chinese in particular. So, I ended up studying Chinese at the University of California Berkeley.

Will: We know you spent about ten years in China working as an English teacher and working with volunteers. Did you spend time in other countries doing similar work? Or was it just China?

Helena: In terms of working, I was really only in China. I have travelled to many countries in Asia but have only worked in China. I have live in Taiwan for a year also as a student.

Will: Do you speak Chinese?

Helena: I do.

Will: Aren't there multiple Chinese languages? I know there is Mandarin and others, how does that work?

Helena: I speak Mandarin, there are different dialects. Cantonese is the other big one which is spoken in South China, Hong Kong, and the Guangdong province. Taiwan also has what's called (unclear) dialect which is from the province of Zhejiang(?) because a lot of people initially went to Taiwan from Zhejiang(?) province, they migrated there over many centuries and took the language with them. But I speak Mandarin which is the official language of the People's Republic.

Kristen: In terms of the ten years that you spent working in China, I read that you were not only an English teacher but you were also an attorney. I was wondering if there were any challenges you may have faced in landing those jobs, particularly based off your gender?

Helena: As a volunteer English teacher, the organization I went with, Volunteers in Asia, was in the early eighty's when gender issues were a sensitive topic. People who were chosen for the volunteer positions was based off who applied. So, a lot of women applied but there were no hurdles in that, I just assumed I was going to get chosen and I was. There was a lot of sensitivity within the organization to gender issues but culture more generally because it was encouraging people to spend time overseas. And so we were talking not only about our roles as Americans but also how we would interact with men and women in Asia as well because of different cultural expectations. When I applied to work for the law firm in Beijing as a paralegal initially, the woman who hired me in that office, was a woman so she was quite supportive. Her boss, professor Jerome Cohen, was a bick figure in the Chinese legal studies field. He had taught at Harvard for many years before he went back into private practice with the lawfirm because at that time it was difficult to do field research in China. But as an attorney in a moment when China was opening up to foreign investment, he could go in representing foreign companies and it was a way to do field work, hands on investigations through the negotiations that he was involved with. He also was a very open person so I never felt that my gender was counted against me in any of the jobs that I have had. Sometimes in Asia, not so much in China, but in other parts of Northeast Asia, Japan and South Korea particularly in the earlier years, I think there was a sense that women should not be taken quite as seriously as men, particularly younger women. So, I was never treated with overt disrespect but there were times when I did have a feeling that the people I was working with on the other side of the table would have preferred to be interacting with a man rather than with me.

Will: Do you think that is worse? The passive feeling? Would you have rathered those feelings be in the open so you could have that conversation as opposed to it just lingering in the darkness?

Helena: I don't think at that time it would have been possible to have that conversation. Had it been an obstacle to the work I was trying to do then I probably would have had a phrase but I was fortunate enough that it never occurred.

Will: When exactly did you start working with the Henry Luce foundation?

Helena: I joined the Luce foundation in 1998.

Will: So it was shortly after your time in China.

Helena: Yea, I came back from China in 1996. I had a daughter and I stuck it out one more year in New York and it was very tough. It was hard work, brutal lifestyle which was not very family friendly so I decided that I needed to make a change and I was lucky enough again through my boss, Jerome Cohen, who knew people at the Luce foundation, he knew I was looking for a change. So he said why don't you go over, they are looking for a program officer, why don't you go talk to them.

Will: So that is how you started with the foundation? You became a program officer in the Asian program?

Helena: That's right.

Kristen: It says that in 2008 you were appointed to the position of director. What were the types of things you had to go through to get that appointment as director from officer?

Helena: Well I worked for ten years as program officer and my boss at that time who was the director retired. They could have hired somebody from the outside but because I had been there for ten years and certainly knew the landscape of the work we were doing, I guess they had enough confidence in me to step into that role.

Will: How many officers are there?

Helena: Our total staff is twenty. We have five different programs in the office: American, art, theology, higher education, Asia women in science and engineering. So not a large group.

Will: How does the higher education aspect differ from the others? Are they different/similar?

Helena: The thread that runs through all of our programs is scholarship in one way or another. The Asia program is the only program that is geographically focused and that has to do with the history of the Luce family. The senior Luce's were missionaries in China. Henry R. Luce, their son, was born and raised in China and then he came back and made a lot of money in Time magazine and established the foundation to honor his parent's work. The family had this sense that not only did they go to be missionized in China, mainly in the area of higher education, but when they returned to the west, they really wanted to share what they had learned about Asia to Americans. So that is why we have an Asia program that has a geographic focus. But all of the other programs have some kind of thematic focus. The higher education program works primarily with higher education institutions in the United States and a lot of our other programs also work in the United States.

Will: With the Asia program I know you give scholarships out. Are there any other aspects to the program? Do you work with Asian Americans for certain projects? Do you help Asian Americans in Asia? Is there more than just giving scholarships?

Helena: The part of the program I work on is not the scholar part. We have a Luce Scholars program which sends eighteen young Americans to Asia for a year of experiential placement. They work in some kind of job but it is not an academic scholarship, it is more of a experiential, cultural placement in an organization in Asia. That is an individual fellowship program. The rest of what we do, which I direct, is grants to institutions. So colleges and universities primarily in the U.S. receive them to support teaching and research on Asia but also we do fund some

institutions in Asia, typically for collaborative work that involves America in one way or another. We do some policy work, supporting think tanks that are involved in research about Asia or in policy dialogue, what we call track two dialogues with Asian counterpart. So most of the work that we do involves collaboration and exchange with Asian partners, although most of the grants that we make are U.S. based but we see it as a two way flow which clearly involves participants from the other side. When you talk about Asian's in America, certainly many Asian Americans are involved in the projects we support. In academia, for many decades, there has been a split between Asian studies and Asian Americans studies. Asian American studies has been put into a basket of ethnic studies or cultural studies. Interestingly, those two are coming together now within scholarship because there are so many flows between the United States and Asia and there are what people call transnational Asian studies or diasporic studies because there are just so many connections between Asia and Asia America. So the grants that we give involve graduate student fellowships or other opportunities for Asian Americans as well as others.

Will: Do you see any danger in the future with the recent election of Donald Trump as President of the United States? Particularly from the view of possible isolationism and your work with Asia.

Helena: It is something that is a little bit too early to tell what will happen. I think we are concerned that if the U.S. moves toward a more isolationist position that there may be more challenges for our work as it goes back to the Bush Administration and even back to the mid-90s, there is something called Title Six which provides congressional funding to the department of state and to the department of education for international and area studies programs. Starting in the mid-90s and again in 2011, there were big congressional cuts for that funding. That funding goes to universities, usually research universities, to support national research centers on

different world areas. So it supports language training, the library work, big centers for East Asian studies and Southeast Asian studies, all different areas. The cuts were quite extreme. For example, in 2011 the cuts took about 50%. So those centers then have less money for teaching languages, supporting graduate students in doing other work, or outreach for K-12 education about Asia because there is no money. These Federal cuts were also accompanied by cuts at the state level to the state universities at least and the universities themselves have been crushed. In 2014, the amount of money was raised again but we are anticipating that Congress may again try to slash budgets like that and that could impact international studies and education. The role of a private foundation is that we can come in and try to fill gaps but we can't fill the gap of Federal funding. Our Federal budget for Asia is no more than eight million annually, and you are looking at multi million dollars that go from the Federal government to all of these teaching and research centers around the country.

Kristen: In terms of the budget cuts, I saw that in 2010 the Henry Luce foundation came out with the Luce Initiative on Asian studies and the Environment and I was wondering how the budget cuts could have affected the implementation of that and how it has affected the foundation as a whole and where it is bringing the foundation in the future?

Helena: We are a private foundation and our funding comes from an endowment that was established initially when Henry Luce gave Time magazine stock to set up the foundation. Time isn't doing so well anymore but for many years that stock was worth a lot and the endowment grew and we have an investments management that manages the fund so we don't have to fundraise at all. We rely totally on our endowment, which of course is affected by the stock market which can go up and down. We were hit really badly in 2001and again in 2008. Foundations by law have to give away about 5% of the annual average of its endowment. Our

endowment is about eight hundred million and we would need to give away roughly forty million each year. For Asia specifically, we usually have between seven and eight million. We are allowed to do that without having to pay tax on the endowment, except for a very modest task because this 5% giving is seen as a public good within the public interest. The politics can affect us through the effects of the stock market so the endowment can go up and down. The Luce Initiative on Asian studies and the Environment was a special grant competition. It's a five year competition that was aimed at trying to encourage more conversation between Asianists on campus and people in other fields that typically had less opportunity to engage in Asia stem fields and there seemed to be a need to have people talking to one another to promote more awareness of Asia among environmental studies people since Asia and the U.S. are big players for prospective climate change and other environmental issues. On the other hand, to have Asianists more aware of environmental issues. The grants for that program go to liberal arts colleges. So there endowments can be hit by the stock market but they are not recipients of the Federal funding, they don't get Title Six funding, that is only for universities. So our reason for starting that initiative was not based too much on economic issues in the sense of trying to assist with college budgets but more so to try and encourage work in more interdisciplinary work in an area that we think is important for the future.

Will: Has there been any talk of fundraising and donations? Does the foundation particularly want to stay away from that?

Helena: We are considered a private foundation as opposed to an operating foundation. Operating foundations do fundraise so I think we could do that if our board of directors felt there was a need to do so but it would probably mean changing our status.

Will: Are there any failures that you can specifically recall within the foundation?

Helena: Early on, the foundation was made up of a smaller, less professional staff. In the eighties, the foundation made an effort to professionalize the staff and have people who were subject matter experts in the work that we covered. Before, a lot of decisions were made by a smaller group of people many of whom were linked to the Luce family. We are not a family foundation, we are a private foundation so the decisions are not made by the family, they are made by our court. Also the grants early on were much smaller. As the endowment grew, there was a feeling on the board that we needed to professionalize the staff. Those of us who were hired now do have some background in the area we cover. So based off our research and interaction with people in the field, our staff will come up with ideas for initiatives that we think are important and will then make a proposal to the board. We have two types of grantmaking which are responsive grants which respond to inquires from the field. So we have three board meetings a year and we get inquiries all the time from colleges, universities, think tanks, and a wide range of non-profits because all of our grants need to go to non-profits. So we have a process here reviewing these requests. As a program staff, we take the ones that we think have the most merit and also fit within our budget and we recommend them to our board for funding. So that category of grants is responsive in that it's the field telling us what is important and that they need help achieving their goals. The other part is something that we determine is important. We set the guidelines, it's a grant competition so there's an RFP to request for proposals usually among a universe of institutions that we consider eligible for that project and then institutions apply to participate in the competition. So these two ways of grant making work in concert. The responsive grants help us know what is going on in the field and that info helps us determine what we will do in the special grant competition. One reason we were interested in Asian environment is because we were seeing this growing interest in environmental studies as well as

a growing interest in Asian studies and why not put those together. So the failures can happen along two lines. One can be that a proposal that we think is very viable might not turn out that way, sometimes for reasons beyond the control of the people who brought it to us or a change in a political situation. For example, in 1989 during the Tiananmen Square protest and the resulting crackdown there were a lot of collaborations between American and Chinese scholars that we were supporting. A few of those were not able to continue because of the politics in China. Sometimes projects fail because one of the key people in the project leaves and goes somewhere else and sometimes the idea itself may not pan out to be as viable as it was in the beginning. With respect to the special initiatives, the staff prepares a proposal to our board. The board must approve and only after that can we send out proposals and work to make those grants. Sometimes that process involves the board not liking the proposal which can result in a slowdown and a lot of work to try and convince the board to pass it. We also have another initiative on religion and international affairs which is worldwide and not related to Asia alone. It looks at the fact that in international affairs, people have traditionally not looked at religion as a factor. Partly because of the separation of church and state in American government. In religious studies, people are not really focusing on international relations. But if you look at the world today, there are so many instances when those two communities need to be talking to one another and understanding the ramifications of each other's work. This initiative took the board some time to agree to the parameters of its design.

Kristen: Are there any personal accomplishments or accomplishments of the foundation overall that particularly stood out to you and that you found the most fulfilling or successful?

Helena: The Asia and the Environment Initiative is something that I am personally excited by and proud of. It is still underway, we are just about to make the fifth year of grants. But I have

done a lot of site visits to the campuses to see the work unfold. Each grant is a four year grant so there are opportunities to see it from the start up phase through implementation and how it's affecting research, course development, student research, study abroad opportunities, and interaction with counterparts in Asia. Prior to this time we also had an initiative for five years on archeology and early history in Asia. The reason we had that was because we were hearing from the field that there were some scholars around North America who were doing work on Asian archeology but there were no strong programs for training a new generation of archaeologists to work in Asia. This is at a moment when every time you put a shovel in the ground you would recover some site with centuries of history. There's a problem with development of sites being displayed, looting, and all sorts of threats to the material that's coming out of the ground and yet this material that is being studied is telling us so much more than we knew about the history of China for example. So it seemed like there was a need to encourage more development of that field and over five years we funded ten new faculty positions and a lot of collaborative research. We funded fellowships for North Americans and Asians to spend time in each other's countries working with other archeologists. I think the fruit's of that initiative are something that I am quite proud of.

Will: When you say you visited sites, you are talking about different college campuses that are receiving these grants and implementing them into their programs. Does the foundation have any influence on what specific colleges implement that or do they propose it to you and you approve it through that process?

Helena: Once it is approved then we are fairly hands off, we defer to the institutions, they put forward a plan and we honor the fact that they are the ones on the ground and know what is happening the most. Where we might have more influence is at the proposal stage where there is

a lot of back and forth with the applicants to refine a project, ask questions so that we understand what needs to be done and based on our experience we might say that we have seen things similar to what you are proposing and ended up not working too well and you might want to tweak it a little bit. It is a conversation and after a grant is made, there is a proposal and there is this beautiful plan but in reality it is a lot messier. We might need to revise the budget or reshape it throughout the process and accommodate the needs. Typically, unless something is really going wrong, we just take a step back and let them do the work.

Kristen: Have you met any memorable people that would stick out most in your mind?

Helena: I have had the chance to meet former President Jimmy Carter who came to our office and was doing work in China through the Carter center on village elections in the 90s. The secret service had to come to our office first to check everything out. He is such a gracious and inspiring person so that was exciting. Some of the work we do involving policy, these track two dialogues I was talking about, that involve policy makers from the U.S. and Asia and different kinds of dialogue. In one of those I got to meet the former Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, and see her at work. On the other end, people in Asia who are doing incredible work. One women I met a few years ago in Burma is matida(?) who was a Burmese surgeon, writer, and human rights activist who was a prisoner of conscience. There was a military gupta in Myanmar that was in control for many decades until recently now that there are democratic elections and things are quite different. For many decades the military was pretty repressive and this surgeon wrote about her concerns about the way people were being treated and she was put in prison for six years in solitary confinement for most of that time. She said the only thing that kept her alive was the fact that she did Buddhist meditation everyday. Because of her writing she has been awarded a number of different prizes. She has now been released and is working in

Myanmar again and she is on the Pen international program which is an organization which tries to defend writers who are under attack in different countries around the world, she is a member of their board because they supported her when she was in prison and wrote letters on her behalf and advocated for her release. So she is a very inspiring woman. One other example is this last summer I met Keiko Oguda(?) who is a eighty year old survivor of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima. With our Luce scholars group in Japan this summer we went to Hiroshima and had a chance to go to the museum there after President Obama had been there and they had a display case with the speech that he had given and also two paper cranes that he had folded which represent peace. The survivor we got to meet was eight years old when the bomb dropped, she survived because her family lived a couple of kilometers outside of the epicenter. She gave us her statement about her experience at that time and then afterward. She was the most cheerful, kind individual you could imagine in spite of the fact that she had such a horrific experience.

Will: What are your personal goals for the future and goals for the foundation? Where do you see the foundation going in the future?

Helena: One initiative that we are considering right now is on Southeast Asia. We have a longstanding interest with Southeast Asia beginning in the eighties in the wake of the Vietnam war there was a lot of disappointment, anger, frustration which led to a drying up of the field within American higher education. So in the late eighties and early nineties we invested a fair amount in providing support for new faculty divisions or library development or graduate education for collaborative research to help strengthen the field of Southeast Asian studies and that made a big difference. As I mentioned earlier, there is sort of a boom bust cycle with congressional funding for area studies and because Southeast Asian languages don't get huge enrollments in universities, it is easy for universities to cut those programs. It is valuable to study

other countries, cultures, and histories for the lessons they can give us and for expanding our understanding of the rich variety of human experience. However, it comes to the attention of policymakers at moments of a crisis such as 9/11 when no one was able to speak arabic and all of a sudden there needed to be a placement of money of arabic studies and Russian studies had declined after the fall of the Soviet Union but now Russia is becoming an increasing threat so we need to train Russian speakers again. So why not just keep at it for all of the reasons beyond the policy questions. Right now is another moment where Southeast Asian studies are under some siege because of financial reasons often as well as the fact that a lot of faculty are retiring and when they retire, they are not necessarily replaced by someone else who does Southeast Asia. A foundation like ours can make a difference by offering money and therefore signaling this is important. Offers some incentives for institutions to meet you halfway and commit to investing in funding. It has been twenty years since we did our last initiative on Southeast Asia. It is beginning to become the focus of attention because of the South China sea issues and because of China's rise. As far as my own future, I have a few more years before I retire. I love my job, it is very exciting. I get to work in all different areas of social sciences, humanities etc. It is a great way to learn and feel that the funding we are providing is helping others do important work.

**The next few minutes of the interview, Ms. Kolenda asked us about ourselves and our majors in particular.

Helena (closing statement): One of the things that we have also tried to encourage with respect to working in China is women in gender studies. That was based on observations over several decades looking at where there were some interests on the side of Chinese scholars and activists for expanding their knowledge of what was happening within gender studies in the United States and in the west. After China opened up in the late seventies to more interaction with other parts

of the world. Over several decades we have provided funding for different types of collaborations between the universities in the U.S. and China on women and gender and help to try to foster the development of programs that would support this work and I just got this book, "Finding Women in the State: A Socialist, Feminist Revolution in the People's Republic of China" by Professor Wang Zheng who is at the University of Michigan. She has been a real leader in this field working with Fudan University in Shanghai, China to train women from all over China in these summer institutes that bring faculty from the West and China together to provide institutes for young Ph.D.s or graduate students or new faculty on that subject area.

Will: Do you have any advice for anyone seeking more knowledge in any academic studies?

Helena: There are so many resources online so that's a good way to explore possibilities. There are all kinds of databases that can give you information about scholarships that exist. Just talking to people that you know are doing work that intersects with your interests in these fields is a good way to learn about others, make connections, and network a little bit. Don't be shy to reach out to people.

SECTION FIVE:

Some aspects of the interview which we found to be quite interesting, were the parts where we asked miss Kolenda about the foundation and its finances. How it got money, how it decided to distribute the funds. Learning how the organization generates money through its endowment, which is completely dependant on the stock market, gave us a greater appreciation for the world market as a whole. It didn't seem like it at first, but major decisions in many countries, can have ripple effects that can damage the funding that the Luce foundation (and others like it) will receive, which in turn can hurt the great work that they do. There weren't really any aspects of the interview that we didn't find helpful. Miss Kolenda was very thorough at explaining and

answering any questions we had, and helped guide us to understanding how the foundation worked, and all the great work it did in cultivating Asian culture in the United States, and helping the newer generations have an appreciation for the rich culture that exists in Asia. We would have liked to know more about her political views and how the foundation adjusts to different political atmospheres, but the conversation was not going in that direction, and we didn't want to force an awkward question or go far off topic. Some of the other classmates presentations were really spectacular. We found some of them to be very insightful and meaningful. Presentations such as the one did by Marie, Julia, and Rubab, on Alexandra Toma. She seemed like such an interesting young woman (only 31!), with an extensive background, and a true passion for helping people. It is our wish that more women like her not only be the focus of study for students, but that they are showcased and admired for the hard work they put in each and every day. Another presentation we found to be useful was the one done by Lauren, on her grandmother, the WWII nurse. What made it so unique was that it was done on her grandmother. That showed us that, while everyone was doing their interview on some important women in U.S. Asian relations, maybe we don't have to look so far to find someone who has made a profound impact on the world. Hearing her tell the story of her grandmother, allowed us to reflect on our own lives, and our own grandmothers (and other relatives) and better appreciate the lives that they have lived. We can only hope to aspire to make a difference such as these women have.