

Touch the Sky

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Since I've been traveling some this year, I found that I generally like to do a bit of research before going somewhere, just so that if I know a little bit about the place, I figure I will appreciate it more.

I didn't get the chance to do it before our Honors trip to Peru last week, but I did manage to get a hold of Mrs. Ruth's (Wife of Dr. Dan Gall, science professor at MOC) book on Peru at the airport.

Peru is such a fascinating country, and one of the biggest draws for tourists is the old Inca ruins in the southern city of Cusco, from the Incan empire that date back to the 13 century. The Incan tourist sites have such cool names, like The Sacred Valley of the Incas, and Macchu Picchu, the Lost City. We hiked along the railroad and through tunnels, and ran down the mountains with clouds having formed just at the top of them. It was breath-taking. I felt like I was in an Indiana Jones movie.

But I also saw a side of Peru that I expected to see: poverty. It really hit me in Lima, I saw women with small children sitting on the side of the road with a basket of bread, waiting for someone to buy a piece for probably less than a quarter. It made me think of my mum. Whenever we got off our tour bus, we would be swamped with street vendors looking for a sale. Often we would get people pleading us to buy something, claiming that they had children to feed. Truth or not, it was tough to swallow.

I heard a statistic recently that about 4 billion people on our planet live on less than \$2000 a year. Of that number 40% live off about \$200 a month. When we think of poverty in this country, it can seem miniscule compared to a developing country like Peru.

As college students, we are in a really unique position to be able to help make changes for a better world. I never really liked the quote "You have to be the change you want to see in the world," it seems too simple, but there really is no other way to put it. You might not be able to educate all children in poverty, but you can educate yourself and hope that it inspires others. You might just be able to write one short article about poverty, but it is one more thing out there that might inspire someone to be better.

Have a nice day.