

STUDENT LIFE

Peeping Prerogative

By Jennifer Haight
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Snooping through your partner's stuff is something that we have all either done or have thought about doing. I've thought about it. Then I realized that I've never dated anyone who tried to hide things from me, thus I would have no reason to snoop. Is our want to snoop innate? Are we born with this sense that we have to know everything about our partners? As a collective group of people who are either in relationships or are about to be, we have this odd desire to want to know the inner, most secrets of our significant others.

We want to snoop because we are just a tad insecure. We feel that we do not know all that there is to know and without that knowledge, we are weak. As humans, we are constantly on some endless quest to know all that there is to know.

Snooping could be some weird defense mechanism. If we suspect our partners of something, instead of going straight to him or her about it, we snoop. We search for something that can quench our suspicions. And once we have that proof, we can rub it in his or her face and say, "Ha!"

However, if you do not find the proof you were looking for, you are left feeling like a jack-ass. You just invaded your boy or girlfriend's most personal things and found nothing. That could be the breaking point. Some people go looking for that drama. Some look hoping that they find nothing; they are safe with the idea that everything is OK and that their boy or girlfriend is not hiding anything.

Say that you do snoop and you do find something that could incriminate the person whose stuff you're snooping through, then what? You're stuck knowing this awful truth about someone who you don't want to know an awful truth about. You have to look at your boy or girlfriend knowing that he or she is a cross dresser, pedophile, has a strange fetish for shoelaces or collects his or her toenails.

What if you get caught snooping? That is one of the worst scenarios. You have betrayed your significant other's trust. Unless you have a really good explanation as to why you were snooping, you had better be ready to pack your bags.

I've thought about snooping in a couple cases. It was basically because he seemed perfect and I had to find one flaw, something, anything to tide my belief that he was not as perfect as he led people to think. I persevered; I did not snoop, and eventually found that flaw.

It is OK to want to know more about our significant others. Just be sure to stop yourself when you are standing in front of his or her closet, about to reach for that shoebox. You have to be prepared to handle whatever it is that you find. If it is something like bras and panties in your boyfriend's shoebox and shoelaces in your girlfriend's closet, you need to either accept it or be willing to do something about it.

Back...and better than ever

By Patrick Webber
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Comic fans and children of the 80s alike will likely be thrilled with the news: The Transformers are returning to comic print.

Released in October, the new series preview issue surprised some and excited many. The original comics, produced by Marvel in the 80s and early 90s, were for a long time some of the most popular and widely appealing comics available. Dealing with the original Generation 1 Transformers storyline, they thrived on the story of the valiant Autobots fighting their war against the evil Decepticons. Recent renewed interest in the Transformers led to a few short-lived series of new television shows and a couple short-running comic series featuring fresh, revised (some say blasphemous) storylines and characters that changed the overall mood of the franchise. A few succeeded, most failed. Fans everywhere waited for a return to the classic epic.

Wait no longer. Transformers #0 has arrived.

Now published by independent publisher IDW, the Transformers have returned to their first generation roots and classic plotline.

Written by Simon Furman, the preview of the Infiltration series manages to start you at the beginning and throw you right into the middle of it all at the same time. The Transformers aren't coming...they're

already here, and the human race doesn't even know about it yet. It starts as a younger man by the name of Hunter O'nion picks up a hitchhiking girl. Eventually she wants to know why he is driving out into the desert. He states that he is looking for something. Eventually she weasels what he is looking for out of him, and of course laughs at him when he says he's looking for giant shape shifting robots. He insists that the Earth is being secretly invaded by "extraterrestrial mechanoids."

She then asks, "And what, we just haven't noticed?"

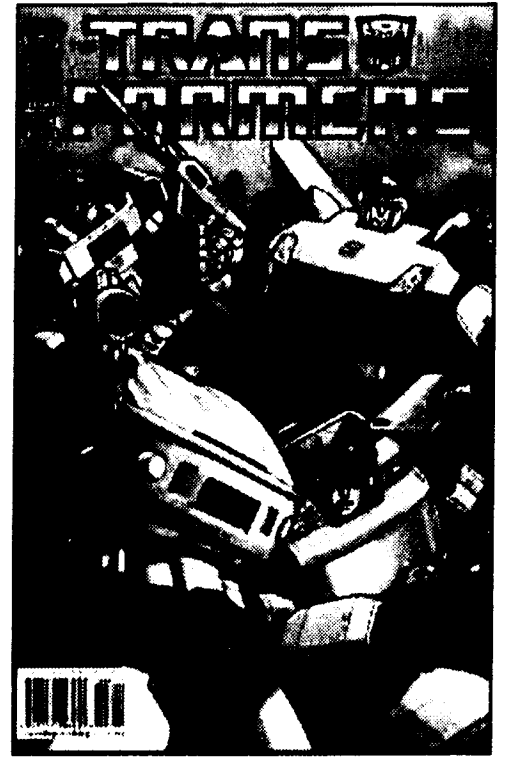
He answers with what may be a highlight of the comic for all you fans out there: "They're in disguise!"

The ridicule continues until they do run into something. Something that doesn't appreciate their curiosity.

Overall, the art and colors by EJ Su and John Rauch respectively are clear and vivid. Artwork of the actual Transformers themselves are skimpy and rare in this preview issue, leaving you thirsting for more.

The series will start in early January 2006. Until then, I suggest you go to a local comic shop or bookstore and see if there are any preview issues remaining. If you can find them, they're only 99 cents, so good luck.

Other Transformers news of interest is the recent revelation that the Transformers are coming to the big screen. That's right, Steven Spielberg himself has proclaimed that he will be the executive producer of a new live-action Transformers movie. Tom



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
One of the four limited edition covers released for the preview issue #0.

DeSanto of X-Men and X2 fame will be producing and Michael Bay will be directing, and the movie will be supported and distributed by Dreamworks. It isn't being released until July 4, 2007, so don't hold your breath.

Until then, Autobots, roll out!

One-Act Plays coming soon

By Jenna Gregory
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Behrend students are preparing for the presentation of this semester's One Act Plays. The One Acts will be presented on Dec. 2 and 3 at the Studio Theater. The time of the shows will be announced at a later time.

The One Acts are all written by Behrend students and the plots tie into the Erie area as well as the Behrend campus. Eleven Matchbox players and

two other cast actors are performing the five short plays. All of the plays are comedies, based on things like robbery, family dinner, after party effects, going to the hospital, and an audience interaction play where they help a struggling boy through a date. Each of the one acts range from six to fifteen minutes in length and are guaranteed to entertain. Michelle Vera Surovicec, one of the directors, said that the comedic performances are "definitely going to be entertaining."

All of the students involved have been working since mid

October on putting together this performance event. Megan Whietsel, another director, said that the "audience will relate a lot to what goes on on stage, especially the audience participation act." Whietsel said that the casts have had a lot of fun preparing, and she personally enjoys seeing the progress that the Matchbox Players group has made in the past years. Whietsel went on to say that if you look at campus you can "compare the development and involvement the campus has experienced from all the hard work coming

from everyone involved." Whietsel also said that she has had an especially good time working with her cast and getting to know each of them.

The next few weeks are going to be a lot of hard work for the cast, but they are energetic and up for the challenge. Reserve your Friday or Saturday night the first week of December and go check out the comedic performances of the Matchbox Players at Behrend's studio theater.

Dell vs. Macintosh What's the difference?

By Logan Stack
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Dear ASCII,

A friend of mine has a Macintosh laptop, and I have a Dell laptop. What exactly is the difference between them and why can't he run programs I send him?

-Friend-of-Mac

Dear Friend,

There are only two things that are different between your laptop and a Mac: hardware and software. These two differences are why Windows programs don't run on Mac OS.

Macintosh OS X is a piece of software, just like Windows. They are both a type of program called an Operating System, or OS for short. The OS is what lets you run more than one program at a time, lets you plug in a USB key without reconfiguring your computer, and do other such vital tasks. Windows and Mac OS do these tasks differently, so Mac OS doesn't know how to tell a program written for Windows to start, stop, save files, etc.

What's different on hardware is the processor; all the other hardware is the same. Your friend's Macintosh and your computer use the same type of hard drive, memory, video card, etc. The CPU is the brain of the computer. When you use the calculator to find the square root of two, it's the CPU that figures out the answer.

Your Windows computer uses an Intel or AMD processor. Collectively these processors are called x86 processors, named after Intel's 386/486 line of processors (from about 15 years ago.) Programs written for Windows 3.1 on a 386 can run on the latest Intel Pentium 4 or AMD Athlon 64 processors. The Macintosh uses something completely different, called a Power PC processor.

You can't run a Windows program (written for an x86 processor) on a Power PC processor. The processors speak completely different languages. It's as though the Power PC speaks Japanese, and the x86 speaks French. The game's instructions are in French, so the poor Japanese kid can't read the instructions.

Neither processor speaks anything resembling English. The instructions these processors are reading are strings of either thirty-two or sixty-four 1's and 0's. It's not something most humans can read. In fact, it's rare for even computer science majors to be able to read any of it.

All is not lost though! There are special programs called emulators which create a fake environment for programs. You can get a Windows emulator for Mac OS. This emulator fakes out the program, making it think it's running on an x86 processor and Windows OS. Your friend can run Windows programs inside the emulator. You can also run Macintosh programs on your Windows computer using a Macintosh emulator.

Unfortunately, emulators slow things down. They are like someone who reads the French instructions, spends some time with a French-to-Japanese dictionary, and then tells you what the instructions say.

Emulators will become much faster in the next few months. Sometime early next year, Macintosh will switch to the Intel x86 processor. This means emulators will only need to translate the software, not the hardware which makes them much faster.

Do you have a computer question? Then Ask ASCII! Send an e-mail to ascii@psu.edu with "Ask ASCII" in the subject line, and you may have it answered in next week's paper.

"The High Cost of Low Prices"

By Heidi Weismiller
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Thousands of people run through Wal-Mart's doors across the country every day for the unbelievably low prices. They pack their carts full and head to the checkout. There are always smiles on the faces of the people who are leaving because they just got great deals that they know can be found nowhere else.

What all of these people don't know is the lengths Wal-Mart will go to to obtain these prices. Also, people who are not directly affected do not see the destruction of smaller companies and individuals across America by Wal-Mart's policies and tactics.

In order to unveil the atrocities of this giant, Robert Greenwald has directed and produced a documentary entitled "Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Prices." The film was released on Nov. 4 and is now available for purchase on WalMartMovie.com. As part of the premiere week, more than 7000 locations across the country have shown or will be showing the film free of charge.

The Screen Visions Film Club here at Behrend heard about the film and decided to take part. "I heard about it on CSPAN in May," said film club president Chris Hvizdak. The film club has two main goals: to bring movies to campus, and to offer open discussions about films.

Hvizdak thought that this documentary film fit their criteria. The film club is willing to entertain any ideas that will promote information or discussion. He also said, "[The club] agreed on the message and we wanted to share it." Hvizdak said it is "encouraging to see a strong and vital movement towards the issue," and he felt it should be available to the public.

The screening will begin at 6 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 18 in room 117

of the Reed Union Building, and it is open to the public. There will be a discussion following the film about Wal-Mart's effect on the nation and all are encouraged to share their opinions. "We have invited question and answer sessions in the past and they have worked out well," said Hvizdak. He believes that the Wal-Mart issue is a heated topic so the audience should be pretty involved.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

This film is an in-depth documentary into the lives of many individuals affected by Wal-Mart. Greenwald wanted to tell the stories of the people across the world who are struggling to survive because of Wal-Mart. Greenwald also had the opportunity to speak with current and former Wal-Mart employees, managers and executives. Through these people, the film reveals the inner workings of the retail Goliath. The film is not all heartbreaking stories. Some are motivational, such as the story of one California town that fought against the building of a Wal-Mart and won!

The film does not completely bash Wal-Mart, it simply shows the viewers how it hurts rather than helps in the struggle to remain open and competitive. The film is very informative and filled with facts. It is 98 minutes long and free to everyone. There are only 200 seats available so those interested are encouraged to get there early. Greenwald believes that although this film is not an answer to the Wal-Mart problem, it does shine a light on the problem. He hopes that with the large amount of people across America that will experience

this film, they will be encouraged to exercise their rights as a democracy and help the country fight against Wal-Mart.

Hvizdak also said that the Website is a great place to get more information about the topic. "It is a grassroots activist kinda Website," he said. He encouraged those wanting to learn more to check it out.