

PERSPECTIVES

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Don't forget about fall

By Jennifer Juncosa
perspectives editor
jdj5061@psu.edu

Fall is by far my favorite season. After a hot summer, the best feeling is breaking out the courdorays, boots and vests. It's cold out, but a sweatshirt or vest is all you need. If you go outside to play football, a long sleeve shirt is even acceptable. Fall is when you have "raking parties" with neighbors, drink hot apple cider, and eat any other product made with the fresh apples you picked.

The only problem is that fall is usually overshadowed by winter. It has only felt like fall for a few short weeks and there were snowflake sightings in the surrounding area on Tuesday.

Before the start of October, HBO was showing *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*. That was just unacceptable. It wasn't even October yet. As if it couldn't get worse, HBO is now playing *Deck The Halls* on a regular basis.

I love Christmas as much as the next person and I can't wait for the snow, the lights, the happiness, and the break from school. But leave my fall alone.

Fall is for my other favorite holidays: Halloween and Thanksgiving. The fun of Halloween is ruined if it's snowing. What's the point of dressing up if your costume is hidden under a jacket?

Now, snow doesn't necessarily ruin

my Thanksgiving but I would still like Christmas and winter to back off. My favorite thing to do on Thanksgiving is to go outside and play football with my brothers. Would you want to play football in a few inches of snow? I don't. I won't be dirty and tired; I'll be muddy, wet and freezing.

Being in college, I appreciate the little breaks I get to spend at home with my family. It's sad though: I have yet to get over not being around for the pre-Christmas things like baking cookies and pies or decorating the tree. I appreciate that the mall puts up every Christmas decoration up a few days before Thanksgiving, but the day after it's practically shoved down your throat and you're being run over by shoppers. I'm all about getting as much as I can while I am home, but the day after Thanksgiving, I'm still suffering from the turkey hangover. Let things settle before I'm swarmed with Christmas.

The worst part is that Christmas isn't even waiting for Black Friday; it's taking over my Halloween. I love you Christmas, but back off.

I think it's important to enjoy each season and holiday without rushing to the next thing. They lose their flavor if you do that. It's bad enough that snow is coming earlier and earlier each year. Leave my fall alone.

Who are you calling a socialist?

By Christopher Brown
contributing writer
cmb5313@psu.edu

After months of scattered and uneven messages on the campaign trail, John McCain and Sarah Palin have finally found their voice, or at least that of "Joe the Plumber." Like "Remember the Maine" and other rallying cries of yesteryear, "Remember Joe" has become a central theme of the campaign, a rallying cry to incite the masses, but devoid of any substantive points.

In his weekly radio address, McCain said his opponent's plan "sounded a lot like socialism." At a campaign stop in Nevada, Palin agreed, "Joe didn't buy it... he said that sure sounded like socialism." However, not only are they misrepresenting Obama and Democrats, this tactic represents their latest attempt to smear and caricaturize Barack Obama. Last week McCain and Palin called him a terrorist. This week they called him a socialist. Maybe next week their campaign plans on revealing to the American public that Barack Obama is actually black. *October surprise anyone?*

By John McCain's own standards, both he and his running mate, Sarah Palin, are socialists. After all, it was Palin who raised windfall profits taxes on oil companies and "spread the wealth" through checks made out to Alaskan citizens. And it was the John McCain of 2000 whose response to a question about progressive taxes was, "We feel obviously that wealthy people can afford more."

Then why make these unfounded and baseless accusations? Because Palin and McCain know their campaign has been reduced to nothing more than seedy insinuations and rabble-rousing rhetoric. McCain and Palin are all killer and no filler.

Over the years we have come to accept a certain level of governmental intervention. The few times this country has edged closer

to pure capitalism, the results have been less than beneficial (see: the Great Depression).

In fact, we benefit from government redistribution every single day of our lives, whether we realize it or not. Few Behrend students would be able to attend college without a progressive tax system in place or programs that "spread the wealth." If you receive federal financial aid, you are a beneficiary of the government "spreading the wealth." The government collected taxes from people and redistributed their income to help pay for your education. Does that make you a socialist?

Like McCain and Palin's past tactics, this one will probably fail. Rhetorically, socialism lacks the gravitas it once had. Few students lived with a fear of a Soviet invasion and, fortunately, did not have to live through McCarthyism. Calling someone a socialist just doesn't have the same impact today.

Furthermore, "Joe the Plumber" did not say anything we didn't already know. Obama has been saying the same thing about taxes since the beginning of his campaign. He wants to give tax cuts to the middle class and raise taxes on incomes over \$250,000.

McCain's argument seems horribly out of touch with the reality many Americans face. This past week the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) released a devastating report on income inequality. It found that in the U.S. income inequality has widened by more than 20% since the mid-1980s. The only OECD countries to score better were Turkey and Mexico - not exactly welcome company.

Additionally, the OECD report found that there isn't just a growing gap between the rich and poor; the U.S. is one of the few countries where there is a growing gap between the middle class and rich. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities found that, in 2006, average incomes for the

bottom 90% of the income bracket gained just \$430. Income inequality is as high today as it was in 1928. The specter of a rising oligarchy hovers above the United States.

Political scientists, sociologists and economists have all identified the pitfalls of widening income inequality. These include declining political engagement, rising poverty, stymied social mobility, increased crime, and rampant corruption.

Conservatives like to talk about progressive taxes that punish performance, but what about the poor urban or rural family who, without any prospect of social mobility, don't even try? According to the Economic Mobility Project, "36 percent of children born to parents in the bottom wealth quintile remain in the bottom as adults." For many, the American Dream will never be a reality. Just a dream.

Are higher taxes on the rich and lower taxes for the rest of the country the sole answer? No, but it's a start. And McCain's tax plan, an extension of the Bush tax cuts, would be an unfortunate step backwards, a further redistribution of wealth to the lucky few. In contrast, Obama's economic policies and educational policies point the way forward. On education, where McCain has no plan for making higher education, including technical schools and universities, more affordable, Obama proposes giving \$4,000 towards education if a person agrees to work in the public sector or community service, making a solemn vow to guarantee a college education for anyone who does community service.

We're left with a choice on Nov. 4. We can either support a candidate more interested in scoring points with tag-lines and sound bites and ignoring reality, or we can support a candidate willing to address the problems of the middle class that have been ignored for the last eight years.

What girls look for in a guy

By Alyssa Weinstein
staff writer
abw5053@psu.edu

Every day, a guy I know will ask me what girls are looking for in a guy. Apparently I am supposed to know the answer to that question because I am female. It took me awhile to figure out the answer because I wasn't even aware of what I would qualify as "the perfect guy."

Trust me guys, all girls have a list. They like guys who are tall or medium height; bulky or skinny; blonde, brunette or redheaded. They like guys that listen to country, rap, or rock. Whatever it may be, physically and personality wise, that we look for, there are always going to be things that every girl wants in a guy.

This is what I have so far.

First of all, we do not want the perfect guy. I believe that there is no perfect guy, just the perfect guy for you. So know what you are looking for. All of my friends make fun of me because I won't date a guy under six foot. It isn't because I am discriminating, I just prefer height.

We want you to notice things. We don't pick what to wear by accident. We don't pick our perfume by accident either. And if you like our hair up or down, straight or curly - look closely - we wear it the way you like it when you are around. So why don't you notice? If you do notice, say that you do.

Girls like guys that are spontaneous. We want you to show up at our door, unannounced, just to say hello, to hug us or kiss us. Just go a little out of your way to show us that we are worth it. We aren't looking for a ring - just attention.

We also like guys that listen. I am not talking about listening while they multi-task, saying "Yeah. Uh huh. Gotcha." That doesn't work. We want you to look

at us when we are telling you something, and engage in conversation. There is nothing more boring than a guy who doesn't talk back.

Tell us how you feel - don't dance around it. Guys, you say girls are hard to read? Well, you are too. We like it when you spell things out for us. We don't want to have to guess what you are thinking. We don't like to be wrong, and when we are, it just makes the whole situation worse.

We also want to be able to trust you. We want to know that when you tell us something it is real. So how does one know if they can trust someone? Get to know them. You don't need to start dating someone just because they are attractive. Being friends first is never a bad thing.

The guy that I like is one of my friends. Will it work out? Maybe it will, maybe it won't, but who knows. As long as people give it a chance, you never know what the future may bring. When I decided that my crush was worth liking, it wasn't because of how he looks. Granted, he isn't unattractive, but it was because he is what I am looking for at this point in my life.

Girls, if you cannot find a guy who meets all of your needs, don't be with him. It isn't worth it. We are still young. There will be time to find someone. Just make sure it is more than someone you want to be with; it should be someone you need to be with. When you start looking, a good place to search is the friend zone.

Guys, we don't want you to be something you aren't. We like you because of who you are. Just try a little harder to figure out who we are.



Bored? Entertain yourself

By Jeff Kramer
staff writer
jsk5161@psu.edu

Hi. My name is Jeff Kramer, and I'm from Vermont. We do cool things in Vermont, like hang out, listen to Dispatch, listen to Phish, hang out, and swim. This column is for all the flat-landers from Pennsylvania to help them understand how awesome it is in the Green Mountain State. Things are green, it snowed this week, and the leaves are all changing.

In Vermont, some people think there isn't much to do. We find ways to entertain ourselves. Some say it sucks, but what are they looking for? You can find people unsatisfied with their situation who say, "there's nothing to do here." Most of the time, there is something to do, but people are either too lazy or aren't creative enough to think of something.

What those people don't realize is that what they are looking for isn't out there. You have to make your own situation. My 9th grade friend told me that only the bored get bored. He's right. There's always something to do, even if it looks like there's absolutely nothing. I stay on campus every weekend and find something to do.

Here is an example of an invented activity: a college in my town hosted the strangest event I've seen in a while. Middlebury College, a small-town school that is so prestigious it turned down Ivy League status, had a day of quidditch. Like, Harry Potter quidditch.

In 2005, a few students decided to take the rules out of the books, write up a set of rules for real life, and put out fliers. The whole town showed up. Teams put on capes, tossed around dodgeballs, and ran around with brooms in between their legs. The snitch was a distance runner

from the track team dressed in gold with a stuffed sock hanging out of the back of his shorts. The snitch and the two seekers could run at the beginning of the match and go anywhere on campus, and they did. If you search for "quidditch Middlebury" on YouTube, there's a 10 minute video. It sounds silly on paper, but when you watch it, it's totally serious. Look up the video, you won't be disappointed. Maybe that's just me; I love Harry Potter. Don't judge me.

Next time you're bored and complaining about nothing to do, find something. Learn to play hackey sack, get into some new bands, do something you've been meaning to do, install StumbleUpon on your internet browser, go for a jog, or read Wikipedia. Maybe I'm just easy to entertain because I have giant bouts of Attention Deficit Disorder, but most people I hang out with share my sentiment.

Beacon Thumbs Up



- Having a Halloween costume
- Pop punk
- Football
- Meat lovers + Buffalo sauce

Submission Guidelines:

Letters should be limited to 350 words and commentaries 700 words. The more concise the submission, the less we will be forced to edit it for space concerns and the more likely we are to run it.

The Beacon does not publish anonymous letters. Please include your major, faculty or administration position, and semester standing. Deadline for any submission is 3 p.m. Thursday afternoon for inclusion in the Friday issue.

The Behrend Beacon reserves the right to edit any submissions prior to publication. Please keep complaints as specific as possible.

Email submissions to jdj5061@psu.edu or drop them off at the Beacon office.

Beacon Thumbs Down



- No Halloween costume yet
- No apple cider at Peet's
- Fish in Lake Erie
- Snowflake sightings