

Too Cool for School:

Ahmed Abdalla

Contributing Writer

A week before the start of the fall semester started, I drove to Best Buy to get my first Apple product – yes, the iPad. If you know anything about the iPad, you are either unsure what to make of it, or you are strongly against it. There are a few iPad fans out there, with the majority of them being Apple die-hards. If you are unfamiliar with the iPad you must live in a hole. It is the most successful tablet device on the market – not to mention the only one.

It is a lightweight computer-like device that is capable of surfing the Internet and reading eBooks, magazines and newspapers. You can play games, watch movies or even stream TV through applications (apps). Apps are the heart of the iPad; they are used to access the games, books, and videos you want to enjoy.

I started using my iPad for school by downloading two of my course books, an agenda application, and running some potentially malicious code to jail break the device. The iPad is not a gadget you can enjoy much unless jail

broken. Otherwise, you would need a lot of money to buy apps from the App Store. At the time, I had given up having a TV in my room for an iPad.

I did not keep my iPad for long. I returned the device and collected my money because even though I was in love with the gadget, I came to realize it was not worth it – not now at least. I will share my experience with the iPad, but I am not trying to persuade you to like it or dislike it.

I had two of my course books and I was working on downloading the final three. After using the device with the two books that were already on it, I realized this was not the same experience as reading a traditional book. It was worse.

eBooks are lacking in comparison to traditional books. I could not skim through an eBook as I could a paper book. I couldn't look back and forth between pages in a chapter, because only one or two pages could be displayed at a time. With engineering homework, where the problems are in the back of the chapter and examples and solutions are in

the middle of the chapter, I needed to flip back and forth. I did find it useful that I could do a "CTRL + F" and search for certain text in a page, chapter, or book.

Engineering homework is mostly equations and formulas, so the ability to find text on a page was not very useful for me.

I tried out two agenda applications on the iPad, "iStudiez Pro" and "Pocket Agenda HD." They definitely replaced a paper planner. iStudiez Pro was a classes-only planner without club or extracurricular event support. Pocket Agenda HD was more of a real world, day-to-day task list maker with a calendar. With Pocket Agenda you can pull up your calendar manually or through a sync, and you can get alerts for commitments or incomplete tasks for the day.

The iPad was a great productivity tool, but I had reasons for returning it. I returned the iPad because of its un-productive features that I often found myself unable to avoid. Google during class is more distracting than texting. Having access to tons of games and web content over a super

fast Internet is just bad news for your GPA. Every time I came back to my room I pulled out the iPad to entertain myself. I would watch a movie before going to sleep, read some articles when I woke up in the morning, and play a game in the afternoon. During a lecture that was dry I would pull out my iPad – given that it is a sleek and easily hidden distraction – and download new applications to fuel my desire for constant entertainment. Not to mention, every time I pulled it out in class I would have people looking at it in awe, wanting to touch it or play with it. It really is a cool looking gadget that is hard to resist.

The iPad is not a bad device. It had a few shortfalls when it came to academic use but it was not marketed for educational purposes. If you have money to throw around, I would definitely recommend it as a must-have gadget. You will continuously be amazed by all the new conveniences your life was missing now that you have the Internet in your hands.

Why PETA is pathetic

 LAURA RUPPEL
Staff writer

While the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) serves the community promoting animal rights and equality, there are various reasons as to why I would never become a member of their organization.

As they triumph with 30 years worth of success stories and victories, I strongly disagree with the methods they have relied on in order to achieve those outcomes. I do, in fact, use their website as a recourse for information and research; however, I find their approaches and tactics have a history of being highly aggressive and controversial.

One of their most infamous procedures is protest campaigning. PETA claims to "maintain a creed of nonviolence and does not advocate actions in which anyone, human or nonhuman, is injured;" however, on the contrary, there have been confirmed reports of members ruining fur coats with

paint and hurling tofu pies at animal abuse proponents. I most definitely consider such destructive, barbaric behavior to be physically abusive.

PETA justifies this obnoxious behavior by claiming they "rely largely on 'free' advertising through media coverage," meaning they need to pull ridiculous and outrageous stunts in order to get attention. These dramatic pleas for attention are absolutely preposterous.

To make up for the law restricting physical abuse, PETA supporters resort to verbal abuse. Located on the organization's online store is a vast array of clothing available for purchase that are negative toward well-known businesses and corporations participating in and contribute to animal cruelty.

The slogans boasted on t-shirts regarding companies include: "Kentucky Fried Cruelty," "McCruelty, I'm hatin' it" and "Give BP the Bird."

PETA also sells t-shirts with libelous phrases toward the actions of everyday, average

people, such as: "Dogfighters are Cowardly Scum," "Screw Dog Breeders: Adopt – Don't Buy," "Mean People Breed Dogs" and "Bad People Wear Fur."

I find PETA to be hypocritical in that McDonald's agreed to comply with their requests to enhance their treatment of animals and yet they still sell clothing attempting to destroy their reputation and decrease their business.

Also, in 2007, PETA ignited a campaign against Mary Kate and Ashley Olsen for wearing fur and incorporating it into their fashion clothing line. This series of personal attacks includes selling t-shirts depicting the twins as deformed, blood-covered monsters resembling zombies and dubbing the Olsen sisters the "Trolls Twins."

Posters were printed that read "Fur is Worn by Beautiful Animals and Ugly People" and pictured the exaggerated, unflattering illustrations of the girls. These posters were placed around the Olsen girls' homes and on their Walk of

Fame star located in Los Angeles.

In addition, they created a video game on their website still played today where people can dress up "Hairy-Kate" and "Trashley" in blood-soaked, fur articles of clothing and accessories. People can also watch a video entitled "Full House of Horrors" in which the opening credits of an episode of "Full House" are manipulated. To this day, PETA continuously refers to the girls "Hairy-Kate" and "Trashley Trolls," encouraging the public to do so as well.

PETA should have tolerance for views and perspectives that differ. The organization should make their beliefs known while accepting those of others rather than practice extremely vicious behavior and use every form of abuse known to man to make personal attacks and bring others down. Being so intolerant, one could argue that PETA does just as much harm as they do good.

Athletes test positive

 BRANDON BOYD
opinion editor

The Tour de France (and sports in general) has itself in quite a situation.

Alberto Contador, the 2010 winner, tested positive for a banned substance. His reason? He ate tainted meat.

Yeah. Sure he did. We've seen a recent history of this: recently, Brian Cushing of the Houston Texans blamed his positive test on "Overtrained Athlete Syndrome."

That's the medical term for "I'm lying."

Seriously, how hard is it to admit that you have done something illegal?

There was likely no tainted meat. There was likely no overtraining. These two men needed to confess to what they did, rather than make up embarrassing reasons as to why they tested positive.

Brian Cushing is a player on my favorite team, and I still have respect for his game. He also does charitable acts off the field. However, I have to

admit that I lost a little bit of respect for him after hearing his story of "overtraining."

The same goes for Contador. I don't watch any cycling – if I want to watch people ride bikes, I'll look outside.

But to hear another cyclist test positive only to come up with another lame excuse is shameful.

Perhaps sports shouldn't do drug testing. After all, ignorance is bliss. We look up to these guys, only to see them stammer over their predetermined lines and lies for why they tested positive for a banned substance.

I never find myself looking up to politicians, singers, or other famous people – I look up to athletes. Maybe it's the fact that I'm simply average at every sport I play, especially compared to those who are actually good.

Let's hear some truth from these guys. Better yet, don't cheat.

I have to stop writing now. Wouldn't want to risk Overtrained Writer Syndrome.

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