

OPINION

A minute with Mauti



By **LISA MAUTI**
Columnist
LMM355@PSU.EDU

Before I start into my little spiel, let me first say that the title will make sense in the end. Have no fear. Here we are as Americans, and damn proud of it. We wave our colors and pledge our allegiance.

All this even after we are called so many names by other countries and attacked in more ways than one. On September 20, Venezuelan President, Hugo Chavez, in so many words referred to President Bush as a devil and that there was a stench in the room—a room where Bush stood a day earlier.

Here's the thing, a lot of people in the world at the present moment have a huge stigma about the US and make a lot of nasty comments publicly (i.e.: President Chavez). We as Americans know in what and where our country is involved for the most part. Some of us like what is going on, and some of us don't.

That is an issue one will find with any group of people, be it a country, religion, or club. Even though we don't all back the decisions that Bush has made/is making, we are all Americans behind Bush. Some of us have taken the penalty, the biggest penalty for that matter, but when other countries/people say things about the US that are not the nicest things, we don't go out and burn their flags. We learn from things that happen.

Along similar terms, just a little while ago there was an incident with the Pope and a quote. Right afterwards, there was an apology, and a nun got killed. My friends and I were sitting in a computer lab when I spotted the story on CNN.com. I told them how I didn't understand why a nun had to die and threats were being made to everyone that believed in a cross. I say, believe in what you want to believe in. It's your birthright.

My friends and I were discussing how killing people comes into the equation, when the girl sitting in the row behind us said under her breath how sad it was that some people were so naïve.

Now excuse me, but who is she to call us naïve because we were questioning the killing of a nun because of a quote. All I am trying to do is to understand. I'm not naïve to the fact that people are going to do what they believe in. I also know that religion is a sensitive subject, but I just don't understand why people have to think that only one way is the right way. We were trying to understand why people make threats or burn flags. We were trying to be open to their point of view.

So to the girl in the computer lab, it is naïve to just sit back and let things happen without questioning. It is naïve to not want to try and understand why people believe in killing innocent people that belong to a group that was targeted because of one person's words.

It is naïve to hear about a nun being killed because of her religion, or for that matter, anyone, innocently being killed and not think it's bad or not to ask why it happened.

So please, the next time you want to call me naïve, really say it to me without looking away when I look at you in response. That way, we can discuss our opinions like adults in a debate or discussion. You didn't hurt my feelings. You just gave me something to write about.

Don't be afraid to question things. You don't always have to agree with everyone. That's why we're humans.

CULTURALLY INEPT A BI-MONTHLY PONTIFICATION

By **OSCAR BEISERT**
Columnist
ODB102@PSU.EDU

In the past two months, I have suffered a great devastation due to a deluge of unfortunate circumstances. However, rather than force you to endure such a score of violin music, I will simply tell the tale of one particular occurrence.

During the last year, I have been in service as an employee of the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA)—which is an Agency connected to the Commonwealth by legislative ties. After procuring a job only two weeks after my arrival in Pennsylvania, I was employed from August to December in the Loan Consolidation Department, and later by Graduate and Professional Services as a call center representative.

Concurrently, upon my initial application to the Agency, I had submitted my resume for a position in the Management Associate Program. This is an experience designed to prepare entry-level employees for a career in management.

I started this position in January with great enthusiasm that such a post would intrigue not only the body, but also the mind. It soon came to my attention that the

program lacked organization and leadership, and that it was led by a duo of milquetoasts.

The program entailed a series of rotations that exposed me to various aspects of the Agency. While the individuals and departments I experienced were positive attributes of the program, I was able to learn much about the organization. This could have been strengthened, but little leadership was given to the hosting departments.

Fortunately, several of my rotations allowed me to meet great leaders within the Agency and because of this and the relationships I established, my evaluations were positive. After about seven and a half months, we were given our sixth month evaluation. At this time, I was told that I was doing my job to the expectations of the Agency, and was even complimented by my center representative.

During the summer, I was pinched from a Friday meeting at which time I was taken by two individuals, one of whom was never introduced to me, into a room with an open glass door in the main corridor, where I was interrogated by a police officer. The public servant had been asked to question an antique veil that had been found in my lost bag. The object was used during the 19th century for smelling salt

and cologne. The police officer questioned as to whether or not the object was drug paraphernalia. After much toil and being berated, he tested the object to find that the accusations were clearly false. After several individuals had inquired about my arrest, which never occurred, I asked that the Agency render a memo for my file that would delineate the event. My wishes were never granted and I was told that the event occurred to protect the Agency.

After being asked even more about an alleged arrest, my vigor about the defamation of character was regenerated.

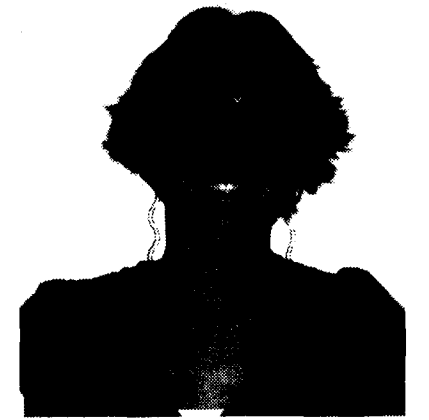
In August, my fellow management associates and I were asked to prepare comments for a meeting with the Executive Vice Presidents and the CEO. The premise of the meeting was to obtain feedback about the program. All of our comments were approved prior to the meeting by our supervisor. I spoke very briefly on the subjects of accountability, seriousness of projects, and breaking down silos within the program. At the conclusion of the meeting, the CEO recollected a few of our comments. He specifically agreed with my comment regarding accountability. After the meeting my supervisor informed me that I had done very well.

Three weeks later, after refusing to resign, I was terminated for my lack of diplomacy in this meeting. This was said to have come from the CEO's instruction and was cited by the contention that I had failed to establish positive working relationships. This contradicted my positive evaluations and the cake and ice cream I had been served at the time I left my last department. While I begged for further training and a chance to improve my diplomacy, I was defrocked of my ties to the Agency without hesitation.

Unfortunately, all my message will really convey to you is to keep your mouth shut, smile, and make a milquetoast of yourself. It shows that within even the largest Agencies one can be fired for little to no reason. The example herein should allow you to see and possibly understand the reality that is before you in the modern workplace.

I have not forgotten the millions of dollars PHEAA provides in grant monies for students and will not forget those who made my experience a positive one. I will instead decry the large bonuses of the Agency leaders while those of the union are forced to live paycheck to paycheck. I will remember my firing not as they wish, but, instead, as a travesty of leadership, training, and professional.

President's Corner



By **ARIEL O'MALLEY**
SGA President
AEO5002@PSU.EDU

That's right folks; it is time for THON again. It is time to dig deep into our pockets to give as much as we can possibly afford to THON to help children with cancer.

THON is the biggest philanthropy project run by university students in the entire world (last year over \$4.2 million was raised). Everything at the actual THON dance is organized and run by students; from security to food to entertainment. Every little detail is planned and put into motion by Penn State students.

This year the THON committee of Penn State Harrisburg has all sorts of good events planned to allow you to help out and support THON.

One event that is going on right now is the t-shirt sale. You can buy a THON t-shirt for 10.00 in the lobby starting at the beginning of October. If there is no one at the table when you wish to purchase please contact Craig Dewalt (CAD281@psu.edu) and he will be more than happy to hook you up. There will also be THON bracelets on sale, canning events, pledge booking, a date auction, and much, much more.

So make sure when you are out at events on campus to keep an eye out for cans with the THON logos on them to make a donation. Also, if you would like to take more action and help with the events (or if you have some fundraising ideas of your own) contact Craig Dewalt and join the THON committee.

Though THON is a great event, many of the commonwealth campuses are feeling a bit of a let down at the moment. It seems as though University Park has come to decision that none of the commonwealth campuses may host their own mini-THON. Seeing as we are a commonwealth campus we are only allowed to send two dancers up for the main event. Because of this small amount of representation we were hoping to host our own smaller version of the THON even so as to allow more of the Penn State Harrisburg community to have a chance to be involved.

THON is by far one of the most amazing events that you as a student of Penn State University will ever have the chance to partake in. It is an opportunity to help children with cancer as well as their families. An unbelievable amount of work, time, and heart goes into the planning and running of THON and it is all worth it!

I encourage each and every one of you to take the time to get involved in THON this year. Whether that means that you drop your spare change in one of the THON cans or if it means that you go out and stand in the cold and collect money from the community. Every little bit helps and YOU have the opportunity to make a difference.

So please get out there and do what you can to help. And when you are outside in the middle winter absolutely freezing, remember everything you do is

"For The Kids!"

For more on THON or to get involved, contact
Craig Dewalt
(cad281@psu.edu)

Osman's window into the world

By **OSMAN ABDALLA**
Columnist
OAA106@PSU.EDU

The newly declassified document by the Bush administration shows that the US invasion of Iraq created new ground and aspirations for Jihadists, and the existence of US troops in Iraq is fueling more anti-American movements to come.

The document is called the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE). A copy of the document can be obtained by following the link: http://www.dni.gov/press_releases/Declassified_NIE_Key_Judgments.pdf

According to Yahoo News, the declassification was done because parts of the document appeared in the New York Times, and the Bush Administration resorted to declassify the document alleging

that they don't want parts of the document to be taken out of context.

The document, dated 2004, raises the question of did the Intelligence system knew these facts only by 2004? So, the Bush Administration sends a giant military to Iraq without being able to foresee the consequences.

These generals and intelligent officers did not have any clue about the social processes may occur in Iraq due to the invasion.

Throughout the history of invasions and imperialism, it has become evident that no one nation can fully occupy a second nation without the consent of the people in the second nation.

As we see in Iraq, people are not afraid of the strong American military. As a matter of fact, they prefer to die than live occupied. This

has been clear through the unsettling insurgency since the invasion of Iraq and suicides bombing that untrained Iraqis perform everyday.

These military generals think of war as a win through what they perceive from their power and technology, but they forget the most important part; the people they fight have a will, regardless of their power or technical ability.

In my opinion, this is one of the results of separating decision from analysis, and it has a devastating result. An administration can't make a decision with a thorough political, economical, and social analysis.

What was neglected here was the social analysis that provided information about the social processes that are likely to occur due to the invasion. If that analysis was taken into consideration, the

insurgency and civil war could have been clear before the invasion, and that may have prevented the whole from taking place.

The NIE proves the immorality of this whole war system through the officials' impaired social imagination.

To make my point more clear, if these generals, including the Commander in Chief, knew there would be a civil war in Iraq two years after the invasion, would they have invaded Iraq any way?

If the answer is no, then invading Iraq was completely wrong and immoral, and we need to pull the troops and begin repairing Iraq.

If the answer is yes, then either there are more classified reasons for the invasion or these generals, including the Commander in Chief, are incompetent to lead.

Time to make new friends

By **SHANA DERSTINE**
Staff Reporter
SKD5029@PSU.EDU

It is known that as a new student in college, one has to learn a great amount about the campus, and the people on it, in a short amount of time. Whether one is willing to admit it or not, deep down, the most important piece of the "going to a new school" situation is how to make friends – how to survive socially. This is the most crucial skill to learn for success at a new school simply because if you have this down, the rest will fall into place naturally, or so it seems.

There are several key factors to determining just how easy this process will be: living on campus or commuting, female or male, race, the school one's currently enrolled in, and what one is willing to do to make friends. Elaboration is only necessary for some of these topics.

In general, it is easier for men to get along than women. Most would agree that the reasons for that are that girls tend to make deeper connections, and with that comes drama. Men, on the other hand, make surface connections, and unlike women, keep them there – on the surface. Therefore they are faced with little to no drama at all.

Believe it or not, race does play a large role in how easy it is to make friends. Now, this only applies to schools that are predominately white. In such schools there are going to be other races – minorities. For these minorities, it is surprisingly easy to make friends – within their race. When a minority can feel how outnumbered they are, they tend to stick together, and bring in as many other people in their race as possible to feel less isolated. This phenomenon is ironic because in creating this network of people, one is in fact isolating oneself further. This has been learned through experience and observation. For the majority, it is fairly easy to find someone else who shares similar interests, not just skin color, seeing as there are more people to choose from.

Of course the school one attends makes a huge difference in the way one will make friends. If one goes to a "party school" then they will expect to go to parties to meet people. If one goes to a more serious school, then they will most likely meet people in academic settings, and interest groups.

Certainly, what one is willing to do to make friends plays the largest role of all. Think about it. If one is not willing to do what it is that people do at their school to make and keep friends, then it is going to be considerably harder for you. That leads to the discussion of what people on this campus do to make new friends.

Here at Penn State Harrisburg, it has become disturbingly clear that many students feel the best, perhaps the only way to have fun and enjoy each other's company is to be drunk or high. This is not all of the students; it's just a certain group – the new students. The number of new students who think this way is

a high one. They don't consciously think this way; it's subconscious. Why is this? People are bored and insecure- simple as that. You might say that people should have known what they were getting themselves into before enrolling here. That is true. Many students did not have a chance to visit the campus before coming to it. Also, the name of the campus is misleading. "Capital College" and "Penn State Harrisburg" both make one think that they will be in Harrisburg, where there is a significantly higher amount of activities to participate in than in Middletown – which is where we're really located. This setting is shocking to students from more urban areas. It does feel like there is not much to do, especially if you did not bring your car. There are activities on campus, but they seem to happen at the wrong times, and they are not advertised well. In order to cut down on the "partying" the school needs to come up with more ways to engage students. One idea is having weekend trips to different places. The school provides transportation, and the group spends the day somewhere. Your college experience will be what you make of it, so put in suggestions and there will be a good chance you will make a change.

