

OPINION

CULTURALLY INEPT A BI-MONTHLY PONTIFICATION

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So, as established by Carrie Bradshaw in last season of *Sex and the City*, being broken up with on a post-it is the absolute worst way to end a relationship; however, upon returning home from a long Christmas break in Houston, Texas, I checked the Myspace page of my current "steady" to find a rather surprising announcement. Having only been gone for three weeks, it was strange to see my steady's headline—"finally found love." While it seemed odd that someone would call what we had "love" after only a month of dating and an unavoidable gap of three weeks was rather odd, but, in all honesty, it was somewhat flattering. Because I had lost my phone during the break, our communication was limited. As

my computer finally registered with the online world and the pictures on the website were available to view, I realized that a new photo had been posted. The photo was of a couple and the couple portrayed did not include me.

Apparently, my "steady" wasn't as sturdy as I thought and, evidently, my flattery was presumptuous! Because in three short weeks, this person had lost interest in me, met someone else, and had fallen in love. I was instantly mortified, which provoked me to call my "ex-steady."

My phone call was received with the utmost excitement and the new dating status of this person was evidently unable to be relayed.

Thus, I had no choice but to bring it up myself.

Expecting an apology, my former

dating companion avoided the conversation, and complained that I had simply been gone for too long. This person then alluded to the possibility of hanging out and us being the best of friends. I was not impressed, nor was I planning to reciprocate an interest in being friends when I had just been indirectly broken up with over Myspace.

I then explained the situation to my friend LaRue. He immediately recollected a relationship wherein he was broken up with on Facebook. After inquiring as to how the break-up occurred, he told me that when he checked his Facebook, he was suddenly "in a relationship" with no one. I was again mortified, but this time for him!

Is it possible that we live in a world where we share our feelings, our free time, and even our beds

with people who don't even have the decency to break-up with us in person? And if dating doesn't require an actual break up, then wouldn't disinterest or meeting someone else at least require clear and honest communication?

After a chance meeting in a certain Manhattan hotspot, I found myself driving to New York to spend the weekend with a new fling.

Unfortunately, our second meeting was in no way comparable to our first, because in only one night of a prospective two-night weekend we had both decided things weren't going to work.

However, unlike my previous dating scenario, we both discussed our lack of compatibility. As I packed my car, and drove the one hundred and twenty blocks down to my friend Dan's

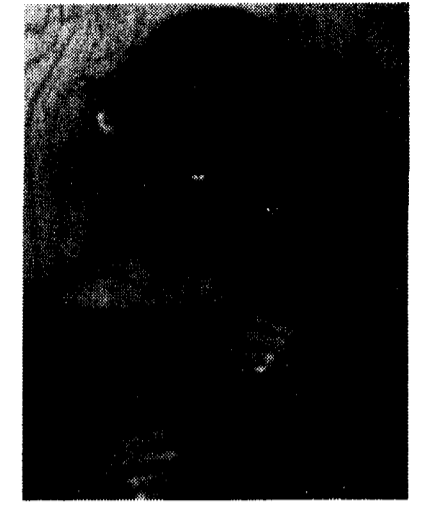
Hell's Kitchen apartment—where he kindly put me up for the night—I couldn't help but think about my last three months of dating.

How could two people who had truly only spent two nights together be so honest and open with one another when someone I had dated for over a month didn't even have the decency to send me an email.

I suppose I know nothing more about the game we call dating than I did before.

Fortunately, I now understand the importance of clear and honest communication in relationships of all kinds. So I leave you with a few things to ponder. In our modern era of communication, are we even further away from being open with those who deserve to know the truth? And most importantly, is the truth even what we really want?

President's Corner



By **ARIEL O'MALLEY**
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Hello everyone and welcome back!! I hope you had an enjoyable break filled with lots of memories and good times. Now that we are all back, it is time to push through another semester. I hope you will all take advantage of the wonderful programs being offered this spring!

There is one special event that I would be truly happy to see you all take part in. That event is THON. THON is a 46-hour dance marathon to support pediatric cancer. Throughout this 46 hours, dancers cannot sit or sleep.

They give everything they have to stay awake and show support and love for the children, in hopes that we will find a cure for cancer.

THON is by far the most humbling experience you could ever have as a Penn State student. It is impossible to make it through family hour without crying (yes, even all the men tear up). During this time, the families get on stage and talk about their experiences with cancer and how the money the students raise has helped them through their hard times. It is amazing to see how much of a difference we all make in their lives.

The funds raised by the students goes to pay for the children's treatments, medications, hotel rooms, food, gas, and nearly anything else the family may need. It also goes towards paying for some of the research that is done at the Hershey Medical Center. Last year more than \$4.2 million was raised by Penn State students, making THON the largest student run philanthropic project in the entire world.

The way I see it, most people would like to make a difference in the world. What better way to make a difference than to work towards finding a cure for pediatric cancer? Not to mention that helping out with THON is easy and appreciated by so many people! You could do something as simple as canning outside of a store for a few hours and raise a couple hundred dollars for THON.

You could buy a raffle ticket to win a new Pontiac or maybe even an autographed football (including the signatures of Joe Pa, Jordan Norwood, Tony Hunt, Anthony Morelli, and many more). There are numerous ways that you can help out and every little bit helps.

THON begins on February 16th at 6 p.m. in the Bryce Jordan Center at University Park and will go until February 18th at 4 p.m. This year Matt Sarver and I will both be dancing and nothing would be better than to see some of your wonderful familiar faces during those long hours. So if you are free, please come out to support THON!

One other event I would love to see some Penn State support at is the Rally in the Rotunda. This will be taking place on March 14th at 2 p.m. This is a time when you will have the opportunity to meet with legislators and voice your opinions on tuition increases as well as appropriations. This is a great opportunity that I hope you all will take advantage of.

I hope you all have a wonderful semester!! And PLEASE remember that the door to the SGA office is always open if you need me!!

Place for higher education or place to make a profit

A Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Everywhere where I turn it seems like this campus benefits from collecting funds or money from students where there is no need. From a student's stand point I have attended three different campuses since I have been a Penn State student, and Capital College Harrisburg Campus is the only campus, over the 20+ campuses spread out over Pennsylvania, that charges registered students to park on-campus. Even visitors on the weekends have to pay a \$1 fee everyday that they have a car parked in any parking lots of this campus.

I'm actually the President of the Black Student Union and it irritates me that when having a weekend event, on-campus, more funds or

money have to be allocated to throw an event. Once for a monitor and a second time for police services to be there when the actual event is going on between the hours of 10:00 p.m. - 2:00 a.m. is required by any club or organization.

Between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 12:00 a.m. a monitor gets paid \$12 per hour, and from 12:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m. a monitor is gets \$15 per hour. For campus police to ensure the safety of an enjoyable event it costs a club or organization \$250 a night. I have a problem with that.

Each student when attending an event planned between the hours or 10:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. should not be scanned for weapons. I don't even get searched for weapons when I attend a bar or club, but for my campus it is necessary. I believe

that is just ridiculous.

An example is the "Red Carpet Affair", which was held in the CUB by the Black Student Union on January 19 between the hours of 10:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. There were three officers on duty, two in the CUB and one patrolling the campus.

The following week Kappa Sigma, on January 26, had a Semi Formal called the Snow Ball, held in the same exact location between the hours of 9:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m., had no police officers on duty and no searching in place. Is it that police services are required for after hour events or needed for particular after hour events?

When attending a school of higher learning I expect to have the right book when purchasing it from the bookstore for my particular class. That wasn't the case for John

Howie. Howie purchased a book for one of the classes he is currently taking this semester. When he took his book to class he realized that he actually got the wrong book because it was misplaced in the wrong section. So after class he decided to exchange the book for the right one after class.

In doing so he was told that he could not return the book or exchange it because the clear plastic seal was taken off. Howie spent \$150 for this book and now he was told that since he broke this plastic seal, which the bookstore has the machine to rewrap a book, he was told he had to spend an additional \$150 for the right book, so the bookstore made out with \$300 of Howie's hard earned money.

Since Howie, being the Vice President of Black Student Union and President of the Multicultural

Recruitment Team, spoke to the right people he ended up getting his money back for the original unused book.

The moral of this story is that John Howie could have been any student on this campus, and when you have a problem with this campus or anything in general my advice is to voice your concern or nothing will ever be done about it. Coming to you as a friend, a student, and your president, because all you need is a spark to become a blaze.

Neil Wray-Marsh

If you have something to say, e-mail the editor at mrx300@psu.edu

Choose a major for your life

By **HEATHER COLEMAN**
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Nationally, three out of four entering college students are unsure about their choice in a major and a little over half of those students change their majors more than once. Undergraduates typically change their majors four to five times before arriving at a decision that make them feel good. So, if you have not chosen a major or are uncomfortable with the major you have chosen, you are in good company.

The first thing a person needs to do when choosing a major is to think about the things they enjoy doing, the things they value, their hobbies and other interests. It is usually these things that will help lead you to a major that makes you happy.

The worst thing a college student can do is just settle for a major. If you do not like your major, you will end up in classes that you do not enjoy, and in return, make college miserable. If you pick a major that you are comfortable in and enjoy, you are much more likely to be committed.

Once you understand the things you enjoy, try to match them to a possible major or career field. Then the fun part starts—finding introductory classes to those possible fields. It is here that you will find out if this is really something you want to commit to before you waste time and money on classes that you never needed. There are several introductory classes at Penn State and the best place to find them, and explore

them, is in your picks for general education courses. A few examples of some introductory classes include introduction to drawing or painting. Those courses are great for students who might want to be an artist. Introduction to theatre, which is good for those who might want to act some day, or even be an acting teacher.

Introduction to principles of nutrition could be a possible choice to those who could possibly want to be a nutritionist. If you think you might want to be a chemist or biologist, take the introductory courses for those fields. If you would like to program computers, check out the introduction to programming techniques. If the fields of crime and justice interest you, check out the course introduction to criminal justice.

There are tons of introductory classes to choose from and they are great for exploring your options while you try to figure out a major. To find out additional information about these classes and more, check out a course catalogue, visit www.hbg.psu.edu or get in touch with your advisor. Just remember to relax and have fun while you try to figure out your major. The major you pick does not always necessarily tie you down to a specific career and the reality is that most bachelor degrees prepare you for many different career paths anyways. In fact, research indicates that only about half of college graduates end up in a career that is tightly related to their degree major. So, good luck and here is to all of your undecided majors becoming decided majors very soon.

Celebrate Life

By **HILLARY ISLEIB**
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In just a few months I will be celebrating my 21st birthday, that much anticipated day of liberation when age is no longer a legal basis for restricting choices—a day of freedom! Like most people, I've anticipated my 21st birthday with gusto planning ways to celebrate this occasion in style. I have to admit, though, that drinking or gambling is not really what I'm looking forward to as I turn 21. I'm just backwards that way. The privilege to indulge is sweet enough for me. Instead, I want this birthday to be extraordinary!

For the last few years, I've been like most students, engrossed in an unpredictable roller coaster of classes, work, heartaches, triumphs, responsibilities and watching as the things I enjoy in life are replaced by deadlines and stress.

I've always had an idea of the person that I want to be, healthy, relaxed, strong, and giving. Being a runner brings all of these elements together for me when they are often in conflict with one another. I've discovered over the course of my college years that being too giving (whether at work, at school, or with friends or family) often means not

being relaxed, or being relaxed may mean not being as strong as I could be. Yet, I have never allowed myself to make running a priority. The truth is, however, that deadlines and responsibilities are the byproducts of life not the essence of life itself, and this birthday is the time to revisit these priorities.

How could I possibly wrap all of that into one birthday celebration? Easy. On April 28, 2007, two days shy of my 21st birthday, I will be running in the Country Music Marathon in Nashville, Tennessee to raise money and awareness for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society! Well, I'll be the first to admit that this feat is easier said than run, and I'm sure the fact that

I'm not exactly an athlete has not escaped many people in my life. I have always lived my life "in the fast lane," but in a figurative—not a literal—sense!

To accomplish this goal, I will be a member of Team in Training organized in 1988 by Bruce Cleland in honor of his daughter, Georgia, a leukemia survivor. Cleland organized a group of individuals who raised awareness and money for researching leukemia and other blood cancers by racing in the New York City Marathon. Sadly, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society estimates that 747,465

Americans are currently living with blood cancers. Last year, blood cancers claimed the lives of 54,480 people in America. In fact, by the time you finish this column, another American will have died from such cancers.

Many of these victims are children but leukemia and lymphoma can attack any race or any sex at any age. Blood cancers do not discriminate and anybody can be affected.

I'm really excited not only to become a runner but also to become a runner for such a great cause. I plan to raise \$3500 by race day—just three months away! You can help by making a donation on my secure Team in Training website at www.active.com/donate/hillaryisleib.

For me, this birthday is not just a milestone but a celebration of life—my own life and the lives of thousands of others who have been affected by blood cancers.

This is the time to reclaim the things that matter and shed a little perspective on life. So, when I'm blowing out the 21 candles on my birthday cake on April 30,

I cannot imagine a better birthday gift than a victorious run through Nashville, Tennessee to celebrate what matters in life!