

# OPINION

## CULTURALLY INEPT

### A BI-MONTHLY PONTIFICATION

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

As the completion of a certain master's degree will soon be an event of my past, it is clear that I will be without a pulpit from which I can pontificate at my own desired length and on such eccentric subject matters that intrigue my pen to move forth. Because of this I find the future premises of these columns to be of the utmost importance as it will probably be the last months in which such a tolerable publication will admit my works. So with much care I have pondered upon and selected this column's topic. But enough of that.

To come to the point I will broach an issue that, for most people, is an open and closed concept: this topic is capitalism.

While for the vast majority of individuals this theory (capitalism) is a measure designed for financial affairs or, at the lowest form, monetary gain, but, in the world of Oscar, I think not. Recently, I was hanging out with a friend who,

much to his own dismay, is shall we say gauche when it comes to matters of style and taste. Because the poor slob is a good friend of mine and is without the mental capacity to reform his aesthetic presence I decided, after prompt, to advise him of a private devise of mine that I often employ for capitol gain.

However, let me delineate the reasons for my disclosure. Because my judgment of his squalid appearance is merely an innate ability of mine, I excuse such superficial flaws due to his desirable persona. Yet, upon our last visit, he lamented a rather shocking sentiment: "Oscar, why are you the only 'twink' (aka: cute, thin gay boy, which I am not) who will give me the time of day? If I were to go up to someone of your demeanor in a bar, such individuals wouldn't give me the time day. Unfortunately, it is this type of appearance and person to which natures pulls me."

After ensuring that a truthful response—regardless of its harshness—was of interest to him, I asked my friend to recall the general

carriage of those to which such "twinks" are drawn. Allowing him to think a moment, I said, "are they similar in appearance to you?" He uttered a very solemn, "no, more like themselves."

And then I made it clear to him that if he enjoys a certain type of person; modification to his own presentation might be in order if procurement is to be made. He immediately began to defend his character, his intellect, and so forth, and rebuked the thought of such a transition claiming it to be superficial. I immediately challenged his poorly planted point. If my friend wanted to become the director of IT in his company, he knew the sorts of devices he would have to utilize in order to obtain this position. What of this is different from aspirations to procure a cutie pie or "fashionista?"

In my eyes there is no difference. Some people care about appearance; apparently, he does—just not his own! But why should those who care about such things—those who go to the gym, shop till they drop, groom the hairs on their head with a fine tooth comb, and even those

who belabor their complexion to the greatest degree, why should these fastidious "self-groomers" be expected to pity the dilapidated intellectual? And so, in your first instance, you ask, how shallow can one be? Or maybe, why should this person change who he is?

Clothing, salons, and gym memberships don't make a person—well, unless your Miranda Priestly—but they certainly raise the morale and refinement of their inhabitant. So after expounding upon my point, he became very fascinated by the prospect of capitalizing off of his altered appearance. Beyond this scenario, I will resort to a former column wherein the premises of my termination were presented.

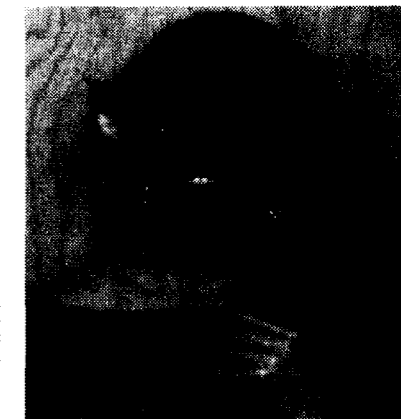
In this instance, I wore the wrong thing, said the wrong thing, and did so with a diction that, while not harmful, was not pleasing to the eye or ear of my employer. Because I regarded these things as important, I lost my job and, because corporations—such as Pheaa—have no conscience, I was without a paycheck, with out the dignity of employment, and even left without

the means by which to see a doctor.

So, I question myself. My tuition was paid for; my bills were assured, and my worries, in regards to finances, were little, but their treatment of me was wrong, and because of this I had to make a choice. And I did. But because of my commitments—to the agency and to graduate school—would it not have been better to alter my deportment and myself so that I might have been able to capitalize upon my situation?

The answer to this question is not clear, nor is it easy, but it is a point not to be forgotten. And with it on the table, I ask you, would we select the choicest option if all of our thoughts had the spirit of capitalism in mind, and would such decision not render a greater verdict for our hopes and desires? Or do such superficial wants become obsolete or undesirable once we are able to caress them in our hands? And, in the end, I must ask, is there anything really wrong with enjoying what can only be seen from on the surface?

## President's Corner



By **ARIEL O'MALLEY**  
SGA President  
ERO5002@PSU.EDU

Alright everyone. I know that we are heading into the last few weeks of class and I'm sure that you all know what that means. All those papers and projects that we put off because "oh I have a ton of time, I'll just do it later" are now demanding our attention. Everyone is starting to get stressed and edgy. Not to mention that it is sunny and warm out (or at least it was a week ago) which makes it even harder to get to class. But hang in there, there are only a few weeks left. I know that this time of year is really rough on everyone but we are all in it together. So study hard, buckle down and write those papers, and get all that work done. It will all be over before you know. At which point many of you will get to celebrate your amazing accomplishments with graduation and the rest of us will simply be glad that another semester is completed!!

However for the next few weeks when things get rough and you just want to give up I want you to think back and remember this poem.

"When things go wrong as they sometimes will,  
When the road your trudging seems all up hill,  
When the funds are low, and the debts are high,  
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,  
When care is pressing you down a bit,

Rest if you must, but don't you quit.  
Life is queer with its twists and turns,  
As everyone of us sometimes learns,  
And many a failure turns about,  
When he might have won had he stuck it out;

Don't give up though the pace seems slow,  
You may succeed with another blow.  
Success is failure turned inside out,  
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,  
And you never can tell how close you are,  
It may be near when it seems so far;  
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,  
It's when things seem worse,  
THAT YOU MUST NOT QUIT."

-Anonymous

Hopefully the poem will help you out in the next few weeks. But if the poem is not enough for you I have another resolution. This upcoming week, April 16th-19th, is the Rites of Spring. This week contains many wonderful events ranging from a carnival (Monday night in Vartan Plaza) to a "Movie on the Lawn" (Wednesday night on the hill). So if you're feeling a little stressed out, feel free to come out to the events of the Rites of Spring and relax and enjoy some good times with the wonderful people of PSU.

Finally I would like to address an issue that is floating around campus. The issue of elections shall soon be resolved. I know that there are a lot of rumors floating around right now about redoing the elections or disqualifying several candidates. All that I can say at this time is that there is a contestation of the elections being made and it is being dealt with in the manner that is described in the election code. As soon as a decision is made I will make sure to have something sent out to all of you via the school list-serve so that you will all be up to date with the current happenings. Thank you all for hanging in there and being patient. I will get in touch with all of you as soon as possible!!

# Musicians at PSH: overlooked

By **ANDREA HEISERMAN**  
Guest Reporter  
ALH5102@PSU.EDU

There is a music room in the basement of Olmsted, but the door is always locked. There are instruments inside that room that are just sitting there, collecting dust, wasting away waiting to be played. Would you agree with me that this seems like a waste of money? The University created this music room and bought the instruments but has not established any music program here at Penn State Harrisburg, with the exception of the chorus. There are pianos scattered around campus; a very beautiful one in the gallery inside the library, and a few here and there in rooms at the C.U.B. Who is using them? As a musician I feel that it is a crime to let these instruments sit around, untouched and deteriorating. The act of music making has so many positive effects in society and I think that it is time that there is a music program established here on campus.

Music has been proven to have some amazing effects on the brain. It engages a variety of areas in

the brain including areas that are involved in other types of cognition. Research has show that musicians are better with languages and mathematics. Music has a positive impact on a student's grades and is linked to better adjusted social behavior. It also improves a person's "spatial temporal reasoning", which is the foundation of engineering and sciences. It also helps improve memory, an effect that has been termed "The Mozart Effect" by researchers. Music makes you smarter, period. With all this evidence proving that music is a constructive and positive medium for developing a more intelligent and effective student how can the college deny us a music program?

The college has no excuse. They could say that they do not have the money to fund a program, but we all see how much dinero this campus is alone racking in everyday. They could say that they don't have faculty to run a music program, but I alone know many qualified, capable, and willing instructors who would gladly join the Penn State faculty to spread the sound of music. They could argue

that there is not enough interest at this particular campus. How many of you students know or have seen people playing guitar, or heard them talking about the instruments they used to play but no longer can because they live on campus? There is a vast and overlooked interest in the student community who could benefit a lot from a music program.

Even if a music program is out of the question for Penn State Harrisburg there should at least be some kind of music club. Maybe a small ensemble of interested and talented students could get together in that empty music room and prepare a few pieces to perform. Performance space is not a problem. We have an auditorium, a stage in the cafeteria, and a gallery that could be used for performances. The establishment of some kind of music program here at PSH seems more like a distant wish to me than a reality. It doesn't need to be just a wish though, and the school should take action and be concerned. Music can help students and the entire community here in incredible and substantial ways.

What blows my mind even more is

that there isn't even a practice room on campus for those musicians who want to continue studying their instrument but are not able to practice in their dorms. I, for instance, play trumpet and will not practice in my dorm because I know that nobody wants to be bothered by the loud, possibly irritating sound of somebody practicing his or her scales next door. I had auditioned last year for the School of Music at University Park but blew my audition, and so here I am at a branch campus. I had planned on re-auditioning this year, but since there is no place for me to practice here at campus I am no longer planning on auditioning because, as we say in the world of brass, I have "lost my chops". I could have continued my musical studies by purchasing my practice mute for \$100.00, or I could have paid for private lessons. But who has the time and money to do those things when they are a full time student? Aren't branch campuses supposed to prepare us to go to the University Park? What about the aspiring music majors? I think they are being overlooked.

"Music is about communication, creativity, and cooperation, and, by studying music in school, students have the opportunity to build on these skills, enrich their lives, and experience the world from a new perspective." —Bill Clinton, former President, United States of America. It is easy to see that music is fundamental in every community. Penn State Harrisburg needs to stop acting as a business and being to act as a school that is concerned with the wellbeing and growth of all of their students, including the musical ones. It is time for a music program to be established here at PSH.

Information included in this article comes from the following sources: ScientificAmerican.com, AMCMusic.com-American Music Conference, <http://www.menc.org/information/advocate/facts.html> - Music Education Facts, and an extremely interesting book called "This is Your Mind on Music" by Daniel J. Levitin. If you agree with this article please write a letter to the editor. Maybe together we musicians can press the school board to get our music program started!

# Global warming: an inconvenient dupe #42 tribute should be 96'd

By **JAMES MILLICAN**  
Guest Reporter  
JTM5098@PSU.EDU

No matter what one may think of Al Gore, it seems as though his science cannot support his position on global warming anymore.

According to a new documentary by British television producer Martin Durkin, the driving force behind the former Vice President's controversial film, "An Inconvenient Truth" is not even a relevant factor in the global warming controversy. In Durkin's "The Great Global Warming Swindle," the temperature change of the Earth over a period of thousands of years seems to have a closer connection to the growth and decay of the Sun's solar flares – not the presence of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere as proposed by Gore.

It was rather surprising to hear people like Patrick Moore, environmentalist and co-founder of Greenpeace, Paul Reiter of the Pasteur Institute, and Nigel Calder, former editor of New Scientist, speak in agreement with scientists about how carbon dioxide is merely a result of climate change, rather than a cause of it. However, it was

not surprising at all to find that the impact of Durkin's documentary on the U.S. media was eerily analogous to the actual effect that carbon dioxide emissions have on climate change.

While Gore's film made it to movie theaters across the country and even earned him an Academy Award, Durkin's has yet to receive any airtime on American networks at all. The only reason it has become such a hot topic among global warming debaters is because of its wide availability all over the Internet.

Praise for "The Great Global Warming Swindle" is mostly based on the use of simple scientific dialect in the film as well as the simple graphs and charts that seem to completely contradict the almost similar graphs and charts found in "An Inconvenient Truth." There is also a strong emotional presence found in Gore's film that tries to sway the view towards his side – as if the science was never enough.

To be fair, there were flaws in Durkin's documentary, including the alteration of a NASA temperature chart, to which Durkin commented, "The original NASA data was very wiggly-lined and we wanted the simplest line we could find." There

is also the controversy involving one scientist who threatened to sue if his name was not removed due to false conclusions to his thoughts on global warming as implied by the film.

There was also no new information brought forth in the documentary, only the exposure of already existing skepticism and the comparison to the global cooling debate of the 1970s. Durkin's documentary seeks to prove that the carbon dioxide argument arose from a political campaign strategy by conservative Margaret Thatcher to increase the production of Nuclear Power plants in Great Britain amidst the confrontation of global cooling and an apparent world catastrophe.

There is no longer a debate about whether or not the temperature is a degree higher than it was a century ago. But just as the global cooling escapade seemed to be nudging in the next ice age, global warming has become the new hysterical rollercoaster to keep all of civilization unnecessarily on the edge of their seats. It is the fault of no one but ourselves that we have become and continue to be so increasingly susceptible to these ploys.

By **RYNE CRABB**  
Sports Reporter  
REC161@PSU.EDU

I realize the risk involved in a whiter-than-white, country raised redneck like me criticizing a tribute to an African-American hero like Jackie Robinson. I won't go all Don Imus on you, but I just wanted to include that disclaimer. So, you've been warned.

Quick history lesson: Jackie Robinson was the first black player in Major League Baseball, breaking the color barrier on April 15, 1947. 50 years later, in 1997, Commissioner Bud Selig retired Robinson's number, 42, throughout baseball. Nobody would ever be assigned or allowed to wear #42 again in remembrance of Jackie's accomplishments.

April 15, 2007 is the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and baseball has proclaimed it "Jackie Robinson Day." Ken Griffey, Jr., a proud African-American and ambassador of baseball, requested and was granted permission to wear #42 in Jackie's honor. Then a few other players sent the same request, and in order to satisfy everyone, Commissioner Selig proclaimed one player from every team would be allowed to wear 42 on Jackie Robinson Day.

It was an honest and fitting accolade

for each team to have a representative participating in the tribute. As teams began to select players, stories popped up everywhere of black players researching and reading history books, learning more about Jackie and his story.

Then, Chicago Cubs sent in a request stating they have four black players and all of them wanted to, and should be allowed to, wear 42. In response, the Los Angeles Dodgers, Jackie's original team when he played in Brooklyn, requested their entire team be allowed to wear 42. Now, almost all the black players in MLB have requested to wear 42, in fear of being viewed as "ungrateful" if they didn't join the tribute.

Clearly, this has become a complete mess, but what was Selig supposed to do? He is older and whiter than me, if he would have denied any requests to honor Jackie, he would have been crucified by the media.

Now half of baseball is wearing 42 for one reason or another, most of which have nothing to do with its original purpose. Jackie persevered through countless acts of racism, and 60 years later, we live in a world where people are so paralyzed by the fear of being labeled a racist, they couldn't properly honor the guy.