

OPINION

The 2008 race is more than about race

By **ALLISON MILLS**
Staff Reporter
MXA932@PSU.EDU

Olmsted parking lot at roughly 6:00 PM on Tuesday, March 18. This, of all places, was the scene of my latest disenchantment with the world. After my last class I walked to my car in an "I'm so sick of school" daze, and I noticed the misplacement of my Obama bumper magnet on the back of my car.

My first thought was that my Republican father's switch-a-roo jokes weren't so funny anymore. But then I noticed the scribbled black permanent marker on my white sticker. And then I read the racist remarks that only a small-minded and intolerant person would use to destruct another's property.

How I would love to reveal the words wielded by the rebel with a Sharpie because I clearly feel very passionately about this incident but I personally find the notions expressed inappropriate for print. So instead of spending the rest of this article ranting about the injustice of racism in Central Pennsylvania and the United States, I'm going to

spew some statistics and relate it all to (you guessed it) Senator Barack Obama's campaign.

In 2006, Opinion Research Corp. conducted a survey for CNN on racism and differences in perceptions of it. Both whites and blacks were interviewed, 703 of the former and 328 of the latter. No reds or yellows were included.

When asked to classify racism as a problem, 49 percent of blacks and 18 percent of whites responded that it is "very serious". Thirty-five percent of blacks and 48% of whites categorized racism as a "somewhat serious" problem. I can't help but interject my opinion here: Racism in its very definition (the act of racial discrimination and/or segregation) and existence, no matter how minimal, is a dangerous problem for every society.

In the same survey, 43 percent of whites and 48 percent of blacks said they knew someone they judged as racist, but only 13 percent of whites and 12 percent of blacks considered themselves "racially biased". Jack Dovidio, a professor at the University of Connecticut, claims that up to 80 percent of white

Americans possess discriminatory feelings of which they are not even aware. Being openly racist is no longer acceptable in this society, which I suppose helps to explain the contrast in these statistics.

One final revealing statistic: Forty percent of blacks believed "all" or "many" whites disliked blacks while 26 percent of whites chose either "all" or "many". Likewise, 33 percent of blacks and 38 percent of whites responded that "all" or "many" whites dislike blacks. What exactly this data reveals is certainly open to interpretation but surely it at least suggests that not all is equal.

Racism, intolerance, discrimination, or whatever the most current euphemism may be is a largely discussed topic, but never more so than before this election year. Barack Obama is a bi-racial man (half black, half white) running for the presidency. He has a good chance of succeeding.

Even the most politically apathetic have asked, been asked, responded to, and heard the most popular question concerning Obama. "Is America ready for a black president?" which can be translated

into, "Even if you do harbor racist feelings, you'll never admit it and it'd be rude of me to ask you to do so. Instead I will inadvertently ask your opinion on America's preparedness for a black president."

To Senator Obama's credit, I don't believe his campaign has overdone the whole "first black president" aspect of this election. It's used it to their advantage and why not? But the focus is on hope and change, which covers so much more ground than just another first in a history book. In fact, if anything, his campaign has almost tried to ignore his skin color. And rightly so! With enough credentials to run for the presidency, gender, religion, and race should be nonissues. Obviously, they are not.

Another commonly asked question, normally as a follow-up to the previous, is whether Obama is "black enough", whatever that means. This issue was the guest of honor at many media field days, gathering speculation from all types of intellectuals, broadcasters, and media's village idiots (by whom I am referring almost fully to Rush Limbaugh and his "Halffrican

American" comments). The conclusion? Easily proven by his success in the polls and his delegate count, Obama is both "black enough" and "white enough" to make it to 1400 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Racism is not going anywhere, not if we cannot address it directly, without the use of euphemisms, without the fear of being politically incorrect. Prejudice and discrimination aren't as apparent as segregated buses and they aren't always disrespectfully scrawled on bumper stickers, but they certainly exist today. Hate is ever present; it's simply gone into hiding.

What can be done to stop it? I'm certainly no expert, but applying President George W. Bush's advise to America on how to combat terrorism certainly makes sense in combating racism as well. "Americans are asking: What is expected of us? I ask you to live your lives, and hug your children. I know many citizens have fears tonight, and I ask you to be calm and resolute, even in the face of a continuing threat."

As for me, I bought another bumper sticker.

President's Corner.



By **SAHAR SAFAE**
SGA President
SVS5033@PSU.EDU

Today we all start seeing the light...the light that will shine on the path that paves the way to our success...Today we all become adults and understand that simple pity battles with one another mean very little in the grand scheme of things; no matter how amusing these battles may be. Today we see that life is more than just drama and who said what and did what or who where. Its more than just gossip on the side of the dirty street corner today is the day you can stand up, sitting down is fine too, and say you want to make difference, something that matters. Something that will make a dent on the sidewalk we call our life.

The perfect event that will happen two days from now, Rally at the Rotunda! On **April 2nd at 12:00 pm** meet by the SGA office and run away with us to the Capital we will take a magical ride on the magic school bus to Candy Mountain, also known as, the steps of the Capitol building. You will have an excused absence from your class but please make sure to tell your professors that you will be missing class to take this magical bus ride. Also please email Marty Santalucia, mfs5075@psu.edu with your emergency contact information (e.g. your name, your emergency contact's name and phone number, and your PSU email address).

PROCRASTINATORS all over the campus gather around for the most amusing time of your life. The greatest invention known to man has been finally created. A small button at the top-left corner of your Mozilla Firefox browser and it is called STUMBLE. What??? You don't have it? Lalo has it that means you need it too! (its just the way the world works) You are totally missing out on wasting about two to seven hours of your day but all for the greater good of productive procrastination. What is stumble well it is an awesome tool that allows you to see awesome websites, based on your likes, which will change the way you think of life. Ready 1...2...3...STUMBLE!

Are you bored??? Are you wondering is going on, on this campus. Well, April is filled to the brim; I mean the cup is literally overflowing with liquid; it is almost a flood with all the spillage. Starting with the previously mentioned event, Rally at the Rotunda on **April 2nd**.

April 6th 13th, and 20th Latin Dance lessons **3-5pm** in the CUB.
April 8th, The 5th L performing at **9:30pm** on **Stacks Stage**.
April 11th, ROCK FOR CHANGE Charity Concert beginning at **2pm** on **stacks stage** with an Invisible Children movie and then moving to the **Vartan Plaza** with awesome bands will be playing into the night.
April 15th, Lion Ambassadors PSU IDOL from **8-11pm**
April 17th, SEE's Earth Day
April 18th, BSU's Fashion Show
And of course the best week of your life... all I can say is Giant Games! From **April 21st to April 24th** RITES OF SPRING so many events!
April 25th and 26th, Godspell in the auditorium

So please do not walk around campus saying there is nothing to do. There is totally a massive amount of things to do on April so enjoy what nature gave you and go outside.

Communications potential is endless

By **MATTHEW MAHONEY**
Columnist
MLM5039@PSU.EDU

As a student in the Communications program I feel that our school does an excellent job of combining theory with practical application in learning about, and developing forms of media. Be they print, video or audio our program has helped me to learn necessary skills, and taught me how to apply them. But there is room for so much more.

Currently we have on this campus our own video program, with its

own arsenal of equipment to create professional work.

We have our own photo development lab. Within that lab we have the capability to develop 35 mm film, and perform a plethora of actions with digital technology.

We have three separate sound recording booths that allow anyone to record and create audio files from any kind of source. We even have a turn table in there!

While I do not doubt the power of our available technology, and I do not doubt the ability of our instructors to teach us how to cre-

ate outstanding forms of media, I do doubt the wisdom of having a Digital Commons that is scattered throughout the Olmsted building in different rooms.

I have seen first hand the great potential of what can happen when students with specific areas of talent and interest combine their efforts in a unified goal.

Many of the clubs on this campus have found that by diversifying the talents of their members they can succeed in areas of fund raising and civil service that others have failed in. This newspaper relies on the talents of graphic artists, journalists, and copy editors.

I am soon bound to graduate from PSU, and as a parting student I can only imagine the potential that lays

before communications students to follow me. Imagine a working radio station (a stretch for some, I know), and this newspaper residing, not only next to each other, but in the same hallway as a video editing studio, and a photography lab, and an audio editing studio.

Perhaps what I call for may be viewed as far too radical for some of the staff. Maybe I sound too commandeering asking for an entire section of a hallway, but please heed my words when I say I have no vision of a communications dominated school. Rather, I have a vision of a communications program that is unlocked to its full potential.

There are many a professor here that are worth their weight in gold. They instruct, and they instruct

well. Their students learn, and apply that information. Greater than that I say is the professor that not only instructs his or her students, but also allows students to learn from each other. A professor who can instruct the lesson of the day, allow the students to learn from each other, and in turn learn a lesson themselves from those same students is worth far more than ten times their weight in gold.

I may be a little radical in my approach, and my pleas out of place for a student request. I don't know the full extent of what politics and money are involved, and for this I am admittedly ignorant.

But far worse a crime is to not acknowledge the untapped potential that is available to our students.

The RIAA took my baby away

By **BEN BRANSTETTER**
Layout Editor
BBB5034@PSU.EDU

Due to extensive lobbying and their own dirty greed, the RIAA has forced certain legislation into law that places higher fees on internet radio services. This means that one of my favorite internet sites, Pandora, will be forced to shut down.

For those of you that do not know what Pandora is (or was, depending on when you're reading this), here's a brief explanation: Pandora is a free internet radio service that helps listeners find new music by asking them what songs or artists they like and playing music that is similar to that song or artist. They define what is "similar" by carefully analyzing each and every song and breaking it down into over 400 genes. It builds your stations around the songs you give, playing songs that share genes with the song you entered or the library of the artist you entered. It really is both a beautiful idea and a flawless service, playing all nature of music with no critical judgment and the world's most polite flash application ("I'm sorry, but I couldn't find the artist you were looking for. If it's not too much trouble, could you either check your spelling or please try a new search?").

Fighting the RIAA's decision seems idiotic on the surface (like those nuts that tried to argue Napster was legal). However, on Pandora (and others like it like Last.fm), the RIAA actually receives a unique service. Pandora allows listeners to listen to full songs, but they cannot choose which songs they want to hear (for example, if you wanted to hear "Machinehead" by Bush, you couldn't, but you could hear songs like "Machinehead"). Pandora is not attempting to let listener's hear the same songs they love, but rather introduce them to new artists and songs. They offer links to buy the

songs on either Amazon or iTunes, as well as a place to order the physical CD itself.

This is free advertising for the RIAA, and they're attempting to shut it down. Pandora introduces millions of people to quality artists on RIAA labels. The normal RIAA business model (that of constant touring, plays on the radio, and music videos) is stupid in comparison. Here, Pandora is allowing free advertisement for both popular artists and obscure artists. The RIAA is spending money on obsessively-corporate advertising when Pandora is reaching millions of listeners for them for free.

Why would the RIAA do this? Are they really that stupid that they would deny themselves free advertising?

Of course not. The real problem the RIAA has with services like Pandora is something called EPT, or Equal Playing Time. Corporate terrestrial radio gives very little playing time to independent artists. For example, the radio station around my town, 105.7 The X, only gives two hours a week to independent music on a program called the Sunday News. Every other time of the week, every song they play (and I do mean EVERY SONG) is owned by the RIAA. The RIAA has a monopoly on rock music for that market.

Services like Pandora, however, replace the need for terrestrial radio by offering listeners free personalized stations. The only problem is that they give EPT to both independent and major labels. This is a real threat to the monopoly the RIAA has struggled to build. If people hear as much independent music as the major-label-music, they might start buying independent albums and going to independent concerts, taking away business from major labels. By forcing legislation that shuts down these services, the RIAA isn't protecting its own rights. It's protecting its own monopoly.

It's your money, use it

By **KRISTIN GILLEAD**
Guest Columnist
KBG5014@PSU.EDU

Hello fellow students! My name is Kristin Gillead; I am the President of the Black Student Union and Community Liaison for the SGA. Some of you may see me frequently throughout the campus because I am extremely active in school. From plays, to choirs and dances to forums, I have found our campus very appealing in its ability to satisfy my interests and willingness to express myself in more ways than my academics. Sadly, I will be leaving next semester, with many of my other fellow active peers and the main thing that concerns me is student participation. Did you know our campus has over a 100 clubs? Even worse, did you know more than half of these clubs are considered inactive? Therefore, for my debut as an opinion columnist, I would like to share my opinion on the lack of student participation on this campus.

How many of you have heard or said these words, "There is nothing to do on this campus"? Well, did you know that there is a student programming board, run through Student Activities, which asks for student participation to pick days and activities for campus events? I thought you didn't. When Student Activities sent out information for this board via email, NO ONE applied or responded. As a result, there was no student programming board established. Hmm...maybe this is why so many think there is nothing to do...

Have you ever heard of SAF, the

Student Activity Fund...or as I'd like to call it FEE...BECAUSE ITS BEING TAKEN OUT OF YOU TUITION EVERY SEMESTER!!! Yes, the SAF provides money for ALL students...let me repeat ALL students who would like to get some other students to do things. As a member of a club, or as an individual, you can write a proposal for anything from a Pajama Party to a Fashion Show or camping trip. But of course, no one knew about this either right? Even though it is posted on every email, flyer, table tent etc. for which SAF sponsors....

This brings me to another issue...DOES ANYBODY LOOK AT FLYERS??? I can't even begin to name all of the events, conferences and forums that have been advertised, this semester alone, which have flopped because no one showed up. I have read the police sections in the Cap Times, I know people like to party and have fun, so why not show up to one that has been LEGALLY established for your enjoyment? I personally challenge everyone who reads this article to go to an event you see posted. DO IT! Because guess what? If you don't go, the venue who was paid to be here STILL GETS PAID!!! Bus trips to NY, plays, movie nights, game shows, poets...ITS ALL FREE... It is your right as a Penn State student to take advantage of these opportunities and why wouldn't you want to?

My final concern forces me to revisit this club life issue. I don't know what bothers me more, people who are too absorbed in clubs and can not fathom reality, or those more absorbed in a misconstrued

reality who don't understand what they can gain from working with a club. Wait, I lied. It's definitely the second. Regardless of your major, hometown, hobbies etc. clubs are good for you. I feel like I'm trying to get a two year old to eat vegetables when I tell people the importance of being active on campus. Clubs look good on resumes, they show you can be responsible; they inflict you with excellent networking opportunities and help you develop teamwork abilities. I have found that being in a club, well multiple clubs, has made me a better student. I am better in professional situations and I have learned lots about the importance of commitments and responsibility.

Students, please become more active. Next year, I and many other fine student leaders are not going to be here and I am honestly concerned about this student body's ability to become leaders. If you haven't noticed, the high school mentality has become an epidemic on this campus. Yes, there is life outside of Penn State Harrisburg, but why let what so many students fought for suffocate? A lot of us have worked hard this year and years prior to help bring life to this campus; not to mention countless staff and faculty. If you don't want to join a club, attend their events. If you don't like the events going on, CREATE YOUR OWN...you can, everyone can. There are no excuses for not participating in even the smallest fashion. After reading this article, I hope you take it upon yourself to be more active. If you don't, who's to say anyone else will.