

# Logical explanation behind Nittany's knickers

By AUBREY CLARK  
STAFF WRITER  
ARC5229@PSU.EDU

Ctrl+Alt+Delete is the key combination that is required to shut down a PC. It also allows a Penn State Harrisburg student to register in to the school computer system safely and securely. I never expected the login window at PSH to expose students to a seductive, fleshy image of the Nittany Lion.

Now, I know Frank and I would joke around about the Lion not wearing bottoms, but most mascots are not even clothed. Heck, at football games, Nittany wears a simple Penn State scarf because, I suppose, in case he gets out into the wild, the school will know he is ours. Aside from the scarf, our mascot is in his birthday suit, as he pumps up the crowd on the field.

So, why now did someone decide to pop some pants on the pride of Penn State? I went straight to my advisor and former ethics professor, Dr. Sam Winch, to get some closure about the clothes. I asked Winch if it was unethical for the Lion not to have pants on, but other garments. "I have no idea," he said. "Political correctness, maybe?" Winch and I deliberated the idea that somebody complained about the Lion's wardrobe. I had to find out. Winch then directed my investigation to Steve Hevner, the Public Information Manager at PSH.

Before I spoke with Hevner, I asked Marketing Associate, Angela Larks why she thought pants have been placed on the Lion. She laughed as she said, "I have no clue," and called Sharon Siegfried, Graphic Designer, to the stand so I could ask Siegfried her standpoint. "What a funny question!" Siegfried stated. "I never even thought about it."

When I finally met with Hevner, I thought I would have an answer for sure. After he was done chuckling, Hevner revealed that he "never, ever noticed" any of the clothing on Nittany, let alone his recent wardrobe change. He suggested I contact Dr. John Hoh, PSH's Director of ITS. Hoh was my last hope.

Luckily, Hoh was in his room and I knew he had the answer. He was surprised and happy to know someone noticed the changes to the Nittany Lion computer graphic. Hoh disclosed to me that there was no real cause for the change of dress for Nittany, but did offer a reason. Some new computers at PSH came with new software. Hoh said that ITS staff can determine the difference between new and old software quickly by looking at whether or not the Lion is wearing pants on the login screen.

My investigation was a success, although rationale behind the sudden appearance of pants on the Nittany Lion graphic was not scandalous as I had hoped. After a year of musing about the Lion, sans pants, I can honestly say I am contented to know Nittany's knickers were not strategically placed on him in vain.



Screenshot from PSH login screen (before)

One year ago, I started my junior year at Penn State Harrisburg as a Communication's major, with a minor in English. With my heavy course load chock full of writing classes, I spent a great deal of time at various computers on campus. Last fall, the first thing I noticed as I sat down at a computer on my first day of class was, obviously, the login screen. Behind the login window was the Nittany Lion, donning a Penn State baseball jersey and sunglasses. I immediately thought, "I wonder why our mascot is wearing a shirt and sunshades, sans pants?"

A good friend of mine and fellow classmate, Frank Magni, and I pondered the pantless reasoning behind the Nittany Lion on more than one occasion. Perhaps he was getting dressed and, in a rush, had to pounce over to hold up the falling login window? After a hard night of partying in Happy Valley, could he have possibly had a one night stand and forgot his pantaloons in the morning? Maybe he thought his shirt was long enough that no student would notice he was not wearing slacks? Well, I noticed. For two semesters, as I entered my username and password to access a computer at school, I noticed.

On the first day of school this fall, I took a seat at a computer in a library computer lab for one of my classes. As I jiggled the mouse, expectant to see that sheepish grin on the scantily clad Lion, my jaw dropped and a loud yelp escaped my mouth. Stares came at me from all directions in the tiny room, but my attention was focused on Nittany; Nittany and his brand-spankin' new pair of terrycloth trousers.

The shock numbed me as I sat frozen in my seat. I squeezed my eyes shut, thinking I was playing a trick on myself. I opened my baby blues only to see that the once pant less Nittany was now sporting some shorts. I HAD to investigate.



Screenshot from PSH login screen (after)