

College Loses When Christmas Arriving Earlier and Earlier

Students Can't Pay

By Gina Ferzetti
Lion's Eye Staff Writer

After doing the calculations for the hundredth time, the awful truth finally sunk in: I would not be coming back to Penn State next semester. The truth felt like a blow to the stomach.

After realizing that I didn't have enough money to come back next semester, I put my future in perspective. To me it was either work full time at my current place of employment, which I do love, or work full time until next fall and go back to school again.

Obviously, the choice wasn't that hard. And although I hold a good position at my current job (I'm a chiropractic assistant at a local chiropractic office), I realized that I did not want to be just an "employee" forever. I want to be happy with what I do in life and the only way to get there is to continue my college education.

My friends often ask me why I'm not mad at my parents for not offering to help me pay for college. And to be honest, last year I was. But I've gotten past that, I've accepted that I will have to pay for my college education myself. And yes, I used to get jealous of people whose parents paid for their education, but I've learned to accept that, too. Although I sometimes think that those people need to appreciate it more and realize how truly lucky they are.

Some days I have setbacks where I think of how unfair life is sometimes, and I get resentful of people who can afford to live away at college or go away on vacations. And sometimes I long to worry about things like guys, and parties, and who's dating who, instead of tuition bills and loans. But then I realize that I have to grow up and accept my current situation and be happy for people who get to do those things. Because sooner or later, my time will be coming. It has to!

So in these last few months of classes before the spring semester I will savor the time I have here at Penn State. I will enjoy attending classes and listening to boring lectures. I will enjoy getting up in the morning to go to college rather than a full-time job. Because next semester I will miss it terribly.

And when I finally do receive my college diploma, I will relish in the fact that not only did I earn it, but I deserved it, too.

By Sarah Stover
Lion's Eye Staff Writer

I don't know about anyone else, but doesn't it seem like Christmas (and the whole holiday season altogether) gets earlier and earlier each year? Thanksgiving is not until the end of November, but still the stores have already begun to advertise their plastic Christmas trees and Santa decorations. The malls have long since been decorated with sparkling lights and hanging garland. Once September and October arrives, it almost appears like the seasons jump right from Halloween to Christmas, especially in the retail and sales world.

I know first hand about the business sales around the holiday season because I work at a nearby Hallmark and I can understand where the business aspect comes into play. Sure, all the corporations and companies value this time of year the most because this is when their sales sky rocket and all the money is made. But what I don't understand is the advertising of Christmas, which begins ridiculously months before. For example, Hallmark schedules their first ornament premier in the middle of June. Already, a designated large area is set aside and displayed for Christmas. Customers walk in and immediately see red and green holiday colors in the middle of summer. Hallmark ornaments are not only one of the highest selling items, but they are also a collectors series. Customers are drawn to them, even in June. Hallmark is not the only corporation that initiates this kind of "early" marketing. My manager and I joke often about the seasonal cycle for the retail world, which, in reality, consists of two parts: the slow season and the holiday season. The holiday season is the one starting from June to December. When you think about it, though, it really is absurd.

The sad side to all of this is that the holiday season is becoming devalued. The holidays only come once a year, and that should be a special time for family and friends to come together. Instead, the holidays are being constantly emphasized in a material way. Because stores start to advertise so early, all else about the holidays is overshadowed. If someone can shop for their Christmas tree in September and even buy the ornaments for the tree in June, where does the really *special* part of Christmas come in? Why don't we just have Christmas all year around? Don't be surprised, because the way the retail world is going, that just might be the case.

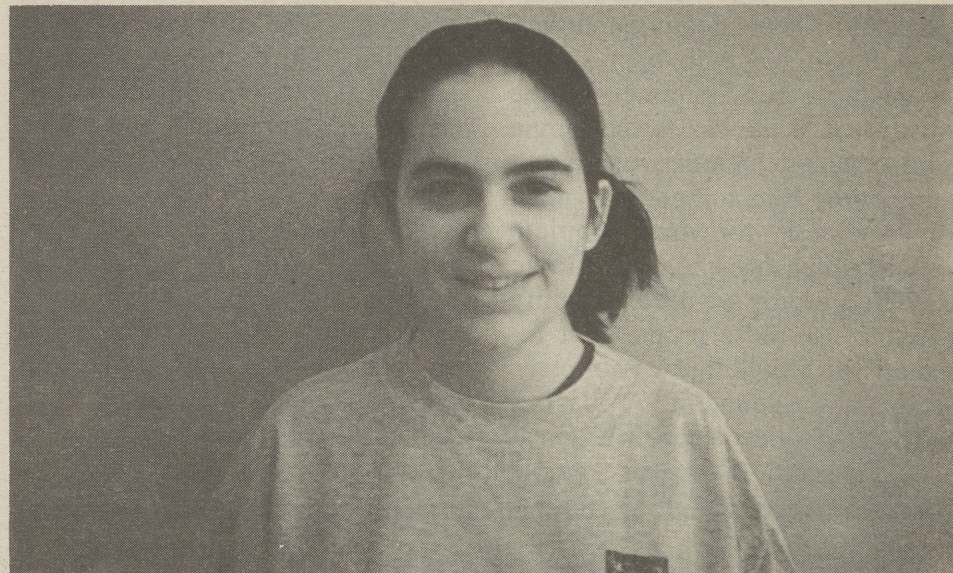
Photo Survey:

What's Your New Year's Resolution?



Ben Rodenkirch: "Quit smoking. Yea, right."

Photo by Phillip Yi



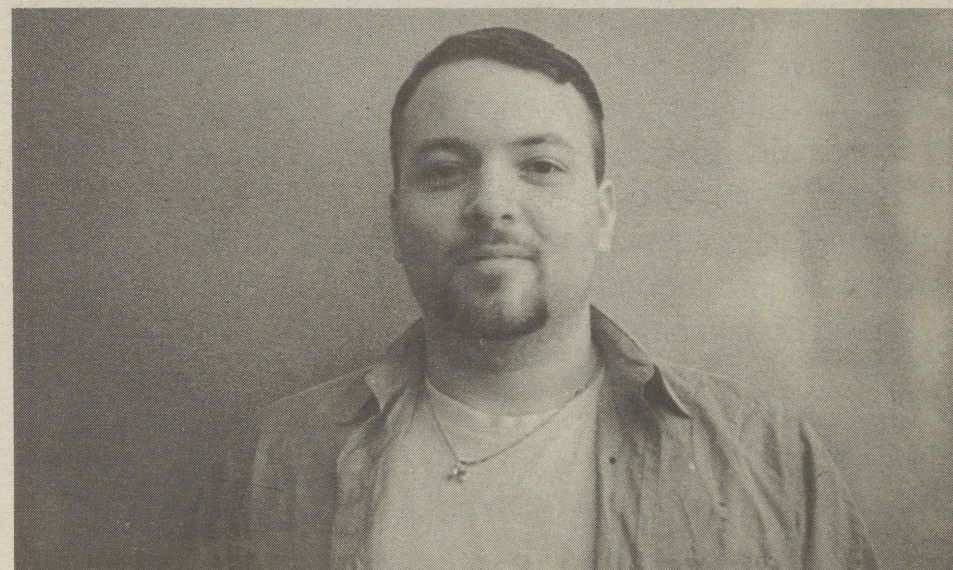
Lauren Gilligan: "To do my homework the night before instead of the day of."

Photo by Phillip Yi



Steve Gaines: "Become more focused and find my interests."

Photo by Phillip Yi



Jim Neary: "Try not to drink as much."

Photo by Phillip Yi