

Eye on Editorials

EDITOR'S SHTICK:

The World's a Mess, No Big Deal: The Girl Effect

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"The world is a mess – agree or disagree?" As I stare at my computer screen at these words, it makes me think, how could you disagree? This was the first image I was presented with when I visited www.girl-effect.org. So everyone wonders – how can we fix it? Invest in girls.



Courtesy of www.thegirl-effect.org

Is it that simple? I didn't believe it myself and of course, it isn't that simple, but as I learned more about The Girl Effect and what the Nike Foundation is doing to change the course of humanity, it made sense. The Nike Foundation believes in the power of human potential and working together to achieve something great. Working with numerous partners around the globe and creating the Girl Effect sister-site, Nike is starting a worldwide movement towards a better future for us and our world.

The Girl Effect is defined as "the powerful social and economic change brought about when girls have the opportunity to participate in their society." If we can eliminate poverty, disease, and lack of education in Third World countries, girls are given the chance to shine and make a difference. They represent the nucleus of family life and if they cannot thrive, their families are adversely affected.

Here are 10 things that stay in the girl's way of making a difference:

- 1) Without a birth certificate or an ID, a girl in the developing world doesn't know and can't prove her age, protect herself from child marriage, open a bank account, vote, or eventually get a job. That makes it hard to save the world.
- 2) 70% of the world's out-of-school children are girls. Girls deserve better. They deserve quality education and safe environments and support that allow them to get to school on time and stay there through adolescence.
- 3) Child marriages are the norm in many cultures where women's bodies aren't considered their own property. Pregnancy is the leading cause of death for girls 15-18 years old. Girls have a right to be able to protect their health and their bodies.
- 4) When girls are educated about HIV, they stand a better chance of protecting themselves. But education is not enough. Girls need to be empowered and supported to make their own choices.

- 5) If girls have the skills for safe and decent work, if they understand their rights, if they are financially literate and considered for nontraditional jobs at an appropriate age, if they get their fair share of training and internships, they will be armed and ready for economic independence.
- 6) Only one-half of one cent of every aid dollar spent in the developing world is earmarked for girls. And yet when a girl has resources, she will reinvest them in her community at a much higher rate than a boy would. If the goal is health, wealth, and stability for all, a girl is the best investment.
- 7) They're girls. They deserve their own category. They need to be a distinct group when we talk about aid, education, sports, civic participation, health and economic. Yes, they are future mothers. But they actually live in the present.
- 8) Girls need advocates to write, speak up, lobby, and work to enforce good laws and change discriminatory policies.
- 9) We won't know how to help girls until we know what's going on with them. Hey, all you governments and NGOs and social scientists: You're accountable! We need an annual girl report card for every country so we can keep track of which girls are thriving and which girls are not.
- 10) Boys, girls, moms, dads. If we don't all rally to support girls, nothing is going to change. Not for them, and not for us. Change starts with you. So get going.

Puts it in perspective, right? We take for granted all that we have in the United States. As a white American female, I've never known what it's like to be underprivileged. Education, employment, health care, legal protection, housing, food, clean water: all of these things I have had the opportunity to have. But females in Third World countries, such as the females in Aldo Magazzeni's photography exhibit at our campus, Traveling Mercies, don't know what it's like to have those essential things. Magazzeni lived amongst people in Afghanistan and Africa and knows first-hand how the potential of women in those countries is being hindered.

600 million girls living in poverty – just think if those 600 million girls had educations and jobs and opportunities. This one website really made me think about this concept and I'm only skimming the surface of what The Girl Effect has to say. It seems so simple. And maybe it is. We just need to make it happen.

Do you have relationship problems?
 Going through a tough time in your life?
 Questions that need to be answered?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, never fear, the advice column, **Ebony and Ivory**, is here!

Please send you questions to ebonyivoryhelp@yahoo.com

Want to be heard?

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Campus Speaks is a new recurring column of the Lion's Eye featuring editorials and opinion pieces submitted by faculty, staff and the student body of Penn State Brandywine. Readership of the Lion's Eye is encourage to submit their articles for publication. Anyone can submit!

Articles should be submitted to kab44@psu.edu

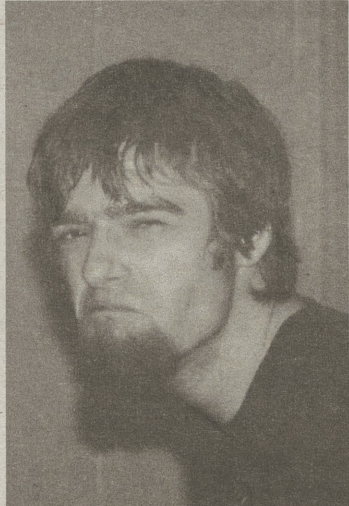
People Poll with Caitlin Olszewski

Who is your favorite super hero?

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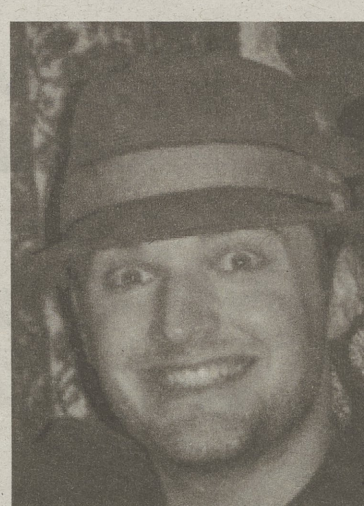
Ray Gaspari
Undecided
"The Silver Surfer"



Kenny Wilson
IST
"Basement Cat"



Katie Lizza
Undecided
"Batman"



Derek McMillan
IST
"The year is 2011. I am the Mach Rider"



Adrienne Showalter
English
"Emma Frost from X-Men"