

Eye on Editorials

PAIR OF PENNIES

Signed, Sealed, Click

By **daniel j. taylor** - *Lion's Eye Editorial Editor*
1104 8th St. Eddystone, Pa 19022

I'm slightly old-school. The thought of reading Slaughterhouse Five on a well-charged Kindle makes me cringe, because I like my books the proper way. I like to hold them in my hands, to turn the pages, the smell. When I'm done I want to put them back on the shelf, and if they have a hardback cover--perfect. Similarly, I like to do my coloring with crayons and pencils on tangible paper. Graphic design and Microsoft Paint don't do it for me. Art--even my crappy, indistinguishable version--belongs in the Real. There is something pure, beautiful about classic versions of artistic expression.

Now me, I'm no artist... not anymore than everyone is, at least. But I do have the power to communicate with others in a similar fashion, and I want the things I make to have that same feel. Today, communication is a piece of cake (ice-cream cake!) and there's no excuse for not keeping in touch with the people in our lives. We can use our cell phones to text or converse by way of Facebook chat or update our Twitters or send an e-mail or leave a MySpace comment--and these things are great. They enable the busy, lazy, and forgetful to keep everyone in the loop, which is wonderful. Like most things, however, what we gain in convenience, we lose in quality. MySpace comments are a lot like a Kindle book: they give you all the same information you could get in a more traditional fashion, but they're not invigorating. We know they were made in haste, between snacks and CD tracks, and by their very design are meant to be forgotten. Give it a few weeks--tops--and they've been pushed off your profile and out of your memory.

"But Dan," I can hear you say, "this is just the way the world works now! Everyone has cell phones and computers, so why not take advantage of them?"

And I'm not disputing those points, but what I am saying is that technologically advanced communication, though quick and simple, is absolutely void of thoughtful composition and meaning. Compare the feeling you get when you have a new text to the feeling you get when you receive a letter in the mail. It's exciting to tear open the envelope, to read each carefully crafted sentence, to decipher the

significance of the salutation and closing, to fold it up, and to store it away.

I receive roughly 3 personalized letters a year, and even calling them letters is generous--really, they're pre-written Hallmark birthday cards; but I'll tell you something: each of those cards, individually, is more exciting than the slew of Facebook "Happy Birthdays" that I receive. The intimate, personalized approach to sending mail is far more friendly--not to mention, flattering--than a quick and detached series of keystrokes and mouse-clicks. I advocate the return of letter writing as a way to enhance personal relationships and maintain a freedom from technological dependence.

I've written four letters to three recipients this year. They only took me between 15 and 20 minutes each, and my discussion was tailored to the lives of those people whom I addressed. Much to my disappointment, half of the letters received responses of "find me on Facebook" and one returned with a phone call (which I'll admit, isn't really so bad--it was good to speak with him). I couldn't believe, however, the lack of enthusiasm on the parts of my addressees. Surely, no one denies the exhilaration of receiving mail with a handwritten address on the envelope. We recognize that time, thought, and even money (granted--only a few dimes) was spent in the process, and it just makes us feel good.

So, here's my pitch: Write a letter this week! Address it to an old school teacher, a high school friend, a soldier, a stranger...it really doesn't matter who. Taking a few minutes to contemplate the life of someone else is a healthy practice that helps to draw us out of the lightning-paced, self-centered, technological world we often find ourselves in. Moreover, it will be a blessing to the recipient. Letter-writing is a simplistic art form that allows those who engage in it to better understand the people with whom they use the medium to communicate. It's a wonderful way to invigorate others and stay in touch, while enabling all involved parties to save the documents should they so wish. Next time someone comments upon your Facebook wall, try this: "Hit me up at my home address," you'll feel warm inside if they do.

The Belligerent Spectator

Pre-Christmas Conundrum

By **Caitlin Olszewski**
Lion's Eye Generation Editor
coo5024@psu.edu

As soon as the turkey digests and the day after Thanksgiving approaches, people rush around in a chaotic frenzy. Around this time of year I usually take a step back and disapprovingly observe everyone tearing their hair out over the trivial aspects of the season. Christmas shopping, gift wrapping, family dinners, exchanging presents, taking the kids to see Santa at a shopping mall, and purchasing that perfectly symmetrical pine tree to complement your perfectly decorated house. All things that could easily put one in certain holiday cheer or Yuletide seem to be leaving people feeling stressed out and pessimistic towards the holiday season.

I have never really been a huge fan of Christmas. I never protested it, but I guess you could say I never really understood the Christmas spirit until now. Maybe it is because I am older and wiser. Maybe it is because I work in a Gift shop and I can safely stand on the sidelines and watch others flounder around becoming stressed out over mundane concepts. Maybe it's because I've been humbled by seeing my friend's son come out of remission every winter for the past two years. Now, I'm not going to be completely liberal and protest all of this materialism and commercialism around the season, but I will say that the lack of true Christmas understanding makes me feel like Charlie Brown and that

sad little tree.

Thanks to "holidays" like Black Friday and Cyber Monday, (Seriously?) people have become more unconcerned with the implications behind their presents and more worried about the ridiculous deal or "totally-worth-standing-in-line-for-hours-discount." People apparently have been dying because soccer moms on a mission for some trendy novelty toy are trampling them in a selfish haste. I read in a newspaper that an employee of Wal*Mart died after getting rushed by the crowd as he opened the door. I am actually pretty surprised that people didn't learn from the widespread Cabbage Patch Kids battle royale of 1982. Needless to say, I am pretty disgusted with society at this point.

I can honestly say that the only things I am really looking forward to this season are being with loved ones, the unexplained and rare kindness of strangers around this time of year, and working all day on Christmas Eve (just kidding about that last bit.) The only advice I can really give to people who get the Christmastime blues or are feeling rather overwhelmed, is to take time. Do not fret. Just take time out of your busy schedule to relax and become enlightened. Maybe you'll soon realize the true meaning of Christmas and everyone can stop running around like chickens with their heads cut off.



Image Courtesy of <http://www.flickr.com/photos/nobodysweetheart/2106689114/>

The Lion's Eye



MISSION STATEMENT

We are the newspaper of the Penn State Brandywine campus, serving the students, administration, faculty, staff, and visitors of our campus. We vow to inform all of our audiences, and we will strive to make each issue better, so that we remain a vital part of the Penn State Brandywine experience. We also pledge to be professional, and to follow the highest standards of quality journalism.

Editor-in-Chief - Christina Felizzi

Campus News Editor (s) - Nancy Perone, Jen Santangelo, and Kelly Guinan

Local/World News Editor(s) - Jenn Knowlton and Nancy Perone

Op/Ed Editor(s) - Christina Felizzi, Daniel j. taylor, Evan Kroboth

Entertainment Editor(s) - Adrienne Showalter, Chris Dilenno, and Kionna Lipscomb

Generation Editor - Caitlin Olszewski

Sports Editor(s) - Justin Park and Sean O'Connor

Contributing Staff Writers:

Martina Delgado, Kelly-Ann Woods, Andrew Shaner, Sean West, Colin Coates, Kenny Kellar, Danielle Lites, Angela Potter, Chris McSweeney, Karlo Radolovic, Steve Scoleri

Contact the Lion's Eye:

Christina Felizzi - clf5050@psu.edu
Karrie Bowen - kab44@psu.edu

For advertising information, please contact Karrie Bowen at 610.892.1336 or kab44@psu.edu.

The Lion's Eye is published bi-weekly by the students of Penn State Brandywine, Media, PA. Penn State Brandywine does not necessarily represent or endorse the accuracy or reliability of any of the information, opinion content, or views set forth in the Editorials/Opinions section of this publication. The Lion's Eye welcomes both guest editorials and letters to the editor. Letters must be no more than 200 words and address a single topic or theme, and contain contact information of the author. Guest articles can be up to 500 words. The editorial board reserves the right to edit letters and guest articles for space purposes and content. Please send all editorial and guest correspondence to kab44@psu.edu.