

# OPINION

THE DAILY  
Collegian

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**Complaints:** News and editorial complaints should be presented to the editor. Business and advertising complaints should be presented to the business manager.

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## Letters

We want to hear your comments on our coverage, editorial decisions and the Penn State community.

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Letters should be about 200 words. Student letters should include class year, major and campus. Letters from alumni should include year of graduation. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Members of organizations must include their titles if the topic they write about is connected with the aim of their groups. The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters. The Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all letters it receives. Letters chosen also run on The Daily Collegian Online and may be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters become property of Collegian Inc.

## Dialogue needed to fix flaws

On Nov. 12, the National Federation of the Blind requested that the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights investigate Penn State for failing to adhere to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

This requires public universities to provide the visually impaired with equal access to facilities and services.

Though these are currently only allegations against the university, there have already been promises of an increased level of communication between the NFB and the university to remedy prob-

lems the visually impaired may run into on campus.

While we don't think that Penn State consciously discriminates against the visually impaired, it is important to recognize their rights and to give them the same access to higher education as the rest of the student body.

The university should continually be investigating every facet of the education process for the possibility of discrimination against any form of disability. It should never again wait for allegations such as these to spur action.

Officials should continue to be proactive and take this accusation seriously.

We do also commend both sides for carrying out an appropriate tone of discourse, with the university realizing the seriousness of the situation and the NFB not acting in an accusatory way.

The best way to solve this problem is through dialogue.

The NFB also recognizes that many college campuses are on the same level as Penn State, and if the university takes action it could be an example for other universities.

## Free speech is still important

In response to Tuesday's column, "Political opposition needs compromise," at first glance, the column seemed sound, logical and almost moderate. Then after a further read, he starts to lend political advice from Kanye West and suggests that we ban free speech. The answer to bad speech is more speech, and I don't want to live in a country where people get thrown in jail for holding up a picture of our president with a Hitler mustache.

That's why we debate. That's why there are sides. And in most cases, there's a compromise position where we can both give a little, but when people like Michael Oplinger start to suggest that we overturn everything the First Amendment stands for, people like me have no choice but to stand strong for what we believe in.

Zachary James  
senior-engineering

## blog lines

### SMALL WORLD

#### Walk like an Egyptian

Last week I was twice offered 10,000 camels for my hand in marriage.

The first time it happened, my friend and I had just arrived in Cairo for our week-long Egyptian vacation, and I was suffering from some major culture shock.

Hearing men constantly shout things at us, seeing women in burkas, hearing prayers over the loud speaker every few hours and having my shirt pulled on by a woman who was offended that a bit of my back was exposed were just a few of the cultural things I had to get used to over the course of the week.

I should probably preface this by mentioning that Russians are not friendly. I love them, but they won't as much as hold the heavy metro door for a stranger who is standing right behind them and they avoid eye contact and smiles like the plague.

So the fact that Egyptians were eager to interact with us (sometimes in unusual ways) came as a bit of a shock. We took some amazing trips that included Cairo's citadel, Alexandria and horse rides around the pyramids at Giza, and though we were surrounded by some of the world's oldest and coolest sights, I couldn't help but feel like a tourist attraction myself.

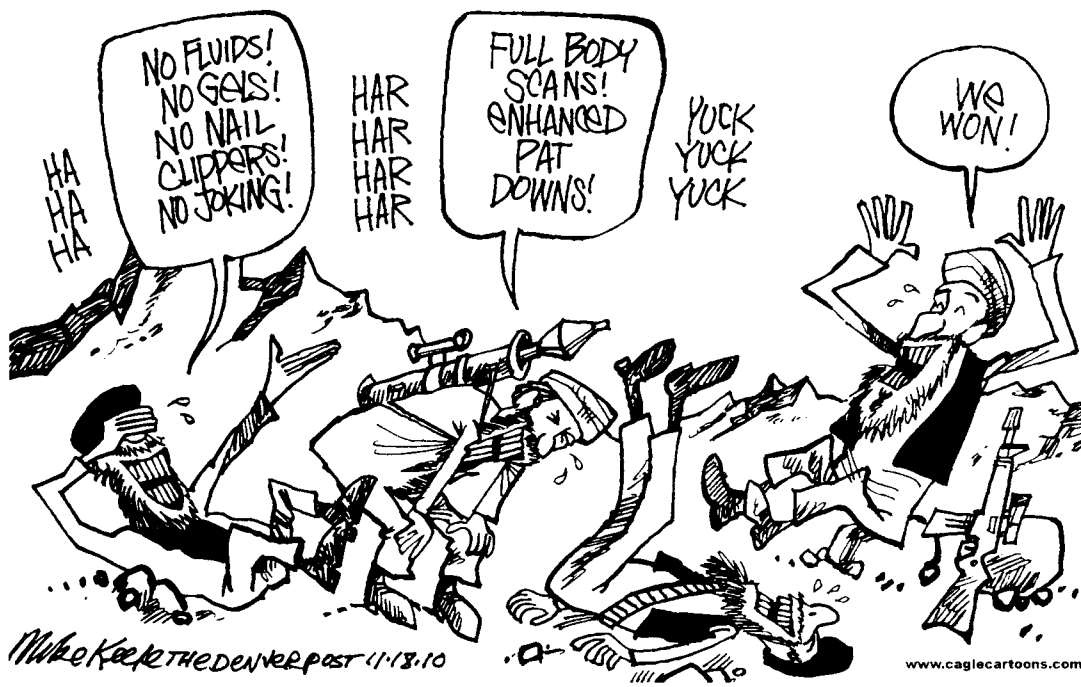
Everywhere we went Egyptian children asked to take pictures with us and men told us we looked like Shakira (not true) and asked us if we were married. Though Cairo is a very touristy city, we quickly realized that it's still rare there to see young white girls walking around by themselves.

Our living situation in Cairo initially seemed a bit sketchy. Our taxi driver couldn't find the hotel we had booked (I'm still not sure if the place actually exists or not) so he took us to a hostel instead. I was worried, but Atef, the hostel's manager, immediately said to us, "Don't worry, your mother told me to take care of you."

And he really did take good care of us. Included in the price we paid for our room were free rides to a variety of cool places inside and outside of Cairo with drivers who worked for the hostel.

This was a huge relief. We had come to Cairo sans guidebook and had just planned on taking taxis or using public transportation, which would have been very expensive/unsafe. We probably didn't plan quite as well as we should have, but it all worked out, because our drivers and the other guys who worked at the hostel were so nice, and through them we had a chance to get to know real Egyptians...

Erin Rowley  
Small World blogger



"ON SECOND THOUGHT PUT THE GEORGE W. BUSH BOOK UNDER 'FICTION'?"

## Potter craze won't stop with movie

By Amanda Elser

It was June 19, 2000, and I can still remember it like it was yesterday. I was an eager 10-year-old who was pretending to be asleep when my mom checked in on me.



MY OPINION

In reality I was awake under my blanket reading with a flashlight keeping a close eye on the clock.

When the clock struck midnight it was the most disappointing minute of my life — I had just turned 11 and Hagrid didn't come pounding on my door to take me off to Hogwarts.

I was in denial for a bit — maybe America's wizard school waited until you were 12? And to quote Mary Beth Henry from the Three Broomsticks Club at Penn State, "I finally accepted the fact that I was going to have to go to high school."

Now that I just admitted to the entire Penn State community what a loser 10-year-old I was, I'm calling the rest of you out.

I know I wasn't the only one that felt a stab of disappointment when they actually had to come to terms with the fact that Harry Potter wasn't real. But the fact that the wizarding world wasn't real did not make the books any less magical.

Harry Potter was the first

book I ever read in less than 24 hours. Before these books, my library was limited to the Baby Sitter's Club and Nancy Drew. Harry Potter was just the stepping-stone. I found a love of reading thanks to J.K. Rowling's world, and she is probably the reason why I am a journalism major right now.

The point is, the Harry Potter books were my childhood and I'm not the only one that feels this way.

The movie franchise alone has made more than \$4 billion — a testament to the dedicated fans of our generation. This Friday is a bitter sweet ending to a high point of my youth. Since 6th grade I have been among the passionate fans that waited anxiously for that July or November release date.

The conclusion of the movies is the end of a piece of my adolescence. They represent more than just books, Harry Potter reinvented the world of imagination. Never before or after have I been that immersed in an imaginary place.

But the world won't end with the wrap up of the films — the loyal fans will make sure of that.

I have been shadowing the Three Broomsticks club lately for a project I am working on in my photojournalism class. I have been following around Mary Beth Henry, the captain of the Penn State Quidditch Team.

This past weekend, Penn State placed ninth in the Quidditch World Cup out of 46

teams participating in the Intercollegiate Muggle Quidditch Tournament. This may sound like a joke and, yes, adults running around Old Main lawn with mops between their legs because their brooms keep breaking sounds funny, but Quidditch is hard work.

The first practice I attended, someone sprained their ankle and this weekend Mary Beth was sent to the hospital to get stitches.

They sweat, they cramp and they sprint; mock we may, but they have a more rigorous exercise program than my occasional visit to the elliptical.

Now, these are the truly passionate Potter fans — the Three Broomsticks Club is not for the faint of heart. And while they have a weekly meeting to discuss their Potter obsession, the rest of us have to do it on a smaller scale (ABC Family Harry Potter weekend marathon anyone?)

These books and this world impacted the majority of our generation on some level, and though this column is seemingly the most embarrassing thing I have ever written, I will proudly wait in line at midnight to see the seventh film.

There are just some things that I can't give up no matter how old I get.

Amanda Elser is a senior majoring in journalism and is The Daily Collegian's Thursday columnist. Her e-mail is ale5045@psu.edu.

## SNAP, CRACKLE, POP Award night preview

This year's American Music Awards are right around the corner, providing some guaranteed entertainment before the rest of the country's universities let out.

Flashy commercials featuring the sounds of Justin Bieber, Ke\$ha, Katy Perry and Taylor Swift adorn the television stations, and advertising is surely not hurting for the award ceremony.

Kicking off at 8 p.m. Sunday, live from the Nokia Theatre L.A., the red carpet will roll out early to take in the artists and their glamorized selves.

But in case you're a little unsure what to expect, here's a preview.

This year, Eminem and Lady Antebellum have racked up the most nominations, each with five apiece, and Justin Bieber is close behind with four. B.o.B., Katy Perry, Ke\$ha and Usher also each received three.

As for awards, anyone could take it home. Here are my picks.

Up for Favorite Male Artist in the Pop/Rock division, we have the choices of Justin Bieber, Eminem and Usher. While the teenager crooning of Bieber is sure to make young girls swoon, I'm feeling Usher taking this one. Not many can compete with years of flawless performance and a relatively straight track record, in regards to women and legality issues.

Sorry Eminem — not this time.  
Brittany Horn  
Arts candidate

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