

OPINION

THE DAILY
Collegian

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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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ECO-ACTION PROTEST

Creative protests spark interest

On Thursday, members of the environmental awareness group Eco-Action stood in front of the HUB-Robeson Center with their pants down, and said they were more embarrassed about the university's use of coal energy than they were to be exposed.

Despite the cold temperatures on Thursday, the group drew a lot of attention from students.

This was a flashy way to get their message across, but we think it was both effective and relatively non-offensive.

Eco-Action should be commended for its ability to balance creative, engaging protests with actual discussion and initiatives with administration, as shown by their meetings with Graham Spanier earlier this semester.

This protest was a good way to bring students' attention toward environmental issues before the winter break.

However, we think that Eco-Action could have also employed other methods to educate other students about their causes.

Perhaps a more effective form of protest would have pertained more to the actual issue at hand — use of coal energy at Penn State and its negative effects, and why an alternative method would be better.

It's not entirely certain whether this pants-dropping protest will change the way the majority of students at Penn State feel about the university's use of coal energy.

But grabbing the attention of such a large student body is a commendable effort.



"WE'D PLANNED TO SPEND THE HOLIDAYS IN THE HOLY LAND, BUT, WITH ALL THE TERRORISM WE DECIDED ON DISNEYLAND..."

Balance career goals with serendipity

By Katie Sullivan

It's my last column of the semester, so I feel the pressure and urge to write something profound. My goal is to change your life in about 700 words.

Well, maybe not change your life, but at least get you thinking about things.

Perspective. That's what I'm aiming for.

Maybe this can be exemplified through a quote I heard when I listened to a session on campus by Rita Golden Gelman, author and nomadic world traveler. "I move through the world without a plan, guided by instinct, contacting through trust and constantly watching for serendipitous opportunities," she said in her speech.

When I heard these words, followed by stories of this amazing woman's journey of passion and adventure around the world, it was like something inside of me clicked.

It no longer seemed to matter what I did with my life, because if all else failed I could sell all of my worldly possessions and live in Malaysia for four years, just like Rita.

But like most good things, the euphoria of the words wore off when I walked into the Collegian office and a prospective news adviser started giving us advice on job searches in a crunched economy.

Immediately, I reverted back to the young woman who was

terrified of getting a job and entering a world where learning is no longer my focus, but rather making enough money to pay off my school loans.

Enter into the realm of taxes and bills, obligations and the "American dream."

How could I move through life without a plan? Sure, it's easy for Rita, she doesn't have bills to pay. She probably has a nice, fat alimony check funding her exotic lifestyle, I thought.

How could I rely on my own instincts when I can't even decide what I want to do with my life? I usually have pretty good judgement about people and situations, which is what makes me a journalist. Take that judgement with a grain of salt: I went into a "dying professional field" that makes beans for pay.

How can I trust anyone, save my inner circle, when my peers would kill for a position or job and sacrifice everything to be on top?

Then, I caught myself. I caught myself and immediately knew how flawed my thought process was when I remembered the last part of her quote, about "serendipitous opportunities" and such. How could I possibly run into any "serendipitous opportunities" if I lived a life full of militantly strict plans for the future and in fear of trusting my peers?

Let's bring the idea of perspective into the equation now. Realistically, I wouldn't want to drop my entire life to move to India and live an "eat, pray, love" kind of life.

I want to have a job in journalism, and I want to own a home

and have a family someday.

But I want to do all of those things while still embracing the "serendipitous moments" that life presents, even in my everyday routine of paying off loans and making sure I have enough money to keep my heat going.

I want to embrace new people and experiences and keep an open mind about everything. Pay attention to life outside Happy Valley. Know what's going on in the world so I can be a part of making it better. Take an extra vacation to an unknown destination every year. Never say no to a reasonable invitation. Trust a person until they give me a reason not to trust them. Find a way to share what I have and what I know with someone else.

These are the little things that brings the teachings of a female nomad to an average college girl looking to make her way in the world.

I may not be roaming around the jungles of a far away land, and I may not have the courage to give up my worldly possessions for a life of complete simplicity, but I have taken Rita's words to heart.

I will live my life embracing the fact that "serendipitous opportunity" is part of the mix, and I can't plan everything for the future. I can only know for sure what I stand for and how I interact with all those around me.

There you have it — perspective.

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Sexes hold different interests

While there were several good points made in Friday's article, "PSU addresses disparities," one of the main focuses of the article — the number of tenured men and women — should not be the basis for determining equality. There are interest disparities between genders that lead to numerical equality in some positions to be unreasonable. This seems to be overlooked in most situations. If there were 100 positions available in a field, and 150 men and 100 identically qualified women applied for those positions, the equal outcome would be that 60 men and 40 women get positions.

However, an outside eye could see that the system was biased towards men. The truth is that men and women cannot have identical lives. Men do not have to leave work to give birth, and generally women are the primary caregivers for children. That leads to a higher number of men in the workforce. If every profession expected an equal number of male and female employees, then any male would be disadvantaged compared to an equally qualified female. Similar disparities can be seen in athletics. Title IX requires equal funding for men and women in sports.

While that would look to create equality, consider this: Dave and Diane come from equal backgrounds. Both take up rowing in high school and have similar success. Both hope to row in college. However, there is no men's NCAA rowing championship. That exists only for women, created in 1997 to help schools reach Title IX requirements. Is this equality? Ask Dave.

Mike Kalsierian
senior-mechanical engineering

blog lines

SNAP, CRACKLE, POP

Tweets give taste of tour life

Being a huge fan of the Vans Warped tour, I follow a lot of bands that have played it on Twitter.

Usually, these bands tweet nothing more than mindless drivel or when they're eating Chipotle. But this past Thursday, I was riveted when many shared in the #tourstories trending topic, as bands reflected on the crazy situations they managed to get themselves into while on tour.

The tweets ranged from the eventful: Brian Dales — lead singer for The Summer Set

« brianlogandales Crashed a wedding at our hotel in Cincinnati with Pretty Ricky and A Rocket To The Moon. The groom opened a bar tab for us. #tourstories

George Ciukurescu — guitarist for Valencia

« georgevalencia « valenciashane and « Valenciacjd saved a family from a flipped over car during a blizzard on I-80 #tourstories

To the raunchy:

Jeffree Star

« JeffreeStar I hooked up with half of warped tour, my mom wasn't too happy about that #tourstories

To the really raunchy:

Matt Black — bassist for Every Avenue

« EAMatt: the singer of my old band shaved a dogs balls for \$50 for gas. #tourstories

Nick Cocozzella of Kill Paradise

« KillParadise Took a piss in a cup. Tried to toss it out the window, but the window was not open, pee everywhere. #tourstories

Then the world caught on and the hash tag was dominated by people who had only attended tours, not played on them. This made the Warped tour vets angry:

Tiffany Mink Barratt — former

Warped Tour pit reporter

« minkus If you haven't been on tour, you're not allowed to use #tourstories. Shooting a show for your school newspaper doesn't count.

« minkus (and sleeping with a guy then passing out on his tour bus also aren't #tourstories. More like #whorestories).

Whether you thought this was hilarious (like me) or just way too much information, you can't deny that it's a prime example of how social media is breaking down barriers between musicians and their fans.

Beth Ann Downey
Opinion page editor

Christmas shows ease mind

It's only a matter of days before winter break is here for Penn State students, and finals crunch-time will undoubtedly bring on a great deal of stress.

Though writing papers, working on projects and studying for finals is crucial, everyone needs to unwind at some point in the day to maintain sanity. TV junkies can rejoice at this time of year when Christmas movies abound nearly every day on multiple channels.

ABC Family is known for being generous during the holiday season with their month-long movie series, the 25 Days of Christmas. By visiting chiff.com, one can see the channel offers a mix of classic and more modern Christmas movies: The Nightmare Before Christmas (Dec. 4), Jack Frost (Dec. 6), Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer and the Land of Misfit Toys (Dec. 6)...

Erika Spicer
Arts candidate

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