

FRANKLY SPEAKING

Olin's unofficial,
student-run news
source.

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FREE, AS IN BEER

Drowning in Attentions

Kendall Pletcher

Editor

This time last year, I was filling out the last of the application materials for my study away program, located in Rabat, Morocco. I knew it would be no walk in the park. The Arab Spring uprisings, threatening violence and upheaval even in typically stable Morocco, had me crossing my fingers that the program wouldn't be cancelled before my flight took off. My advisor was against it, though she signed the papers amid talks of a "plan b" and "looking at options". She may have known a little of what I would face, but for me there was no "plan b". I didn't want a walk in the park; I wanted a challenge and I got one.

My greatest challenge in Morocco was undeniably my experience as a woman in an unashamedly patriarchal society, particularly street harassment--specifically *ghazal* and *syada*, the socially acceptable forms of street harassment.

In Morocco, there are five named categories of street harassment, beginning with compliments and ending in

rape. The first two categories are considered socially acceptable and any female visitor to Morocco should expect to encounter them regularly.

The first category, considered the most harmless, is *ghazal*, the so-called romantic harassment. This generally takes the form of compliments, especially the admiration of the subject's beauty. Kissing noises would follow me down the street. Men would whisper "beautiful" in my ear as I passed. *Ghazal* was a daily encounter for me which I eventually learned to ignore so effectively that I sometimes ignored actual acquaintances.

The name of the second category of accepted street harassment, *syada*, derives from the Arabic word for hunter, and street harassment in this category is thus more aggressive, threatening. *Syada* is when a man is persistent in his pursuit. If he calls you six times in a row, shows up to your house uninvited, follows you for two blocks, demands that you respond to his comments. When men 'hunted' me in each of these ways, they were practicing *syada*. While this kind of attention can stray into the "unwanted"

category, it is still tolerated.

In a seminar on street harassment, taught by one of my female Moroccan professors, this behavior was explained--by the professor and visiting Moroccan men--by saying that women are expected to show their modesty by reluctance to talk to a man; thus, there is no response which will serve as a deterrent. The man sees his persistence as showing his strength.

I hope that, to a westerner, *syada*'s undesirability is obvious. During one of our conversations on the subject, a friend speculated that perhaps Moroccan women did not seem as alarmed by *syada* as we were because they did not fear that the situation would turn more serious. What may seem to me to be the actions of a deranged stalker, to them, could be admirable perseverance.

Although *syada* was sometimes frightening, it was actually *ghazal* with which I had the most difficulty. It is impossible to explain the anger that comes to mind when I think of the so-called "romantic" street harassment. I remember the impotent rage I would feel at the end of the

Continued on next page

day. Sometimes, I wanted to hurt the men who yelled at me. In the Egyptian movie "789", the female lead stabs a man after being subjected to daily gropings. Some days, I imagined I could feel some small part of her fury.

Why? Why would innocent, harmless, complimentary *ghazal* inspire so much rage?

Part of it was frequency. For the nearly four months I spent in Morocco, there was not a single day when I was not approached by multiple men both physically and verbally. It was exhausting to be constantly ignoring people, avoiding eye contact in order to prevent *ghazal* from turning into *syada*, but also watching everyone around me so that I could move out of the way of the men who tried to block my path or split me off from my friends. If each interaction was a drop of rain, then I was in a thunderstorm, and I was drowning.

Second was the fact that every catcall, whistle, and comment was a reminder of my place as a woman in Moroccan society. I was under no illusion that my incredible beauty was the cause of the situation. The compliments were meaningless to me; they had been shouted to every women before.

And that's it. *Ghazal* wasn't about me. It was about the men who harassed me.

They were using me to have some fun, to feel like a man, or just as practice. Every word shouted at me on the street was a reminder that I should be inside, that my place was not in public, that

I had no power.

The worst aspect of *ghazal* was simply the feeling of powerlessness. From the beginning, we were warned not to react, not to engage, to avoid eye-contact. No matter how angry I was, no matter how much I did not want to be approached, there was nothing I could do, because any reaction would have encouraged my harassers. Worse, not only could I not react, I could not control it. I couldn't turn it off with my clothes any more than I could turn it on. I couldn't cross the street to avoid the car mechanic who inexplicably liked calling me his "white alligator with blue eyes" because he would follow me. It was real powerlessness in a way that I had never experienced before.

My experience may be different from what others have experienced. In fact, it varied quite a bit from those of the other women in my program. This was for a few different reasons. First: during the course of my research, I often traveled alone. A woman alone is treated far differently than a man or a woman with a man. Many of the men who were studying away with my program claimed disbelief when told stories about the street harassment we'd experienced. They'd walked with us countless times and never seen a thing. I was in Essaouira when a perfect example of this occurred. A cart pushed by a woman was directly bisecting the road and a male friend and I each took our respective halves. Mine, of

course, lead me past a group of young men who hooted and hollered and catcalled at me mercilessly. Minutes later, we turned around and passing by the same group of men, in the company of a man, there was silence.

Secondly: I am quite obviously not Moroccan. My appearance--that of a clear outsider--certainly affected my experience. In fact, my flatmates who could, as a result of multi-racial ancestry, "pass" as Moroccans compared their experience with mine--they received very little attention on the street while alone. This, compared to the fact that I could not leave our apartment by myself without being approached dozens of times, made an argument for the fact that men were targeting me as a foreigner. This argument was further supported by their additional observation that the majority of the harassment they encountered was when they were in larger groups, in other words, clearly visitors themselves.

Over the course of my study away I was groped, solicited for sex, lied to, intimidated, complimented, proposed to, asked out, cursed at, and called over a hundred times by a man who called my phone on a wrong number and decided he liked the sound of my voice. Some parts were truly challenging and others were a dream. Being a woman in Morocco was, at times, extraordinarily difficult, but I could never have even begun to understand without actually experiencing what it was like.

A Safe Conversation Space

Colby Sato

Staff Writer

At the beginning of high school, I had the feeling I was gay, and I was very worried about this possibility. I had seen flamboyant gay men on TV and heard about bear culture [overweight, hairy gay men that are usually dressed in shiny black leather and chains] from friends who knew the internet. I did not feel that I had much in common with these people. I felt misrepresented and confused. If I was not “gay,” how could I be gay? By the end of the year, I was more convinced I was gay, and with this realization I had to resolve the disconnection between my idea of myself and what I knew about “gayness.”

I really wanted to talk to gay people and find that I was not alone. I wanted to talk to gay people who were “like me.” I wanted to ask what it was like for them to be gay and ask them how they came out and how people reacted. Unfortunately, I did not know who else was gay. I was closeted at the time, so asking around was not an option; if I asked around, people would start thinking I was gay, and I was not ready for that.

I wished that I could simply go to a counselor. I would tell the counselor I was gay, and the counselor would open a magic book that would show me the names of all the people at my school who were gay. The book would be filled with pictures

and information about them, and I could learn all about people. Then, I would choose whom I felt most comfortable with and call them up or email them. All my questions would be answered, and I would be okay with being gay. Unfortunately, there was no magical book, but I think I have created something better.



Source: jaysanders.com

With the design guidance of my classes at Olin and the support of friends, teachers and OSL, I have created Closet Conversations. Closet Conversations is a website through which closeted and questioning students can find and anonymously message openly queer students and faculty at Babson, Olin and Wellesley. The advantage of the site over a book is that a site is more dynamic than a book, people our age are comfortable with computers and the internet, and all messaging can be done in the comfort of one’s room. One would not even need to come out to a counselor. Sign-up is

easy, and all conversations are confidential [except in cases in which we are concerned about serious self-inflicted harm]. We are not selling ourselves as professional counselors, but if one wants to talk to someone professional, the Trevor Project is great [<http://www.thetrevorproject.org/>]. We currently have eleven people on the site, and we will have more after this coming Saturday. My goal is to attract a diverse group of student and faculty resources to the site such that anyone can find someone whom they feel they could relate to.

On February 4th, 2012, we will host training in the Crescent Room. If you would like to be a part of the site as a queer student or faculty resource, please email me, and I will make sure we have enough food. You can also sign up on the Facebook group, “Training Session.” Right now the site is inaccessible, but following this training session, I will open the site up, and everyone who was trained will be available on the site as a resource. We can answer questions such as: “How did you know you were queer?” “What was it like coming out?” and “Have things gotten better?” I encourage anyone questioning or closeted to check out the website: <http://closetconversations.ning.com/>

If you have questions or comments, feel free to email Colby at cjsato@gmail.com.

The Struggle for Good Enough

Kelsey Breseman

Editor-in-Chief

I was angry. I was right. And as usual, it didn't make a bit of difference.

We were building a woodshed to earn our keep, and my father Rick and I were each adamant about our own, contradicting design decisions. My way would make the roof stronger. His would get the job done faster. Either way, our materials were poor salvage and the sun was too hot.

And Rick's way was wrong.

A month and a half earlier, in winter, we had together borne witness to another act of treason, this time in fire-building. Rick taught me how to make a fire when I was five years old, and he's been chopping kindling for far longer than that, so we have some experience with fire building.

And this was simply wrong.

Diminutive Tia Paty had shoved a large chunk of hardwood into the back of her woodstove oven, her creased hands breaking a couple of smaller twigs to throw in afterward. And then a wad of paper, shoved in last as Rick and I exchanged glances, aghast.

But it was her house, and cold without a fire. Surely, she must know how to warm the place on a winter night?

In the matter of woodshed building, Rick has some experience as well. He built a house for himself when he

was seventeen, and it's still doing fine; I visited my uncle there this summer. And our woodshed, raised some fifteen years ago, shelters the wood we chop to this day.

But to my fresh young eyes, my logical studying-to-be-an-engineer mind, the strength of this new woodshed's roof was in peril if we carried on as Rick proposed. Our tools and boards were poor enough, so we should build it as strong as possible.

Rick told me I was being silly, and for some reason, as tends to happen, we did it his way.

This was a few months ago now, and I haven't been back since, but my guess is that the woodshed stands, and its roof is fine. It was strong enough the next day, when we knelt on its boards to tack on tar paper and aluminum, and the day after that it remained too, despite strong winds in the night.

But why was I so concerned at the time?

I think there is a danger in knowing the right way to do things, the theoretical best construction and materials. Or rather, there is danger in the separation between the right and the real world.

Sure, some of us will go on to design airplanes, computer parts, high-precision robotics. That's the time to be right. But most of the time? People just want the job done. They want it to work, and then they move on to the next thing.

With the woodshed, my

way, while maybe a little stronger, would have taken a few more hours in the hot sun. And since our time was limited, we might have built a really solid foundation, but not had time to finish.

Often, our time or resources are the limiting factor. Maybe you, like us, will be working with the lumber scraps you found in the backyard, or you have nails at hand when getting screws would take another run to the hardware store.

Maybe you have the materials and expertise, but the use you'll get out of your product isn't worth the time it takes to do it perfectly.

And maybe you're the only one asking for perfection in a project that to everyone else, is just today's problem, something to get done.

Our woodshed, once finished, was just what we were asked to build. It covered the wood, and no one had to go shopping, even though our lumber was warped and the nails a little too long. We finished it in a couple of days, rather than a week, and we made it well, if not perfectly.

And then we moved on.

Tia Paty's fire lit, by the way. It lit quickly and easily, and we shrugged off our astonishment over hot food and warm hands.

And when I built the fire in the "right" way, it worked about the same. And we didn't worry about it, because in the real world, the "right" way doesn't matter, as long as it's good enough.

Announcing Extended BOW Shuttle Hours

Last semester, Thomas Dugger applied for a grant from the Mellon Foundation with a proposal to run a pilot of an extended shuttle service between Olin, Babson, and Wellesley Colleges.

With the money received from the foundation, extended shuttle

services are being offered from Monday, January 30th until Sunday, February 19th. When riding during these extended times, please be sure to sign in--if there is enough demonstration of interest from students, the change may become permanent.

As a part of this effort

to increase interaction between the three schools, Olin students are invited to a mixer at Wellesley's Tishman Commons on Friday, February 10th from 5-7pm.

Questions or comments? Contact Colby Sato at Colby.Sato@students.olin.edu.

SOCIAL MEDIA "GURUS"



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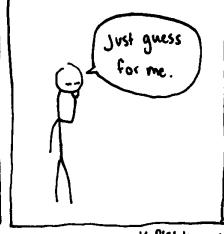
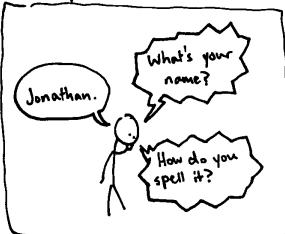
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30 blogs

Toothpaste For Dinner.com

True story...



"Drawings by Kendall, funny by Jon"

K.Pletcher 1/12

FRANKLY INTERVIEW: AARON HOFFMAN

A candid conversation with Professor Aaron Hoffman, about linearity, wave propagation, and his passion for applied mathematics.

Aaron Hoffman's office is sparse but lived-in, with a few chalk and crayons drawings on the wall, courtesy of his young daughter. The bookshelf is full of mathematics texts in various colors, and the table is laid with a draft of a problem set.

Originally from a New York suburb, Aaron comes to Olin via Swarthmore, Brown, and Boston University. This is his first teaching post, and he's spent the last year and a half fostering mathematical enthusiasm wherever it presents itself, and his passion is obvious. Though he answered many of my questions with seeming reluctance, Aaron spoke with exclama-

tion marks when I asked him about math.

FRANKLY: Tell me about the new Linearity course.

HOFFMAN: The idea is to deliver a four-credit, full-semester course that overlaps significantly with the content that you would see in a normal linear algebra plus differential equations course, but which really takes a perspective on what's happening. The perspective is from dynamical systems, which really builds on ModSim. We're revisiting and analyzing models for population ecology, for mechanics, for circuits, for different domains in engineering and

applied sciences, trying to understand the mathematical mechanisms that make those models have the behavior that they do.

FRANKLY: Were you involved in the whole creation process of the course?

HOFFMAN: They in fact made it a point when they were hiring me. They waited to start the ideation process until I was on board.

I've had a great opportunity. Sarah Spence Adams and John Geddes have more experience than I do, they've been thinking about pedagogy in math education for a long time, so I've had an opportunity to develop this Linearity course with them.

I've observed a change in



"Most people want to learn math because it's a tool that works."

"Somehow, through the force of my enthusiasm, you're learning!"

"It's hard to figure out ...the downstream effects of a change..."

myself, in my perspectives on teaching. Last year at this time, I would not have been ready to embrace a course like Linearity, which is so heavily studio based. And I'm so excited about it.

FRANKLY: You're used to lecturing, then?

HOFFMAN: Yes. Interactive lectures where you're really trying to engage the students, where you're cold-calling, interacting. But lectures! Lectures where I get to be there talking about math, which I love! And somehow, through the force of my enthusiasm, you're learning!

But the studio-based approach is really fascinating to me, and I can see how it can work. I'm excited to see what the results of this semester turn up.

I try to bring passion and intensity to my classes. I think if I pump energy into the classes then the students pump energy into the classes, and if I don't, they won't, typically. I also want them to be doing math. If the students are not doing math, they are not learning math. But whether that's accomplished through problem sets that they do at home, or quizzes and tests, or studio problems, or problems embedded in the reading is a matter of personal taste.

FRANKLY: What is your field of research?

HOFFMAN: I'm interested in differential equations, those that support pulses or fronts, like a dislocation moving through a crystal, a spinodal decomposition in an alloy, a wave of advance of an invasive species taking over the habitat of the native species.

Very different kinds of models when you look at their instantiations, but the underlying mathematics is very similar. You have pulses or fronts moving through a spatially extended system. And I'm interested in how those fronts and pulses arise, what their stability properties are, and what their interaction properties are. I try to prove really the underlying mathematical mechanism.

FRANKLY: Are students working with you on your research?

HOFFMAN: I'm new faculty, so I haven't really ramped up my undergraduate program yet, but this summer I'm going to have a couple students working with me, and we'll see what goes from there. I'm really looking forward to it. I think in the classroom, I need to reach 85 percent of the students at least. Hopefully 100, but I'm realistic. To recruit for my research program, I only need to reach five percent of the students. So if there are only a handful of students who are really, really excited about mathematics, I can provide something for them.

FRANKLY: You minored in biology as an undergrad. Do you still have an interest in that field?

HOFFMAN: At Olin, more than other places, faculty really do maintain solid footing in multiple disciplines. It is very hard to do that. Some of the equations that I study are, for example, propagation of electrical signals in nerves, so I'm familiar with those equations, and some of the theorems I prove are related

to that. But to really immerse yourself in the world of biology- it's not something I've undertaken at this point as a professional researcher.

FRANKLY: If you could change one thing about Olin, what would it be?

HOFFMAN: It's hard to figure out what the downstream effects of a change would be. It's natural to miss having math majors, students who want to learn math for its beauty rather than as a tool. But most people don't want to learn math for its beauty. Most people want to learn math because it's a tool that works. And being forced to wrestle with that, figuring out how to deliver that content to engineers in a way that helps them grow as scholars and that gives them the tools they need is a fascinating challenge.

FRANKLY: What do you do when you're not doing math?

HOFFMAN: My kids are aged 2 1/4 and 4 1/3 and they're great fun. I spend a lot of time hanging out with them and taking care of them.

I do not have the sort of wholistic, well-balanced life that the office of student life describes. I don't have my own passionate pursuit right now. But having a family is sort of a passionate pursuit.

FRANKLY: Are you on campus all of the time?

HOFFMAN: I go home when it gets dark, and I stay there until it gets light again.

But I like to talk to people about math, and I try to make myself available to do so. If people want to talk to me about math, they can find me in the Dining Hall.

Review: *The Artist*

Ilana Walder-Biesanz
Contributing Writer

The best film I've seen in a long time was black-and-white and (mostly) silent. You might think those adjectives apply only to movies made before the 1930s, but this one was created and released in theaters in 2011. Its endearing characters and compelling plot have won over critics and audiences alike, making a strong case for the continued relevance and interest of silent films.

The Artist tells the story of two actors navigating the transition between silent films and talkies. George Valentin (Jean Dujardin) is an older star on his way out, too stubborn to transition to talking pictures, which he insists are a fad. Peppy Miller (Bérénice Bejo) becomes an actress because of an encounter with George, but her star waxes as his wanes. Jealousy, love, and pride define their relationship over the course of the film. The plot is often humorous, but also moving. George's financial and professional frustrations are profound and touching, as is Peppy's affection for George.

The Artist is essentially a love letter to the film industry. It frequently references scenes and music from classics and breaks the fourth wall to cleverly explore the medium of film and the question of dialogue in films. In one scene, the objects around George begin to make sounds, but he remains silent

despite his efforts to scream. The scene coyly acknowledges the presence of the audience—of course, George should not actually be startled that setting a glass down on a table makes a sound, because it always does and it is only the limitation of the film medium that usually prevents the audience from hearing that sound too. This breaking of the fourth wall increases the scene's comedic effect without detracting from our sympathy with George's terror at being stuck in a silent world.

The acting in *The Artist* is perfectly suited to a mod-

ern silent film. The actors use the techniques, gestures, and facial expressions common to the silent-film era, when visual cues had to be more obvious to present a story despite the absence of dialogue. But except in certain film-within-the-film scenes, these techniques are used moderately enough that they don't seem jarring to modern audiences, who are accustomed to understated acting.

Old movie buffs will delight in the Easter eggs scattered throughout, but I suspect almost anyone who attends will enjoy *The Artist*. It will leave you with tears in your eyes and new appreciation for the golden age of American cinema.

Rubber Soul (The Many Uses of Rubber Bands)

Molly Farison

Staff Poet

*Make a motor with your Legos
Preserve the freshness of your Eggos
Shoot at strangers, start a riot
Extra fiber in your diet
Attach a cell phone to your ear
Make a marker for your beer
Stretchy leashes for your dogs
Protect your pants leg from bicycle cogs
Revamp your shoes with cheap new laces
Add some pain to your mouthful of braces
Play catch with a bouncy rubber ball
Make a net to catch your fall
Use scissors and glue to make some art
Hold things together when your life falls apart
Keep the Saran wrap on things you cook
Mark your place in your favorite book
Lace them together to make a strong cord
Keep all the things in your truck bed on board
Pass the time in any old place
Keep them around your left wrist just in case!*

Horoscopes by Drunk Editors

Aries (March 21-April 19): The cosmic plane has a kind of weird stain in your corner. Review your notes, and check your math. This is your stupid month. Especially for dating. Just don't do it. You'll only fuck it up. Take time for yourself. As in, you're single for a reason.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): Authorities may need persuasion, so articulate the benefits of your point of view. You might need to get persuasive, if you know what I mean. Provide excellent service with the finest ingredients. Additionally. Prepare for later lunch, because of that class that always runs late.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): You surprise everyone with your style choices this month. Do us all a favor, and stick to the basics. Don't ignore facts. You know that person you've been hitting on since classes started? Yeah, they're not interested. Accept advice from people who know better.

Cancer (June 22-July 22): Your nurturing helps others with their anxiety problems. Too bad it can't help your love life, and hoo-ee it could use some! Include futuristic fonts. Futuristic fonts are the best. Envision the road ahead.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): Look into the distance for upcoming obstacles. You thought things were going so great, and now you have to have a "talk". Well, can't say I envy you. Happy Valentine's day. Zoom on by.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): A new month means a new chance! Get ahead in your career by accessing your ambition. Take today and catch up on the things you've been putting off. Stop being such a lazy procrastinator. In other words, start answering my emails, (non-gendered) bitch.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): The adventure's just beginning. And not the kind of adventure that ends happily. You thought you were going to be the hero; turns out you're just NPC. Oh well, we can't all be awesome. Flexibility and patience are key.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You should probably cut a few of your classes in order to make a grand, romantic gesture. Grand gestures are definitely not the mark of a desperate person. Share a feast; obligations may force a delay.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You're most likely to make a silly mistake or feel insecure. All you really need is love. But you

worry about it so much that you'll never find it. Press the pedal down to make things happen.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Comet Elenin is not expected to encounter any dark bodies that could perturb its orbit, and you aren't either. Try to find some sluttier clothing. It's probably the best thing you have going for you right now. Also Venus is in its eighth house or some bullshit.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): An unfriendly new moon is predicted. Build a solid foundation. Raise walls. Maybe a roof. Nothing can find you in your fortress. Especially not love.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): Meteors fall across the face of Jupiter. Troubled times are ahead. But don't worry, there's hope! You have a support network! Your loved ones believe in you more than you do. Trust them. They're probably right this time.



Companies with Personality

Jon McKay

Staff Writer

As a computer science major, I have a tendency to force problems into algorithms, usually to a fault. While taking part in an International Business Semester at Copenhagen University last semester, I focused my algorithm goggles: what makes a company successful? One similarity that really struck me was personality. More specifically, the personality of the person in charge with respect to the projected image of the company.

Take Apple. They're well known for their beautiful design and attention to detail. It's the Apple that Steve Jobs grew. And if you're one of the millions of people who read his biography, you'll know that he, too, was driven by beautiful design and a painstaking, detailed-oriented obsession with computing devices. His personality was embodied by his company.

Let's look at one of Ap-

ple's biggest competitors: Microsoft and its founder Bill Gates. Bill grew up in an upper-middle class family in Washington, an average man with an unassuming demeanor and an affinity for writing functioning code. Likewise, the software produced by Microsoft during Gates' years as CEO was primarily directed at improving the lives of average people across the world with little emphasis on elegant user interfaces. Like the founder, the products of Microsoft weren't particularly ostentatious or eye-catching.

There are more examples: Sergey Brin (Google) with his technical background and austere, speedy web applications; Richard Branson (Virgin Group) with his daring, adventurous spirit and competitive, innovative, and usually risky companies. All of these companies have the personality of their founders woven into the fabric of their identities. But is this personality helpful for business?

In an industry with doz-

ens of competitors producing essentially the same product, creating an emotional tie with potential customers makes a company more memorable and increases the likelihood of loyalty. What better way to create a company with a rich, genuine image than by basing it off of a real person? Months of marketing design is no match for years of experience molding a personality. Furthermore, the personality doesn't matter. Take RyanAir, a highly successful, no-frills, airline. Their CEO, Michael O'Leary, is known to be blunt and unfriendly and, as anyone who's flown RyanAir knows, they run a tight, minimum-customer service flight. What you see is what you get. But the "compassionless jerk" is a unique personality in business. It's something you remember and know how to deal with.

So when starting a company, go ahead and inject your DNA into it. Let your company be somebody. Let it be you.



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Frankly Speaking is pleased to announce the addition of a new advice column. Dr. Liu will anonymize and answer your interpersonal problems and questions. Submit questions to roland.liu@students.olin.edu. If you want to submit questions anonymously, you can write them on paper and drop them off at WH315.

DOCTOR · LIU

Dear Doctor Liu,

There are too many dicks on the dance floor.

*Love,
Not-a-dick*

Dear Dickless,

If there are too many dongs, and too many shlongs, make sure before you go: the dance floor bro-hoe ratio; Five to one is a brodeo! It's easy to fix, just spread out the dicks! It's a dance floor... what can you expect, in all honesty?

But in all seriousness – Tits or GTFO.

(I'm a bad person...)

Dear Doctor Liu,

I have a problem that's been bothering me for a long time:

When you're walking down the street and you see a person panhandling, what do you do? Keep walking? Give them change if you have some? It always feels awkward.

*Your Friend,
Fishing for money*

Dear Ghoti,

Usually when I'm in

cities or places when I encounter people panhandling, I'm usually shopping. And because I'm an old fart, I usually purchase things with cash, in which case my pockets are usually happily jingling as I walk. When I see a mendicant in my path, I usually just see if I have any spare change in my pockets – sometimes if I'm in a good mood, I may search for dollar bills as well.

So I usually have the money in my hand as I pass by them, in which case I just casually toss the money in their jar/bin/cup/hat and move along. It's much less awkward when you don't make much eye contact, because then they may feel like you pity them – which may be true, but no one likes to be pitied. If I don't have change on me, I never take out my wallet to give them money – it feels unnatural, awkward, and all sorts of bad stuff.

Dear Doctor Liu,

I would like some advice on how to catch por-

cupines in Parcel B. This endeavor has been giving me trouble for years.

*Thanks millions,
Velociraptor*

Dear Velociraptor,

I have found the seat cushions of the West Hall lounge chairs to be quite instrumental in my porcupine-acquiring escapades.

Dear Doctor Liu,

What is this white stuff on the ground? It's kind of squishy and gross, but it's also kind of pretty. It sure makes it hard to drive my Californian car. What is it, and where does it come from? What do I do with it?

California gurl

Dear Gurl,

When a mommy cloud abstains for extended periods of time, sometimes the daddy cloud just has to, you know, relieve himself. What you do with it is your own prerogative, but I think it's quite tasty.

Roland

F SEEKING WHATEVER FOR VALENTINES DAY

by Jackie Rose

I've never dated anyone long enough to make it to February, and therefore have never had a date on Valentine's Day. This year, I'm changing that. I'm going on a date with Geoff Pleiss on February 14th, 2012. The problem is neither of us wants to go on a date with each other, so we're each seeking out a special someone and double dating. With this article, I am opening applications to be my Valentine. The requirements for the position are as follows:

- I've never dated anyone long enough to make it to February, and therefore have never had a date on Valentine's Day. This year, I'm changing that. I'm going on a date with Geoff Pleiss on February 14th, 2012. The problem is neither of us wants to go on a date with each other, so we're each seeking out a special someone and double dating. With this article, I am opening applications to be my Valentine. The requirements for the position are as follows:

 1. Design Nature is a necessary prerequisite, as it's a good thing to talk about when we have awkward silences.
 2. Gender doesn't matter, but I'd prefer male or female.
 3. Applicants must be above 5'8" or less than 3'8" tall. I want to be able to imagine you as an Elf or a Hobbit, but nothing in between. (Though if you happen to look a lot like Aragorn, I can make exceptions.)
 4. You can't know all of the jokes in the world, because I dislike it when people ruin my punchlines.
 5. You need to be able to hold your liquor, because I'm not walking you back to your room. (Unless the date goes really well, in which case I will definitely be walking you back and probably into your room.)
 6. Applicants with prior experience in the field will receive preferential placement in the second

round of interviews.

7. Applicants must be comfortable with working in groups.
 8. Experience in nodeology (the study of knots) is a plus.
 9. b սմ զ՞ն սի՞ն ի՞ն ի՞ն
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թշվայ՞ն լո՞ ի՞ն յա՞ր: .
 10. BioE's need not apply.

If your application is accepted, please be prepared for a technical interview. The second round of the application process will include an oral examination.

Applications and references can be sent to EH426B.

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