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| ▲ see page 5.

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GENERAL PUBLIC

Column

Stupid cupid

BY ALEJANDRO ALBA
The Prospector



Dear Cupid, I'm afraid that the 14th day in February is an insignificant holiday due to the fact that many people don't even know who St. Valentine is. A holiday, after all, should be a day when you celebrate a special someone, or a special event. But for people in the 21st century, a holiday means gifts and more gifts. Oh, and getting drunk and laid as well. Either way, I'd like to let you know that you are just as significant on this day as the bunny is on Easter. Where do you even come in, and why? I know you are the Roman god of erotic love, the equivalent to the Greek god Eros and the son of Venus, the goddess of love and beauty. Many will agree, but what does a chubby little kid in diapers with a bow and arrow have to do with St. Valentine? Well, nothing. People simply liked the idea that you are the god of desire. Therefore, they began using your image for the "holiday," shooting your bow to supposedly inspire romantic love. Well, I haven't received any inspirations yet so I should put an arrow through your heart just for not being important, and for not striking both my crush and I with your stupid arrows.

So you see Chubsters, you go around making people want to be with someone on this ordinary day, creating false hopes and depressing nights. Due to you neglecting your duties of making people not fall in love, many people have an "I hate Valentine's Day party" every year now. Parties for those who are single,

willing to mingle, but remain heart-broken and bitter. Other people host these parties just to go against the capitalistic market that is a parasite on the day of St. Valentine's and your disturbing image. But by having an "I hate Valentine's Day party," it is just another way to hit the market. Instead of buying heart shaped products for their significant other, they are buying heart shaped products to be simply thrown away. So those people who don't do Valentine's because it is a capitalistic holiday, are still contributing to the cause by organizing a party on that day. We are all means of massive consumption, after all. The one thing we lack, though, is your "love." According to ancient history, you are described as fickle, playful and perverse. And often depicted as carrying two sets of arrows: one set gold-headed, to inspire love; and the other lead-headed, to inspire hatred. Well, it looks you have shot me after all, but with the lead-headed arrow. Which I'm ok with. I don't require much love during these bogus holidays so don't you dare hit me with your golden arrows, because to me, you don't inspire romance. To me, you're just a little perverse butter-ball that goes flying around with his twinkie-winkie loose, and to me, that will bring disturbance. Regardless of my issues with you, an unreal character that is much referenced, it is important to remember that being alone on Valentine's Day is just as being alone on any other day of the year. There is no need to treat it any different or feel any different. Sincerely, Exasperated me.

Alejandro Alba may be reached at prospecto@utep.edu

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the prospector

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Politics

Hot or not? Do looks matter in American politics?



BY ADAM MARTÍNEZ
The Prospector

The 2012 presidential elections are right around the corner and candidates are campaigning hard to woo the hearts of voters.

In an era where media and technology dominates electoral politics, it is widely believed that a candidate's sex appeal affects his or her chances of being elected. So come November, will people vote with their heads or with their eyes?

Political scientists at MIT recently conducted a study showing that people around the world are heavily in-

fluenced by appearance in voting for a politician. So do looks really matter?

"Looks have always mattered in elections, regardless of where they are held," said Gregory Rocha, associate professor of political science.

Research has shown that physically attractive politicians seem to outperform their peers. The same can be said about good-looking people in other professions, who get paid an average of 12 to 14 percent more than their unattractive co-workers.

"Political elections are pretty much like pageants, there really is no substance other than the differences between the candidates," said Edgardo Peregrino, senior applied math-

ematics major, "So the only thing you have to do is look nice and look presentable."

Tony Payan, associate professor of political science, also believes looks matter, but only to a certain extent.

"They are not a determinate of electoral or political success, because there are a lot of variables," Payan said. "Think of elections as essentially a beauty contest and you have to show a certain degree of attractiveness. Politics being what it is and democracy being what it is, a contest, the packaging really matters."

People tend to think simply about whom to vote for, and the way a person looks says a lot to a voter. Political analysts said that despite the ambiguity of judging people based on looks, voters often draw inferences about the character and abilities of politicians from their facial features. Favorable traits such as talent, kindness, honesty and intelligence are automatically assigned to good-looking individuals. Further, these judgments are made without being aware that physical attractiveness plays a role in the decision.

"The voters tend to be not very complex thinkers and tend to use simpler heuristics to understand who they are going to vote for, particularly those who are in the middle and non-partisan," Payan said. "They will often latch on to particular stereotypes."

Female politicians are more susceptible to being judged by their appearance and attractiveness than their male counterparts.

"Usually, people don't care what a man looks like, but when Hilary Clinton was running for president the media always focused on what she was wearing and what she looked like," said Monica Molinar, senior history major.

Political analysts believe the GOP is embracing an array of female politicians in hopes of attracting more male voters.

"What is true is that not very good-looking people don't do well," Payan said. "If you're not blessed with good looks, you have to do something more to sell yourself, elections essentially being a marketing campaign."

Physical appearance, competence, verbal skills and a charming personality are all important in elections, especially when the differences on

political issues and ideology between candidates is small.

"Being well-dressed and groomed is obviously crucial, but so does knowing who the audience is," Rocha said. "Regardless, how one looks is just one part of a pretty complicated set of considerations made by voters and includes: the candidate's record, the ad campaign, contacts made on behalf of the candidate and so forth."

Senior history major Stefanie Morales hopes voters would see beyond good looks and a smile and make thoughtful decisions on election day.

"I don't think sex appeal should matter, but I'm sure it does to some people," Morales said. "Why should we care how someone looks, it has nothing to do with how they will perform."

Adam Martínez may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

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Columns

Amigos... ¿Sin sexo?

POR DIEGO BURCIAGA
The Prospector



Este tan polémico tema ha sido motivo para largas horas de plática entre amigos y parejas, pero aún nadie ha llegado a una conclusión y por lo visto no estamos cerca.

El hecho de que exista una amistad entre personas del sexo opuesto es casi un mito. Hombres y mujeres que han llevado una relación de amistad de mucho tiempo y que nunca se han visto comprometidos en un aspecto sexual es algo de admirar, pero la mayoría sabemos que eso es algo tan común como los cometas, sólo pasa cada setenta años.

Por definición, amistad es confianza y afecto desinteresado entre las

personas involucradas, aquí la palabra clave es “desinteresado” lo cual no siempre se logra. Sinceramente, creo en la verdadera amistad entre géneros y la apoyo, pero siendo objetivo, entre una mujer y un hombre siempre existe algún vínculo o interés que los atrae y que independientemente que al principio de la relación esto no se perciba, tarde o temprano ambas partes se verán involucradas en alguna confusión entre amigos y “algo más.”

Por más que se diga que hombres y mujeres somos iguales, eso no es ni será posible. Desde nuestra biología, hasta la manera de pensar hombres y mujeres diferimos en la manera de percibir las relaciones.

Cuando una mujer piensa: “el no es más que un amigo, no me gusta; pero es lindo, lo quiero mucho” los hombres pensamos: “...es mi amiga pero no le diría que no si me pidiera pasar una noche con ella...” Y es por esto que a lo

largo de la relación habrá un momento en el que alguna de las dos partes ceda.

El delicado equilibrio entre verdadera amistad y “amigos con derechos” es muy frágil; la convivencia, confianza y afecto son cosas que nos pueden confundir y disfrazar el hecho de que alguien nos gusta realmente.

El hombre puede llevar una amistad con una mujer de manera fácil siempre cuando esa amiga no nos guste o no nos de pie. Pongámoslo así: los hombres somos como aquel terrorista en potencia esperando el momento correcto para lanzar su ataque encubierto, y la mujer aquella víctima incauta de las intenciones del hombre, aunque muchas veces la mujer también toma el rol de terrorista y ataca.

Existen muchos ejemplos a nuestro alrededor de esto, empezando desde nuestro círculo social más cercano, hasta Hollywood con películas como “When Harry met Sally” (1989), “No strings attached” (2011), “Friends with benefits” (2011) y “Love and other drugs” (2010), en las que se refleja que el sexo esta presente en las relaciones que comienzan como amistad.

Reitero que no soy un pesimista que no ve la remota posibilidad de una relación de verdadera amistad entre un hombre y una mujer. Objetivamente, la amistad es algo que se está desvirtuando en un concepto en el que el sexo es el fin y donde el hombre da afecto y confianza para recibir sexo y la mujer da sexo para recibir afecto y confianza. No intento ponerle fin a la discusión, puesto que hay muchos puntos de vista, pero en mi opinión, la verdadera amistad entre géneros es algo muy difícil de alcanzar y más si no se tiene claro la importancia del desinterés en la amistad.

Diego Burciaga puede ser contactado en prospector@utep.edu.

BIG TRUTH Size doesn't matter

BY KRYSTAL OBLINGER
The Prospector



Big truth: size doesn't matter the way many think it does.

Growing up, there seemed to be this utter need for men to have an adequate size male sex organ, which means really nothing for a girl. Walking into a football locker room and hearing jokes like “he ain't hung like a horse” or “it's not the size of the boat, it's the motion of the ocean,” didn't faze me, not because size was important, but because sex wasn't a big issue. The truth is, when sex did become part of my life there wasn't any notice of the size versus how good it felt and it turns out, research agrees with this.

The phrase “it's not the size of the boat, it's the motion of the ocean,” basically means that if its small, medium or big, just know how to use it. There seems to be different techniques, but in studies conducted by British researchers at BJU International, almost 63 percent of men said they were afraid of having a smaller than normal penis, but none of them had smaller than normal. According to Valerie Farrington, nurse practitioner at the UTEP Student Health Center, each size has its advantage and disadvantage.

Having a small penis is all about angling. What do I mean by that? Guys with smaller penises have a better chance at hitting the notorious g-spot more then men with huge schlongs. Imagine, you can tap that sensitive island of prominent female pleasure left and right and never get a bad review for having problems with size. In the same British research, “85 percent of women reported they were happy with their partner's size,” so either we don't notice the difference or you're doing something right.

Average size men have abilities for both sides. In the proper angle, average sized men can stimulate the clitoris and the g-spot at the same time; plus, average sizes tend to have slightly more girth, which stimulates the nerve endings at the entrance to the vagina. Basically, a thick penis presses the labia and lower vaginal wall in such a way that brings immense pleasure during sex.

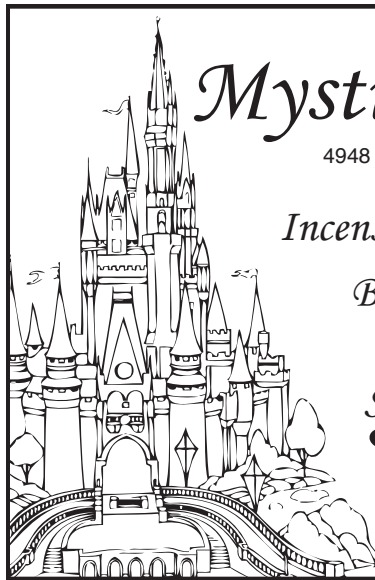
Here is the huge truth: giant penis's, although they may seem to be a dominating vagina destroying beasts, women have a fear that they may get wrecked in the worst possible way. Large penises can pummel the female organ and cause tearing, bruising and bleeding. Girls, imagine making love to an actual cucumber? That makes me cringe.

Many times girls actually look at a man's penis and think it is bigger then they think it is. Consider the infamous angle. You look down and see your little buddy pointing up, or away - I mean everyone is different - your eyes will play tricks on you and create an optical illusion. Its happens to girl when they look down at their own body.

Porn, films, magazines, you name it and they have conditioned you to believe that your penis needs to be massive. Type in penis size and many of the ads that pop up are for penis enlargement. Watch a porno and the strapping young stud is packing some heat as he's banging into his female counterpart. Jokes are thrown in films about the “perfect penis” size. A “Superbad” character had a fixation on the beautiful image of the giant cock.

For now, just know, cuddle up close to your lady on this fine Valentine's Day and if you decide to engage in the term known as sex, don't worry about the size and give her what she wants!

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Sex

Wrap it before you tap it

Social networking to prevent the spread of STDs

BY KRYSTAL OBLINGER & HENRY
ARRAMBIDE

The Prospector

Roses are red, violets are blue, but beware the rashes, blisters and itches that may follow you. After the flowers have withered and bears are unstuffed if you didn't wrap it when you tapped it on V-day, spending your cash may not be the only thing that haunts you.

The spread of STDs such as gonorrhea, chlamydia, HIV and AIDS has long been a fearful issue for students at many universities, including UTEP.

"University students are at a higher risk for transmitting STDs because they are just discovering their sexuality," said Valerie Farrington, nurse practitioner at the Student Health Center. "Mommy and daddy aren't around; it's very common to go away to college and start experimenting with various things, sexuality is one of them. There are so many opportunities around, it's very tough to maintain self control when there's so many chocolates surrounding you; it's hard to deny the chocolate. It's too bad because the STD rate is the highest with this age group."

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 300,000 cases of gonorrhea were reported in 2010. Cases of chlamydia have increased in the past 20 years, as 1.3 million people were diagnosed with the disease the same year. Twenty-five percent of people having sex are between the ages of 18 and 26. Of that age group, nearly half have been infected. and have seen the greatest rise in sexually transmitted diseases. In 2010 alone, 309,341 gonorrhea and 1,307,893 chlamydia cases were reported in that age group.

With numbers ranging in the millions, the CDC and many other sources recommend one vital product to help prevent the spread of any kind of STD: condoms.

Students believe that the reason for the rise is simple: people don't use condoms.

"I think condoms are effective in trying to prevent STDs and pregnan-

cy. You just have to make sure that it's the right size and everything is okay," said Brian Acuna, freshman microbiology major. "If you're going to engage in sexual activity, you always have to keep in account the STDs that go around and you have to be careful and protect yourself."

Despite this advice, the numbers keep rising and the battle of how to handle it rages on.

Across the Atlantic Ocean in Sweden, gonorrhea and chlamydia are on the rise, as well. In order to combat the spread of these diseases, an organization named LAFA devised a campaign that played off the use of condoms and a type of branding that many people who are college aged could relate to. Condom08, or Kon-dom08, is an iPhone/Android phone app with a built-in social network that, when used correctly, is able to monitor sex and allow the user to publish their results.

Although it was an attempt to promote safe sex practices, some students and teachers feel that it wouldn't be met with a positive reaction in the US.

"I think it could kind of be a double-edged sword," Acuna said. "It can help prevent and educate, but it could also backfire on people. I'm sure you can find a way for that kind of app to work, but if you change things around a little bit to change people's identities and still promote safe sex, it may work."

The group handed out 100,000 condoms to people in Stockholm that branded a QR scan code on the label, which, when scanned, would allow the owner of the phone a chance to download and join a site called The Sex Profile. That person could publish their results and browse other results. This inspired posters to be placed around Stockholm that matched some of the results.

Aurolyn Luykx, associate professor of anthropology, said she hoped that the person who uses the site uses the condom as well. In the end, the app is merely a gimmick.

"It's cute and if it gets more people to use condoms. That's great, of course. But I must confess, I also found it a little sad. I mean, if there's one time you wish someone would turn off their phone," Lukyx said. "I bet most people who use it just use it a couple times for the novelty and then forget about it. I mean, you wouldn't want your partner interrupting the intimacy every time to go to the app, would you? Much more of a buzz kill than putting on a condom."

The biggest issue for Josh Calderon, sophomore accounting major, is not about remembering when to wrap it, but rather being safe and being educated in order to prevent the spread of STDs.

"It's more about being tested," Calderon said. "I think some people go around doing the things they do without knowing sometimes and their partner, unfortunately, gets infected as well. And when they do find out, it's too late. I think practicing safe sex would help that a lot."

On Valentine's Day, the choice between having sex or not becomes a big question for students and Farrington has one answer for those uncertain if they want to add sex to the festivities.

"The most important thing we have to do is number one, change our attitude about STDs," Farrington said. "We should be able to talk about them openly with the lights on, and insist that if we're getting hot and heavy with a potential partner who we want to have sex with, we think about all the things we're getting into."

Krystal Oblinger and Henry Arrambide may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

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Men’s basketball

Love and basketball



FILE PHOTO
Senior forward **Gabriel** McCulley (center) has been in a relationship with his girlfriend for more than four years. This is his fifth season with UTEP.

Players make relationships work, even during a season

BY FRANKIE RODRIGUEZ
The Prospecter

Finding the time to maintain a relationship as an athlete might not be easy, but some of the UTEP men’s basketball players gave details about their relationship, what it takes to balance out things and some Valentine’s surprises.

“I have been with this girl almost a month now and I like her a lot. It is a good relationship,” freshman guard Tim Jacobs said. “She is from Las Cruces and that is where I am from. I have known her since high school.”

Jacobs, who graduated from Oñate last year, explained how for some players who shy away from the thought of a relationship might be better off, but in his case, it keeps him content.

“Having a girl keeps me happy so I keep her there to be with,” Jacobs said. “I mean groupies are always there but you should not want to stick around with groupies because if you fail then they are going to leave you.”

Junior guard Tyler Tafoya gave the scoop on his girlfriend and the surprise that awaits her on Valentine’s Day. Tafoya said he is currently dating sophomore first baseman/pitcher Laura Ramos from the UTEP softball team.

“We have been together for a year and four months now. I met her here on campus,” Tafoya said. “I am planning to surprise her with a necklace I bought her, some chocolates and some Edible Arrangements (fruit bouquet) so it is going to be a good day for her.”

Tafoya said some relationships can be negative on players, too.

“I mean, not to say anything bad about girls, but they can always be a distraction,” Tafoya said. “It has been good with us because we manage our time really well.”

Sophomore forward Kevin Perry explains how relationships as an athlete are all about priorities. Perry is also a tight end on the UTEP football team.

“It is hard at first, but a relationship will benefit you because it allows you to stay focused as far as athletics and school,” Perry said. “It could get in the way if you don’t understand what comes first all the time, and my girlfriend understands that so it makes it easy.”

Perry said he plans to keep Valentine’s simple.

“I have been with my girl for one year now. I met her New Year’s Eve at a restaurant, and I had to put the moves on her,” Perry said. “I am probably going to take her out maybe go to a movie, dinner and maybe just hang out after and enjoy the rest of the night together.”

Senior forward Gabriel McCulley believes women can be a hassle for an athlete but considers himself fortunate to have a long-term relationship with his girlfriend.

“It is tough because women are not easy to deal with sometimes. They get a little overprotective sometimes or insecure, and being an athlete, it is never easy to deal with women and your sport at the same time,” McCulley said.

As an athlete, the attention they constantly receive can cause some division in the relationship.

see BASKETBALL on page 10

Congratulations to **Belinda M.** for winning *The Prospector’s Design Your Valentine’s Card Contest!*

...and as I gazed upon him inspecting his nostrils, his aroma wafting in the air. I then realized that I was in love.

Happy Valentine’s Day

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Question of the week

What has been the worst gift you've received on Valentine's Day?

Photos by Candie Herrera, Greg Castillo and Audrey Russell



CRYSTALLE OLIVAS
Freshman nursing major
"The worst I have gotten for Valentine's Day was a promise ring from a guy that I had never talked to before."



DAVO SAUCEDO
Freshman finance major
"Stuffed animals I would say would be not the worst gift, but not the best gift, especially for a guy."



KIMBERLY DUVERMOIS
Freshman biology major
"I personally have never gotten a bad gift on Valentine's Day. I appreciate the thought that goes into each gift and that's all that matters to me."



ROBERT MELENDEZ
Senior psychology major
"I've never received a bad gift for Valentines, but I imagine the worst gift would be a girlfriend."



ABIGAIL VARGAS
Sophomore criminal justice major
"Flowers seem to be a common given gift on Valentine's Day, but one year instead of getting fresh flowers I recieved artificial flowers that were dirty."



VICENTE ARREDONDO
Freshman general studies major
"The worst gift I've ever been given for Valentine's was finding out my girlfriend was cheating on me."



LEA TELLES
Sophomore graphic design major
"I'm pretty grateful for any gifts, I don't think I've ever received a bad gift."



RICARDO MORAN
Freshman education major
"Melted Hershey's Kisses."



EMY LOYA
Freshman criminal justice major
"The worst gift would be no gift at all. It's all about giving."



LEO RODRIGUEZ
Freshman engineering major
"A small bag of M&M's, the 99 cent kind. And a stuffed puppy that looked like it was from Dollar Tree. Needless to say, there were no more dates with that person."



CONSUELO MARTINEZ
Freshman education major
"The worst gift ever has to be a pink teddy bear. The thing was that I found out the guy I was dating had given the same bear to his ex the year before. I am not into sloppy seconds."



MARTIN LOPEZ
Sophomore studio art, major
"The worst gift is not getting one."



DALIA PIÑON
Sophomore business major
"Just a card."



MARIANA CARBAJAL
Sophomore pre-med major
"Just a single rose and just a little piece of chocolate, not even a full size candy bar."



MONIVA RIVAS
Sophomore sociology major
"I've never received a bad gift, but I imagine the worst gift I could receive is a life-sized teddy bear."

Relationship

Lonely hearts find other ways to celebrate Valentine’s Day

BY AMBER WATTS
The Prospector

As couples buy each other tokens of affection and plan a romantic evening, for some, the holiday is an ominous cloud of broken past relationships, “single-awareness” and the boredom that will be potentially ensuing.

While many students have dates for Valentine’s Day this year, many do not. These single students though, are not being torn apart by the idea of being alone. Instead, they have planned out ways to keep themselves busy and enjoy the weekend.

“Celebrate with your friends, watch movies. It doesn’t matter if you’ve got a guy, you’ve always got your girls,” said Zaira Inigaz, sophomore education major, who plans on staying low-key at home for the holiday or heading out with her friends for a movie.

Inigaz said she has celebrated Valentine’s Day before but tries to avoid all the commotion that surrounds it, such as the people that make huge and extravagant plans for the holiday.

“You know, when you have somebody, I think it’s a good thing, but I think it should be like that every day. There shouldn’t just be one day where you get your girlfriend or boyfriend stuff. It should be like that every day,” Inigaz said.

James Wood, psychology professor, said there are no negative side effects

to being alone on Valentine’s Day for students; except for maybe the reasons they are alone in the first place. For instance, recently breaking up may just bring up feelings of sadness, but for most people, it doesn’t really affect them that much.

“If you have other friends that are not romantic friends, then try to spend time with them,” Wood said. “Try to find other people that don’t have a date on that day and do things with them, or just do something you enjoy. Just make it a point to do something you enjoy if it’s bothering you.”

Wood said that social support helps a lot with things that would bother people and helps them feel fine about not having a partner at that time.

Jackie Armijo, junior multimedia journalism major, supports the idea that Valentine’s Day really isn’t just about big expensive gifts or feeling sad about being alone, but rather celebrates the love of the people around you.

“As of now, I’m not really doing anything (for Valentine’s Day) because I’m single right now, so me and my friends are just thinking up stuff like what could we do,” Armijo said. “We can’t just be depressed on Valentine’s Day so we sort of started a Single Awareness Day, so it’s basically saying you can be proud of that because there are other things to do.”

Armijo’s Valentine’s Day festivities consist of hanging out with her

friends, going out to eat, dressing up nice and watching chick flicks with lots of good food. Armijo said that it’s a girl’s-night-out but with a purpose that says “hey, it’s alright to be single and it’s not the end of the world because you’re not getting a huge rock or unnecessarily large teddy bear.”

“I mean honestly, I do see myself as a hopeless romantic so (making extravagant Valentine’s Day plans) is not such a bad thing to me, but I do see people being a little over-the-top about it and it kind of irks me,” Armijo said.

Armijo’s advice to other single students is to remember the people around you and to take advantage of the holiday to show appreciation to them.

“Use simple things, it doesn’t have to be over-the-top because that’s not what love is about,” Armijo said. “There are different forms of love, I mean it doesn’t necessarily have to be in a relationship, it could be showing your love to your family, showing your love to your friends, like there’s different ways just show them how much you appreciate them on that day and remind them of that.”

Amber Watts may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KRISTAL OBLINGER / The Prospector

Film



MOVIES TO WATCH ALONE on Valentine’s Day



BY ANDRES RODRIGUEZ
The Prospector

Another year, another Valentine’s Day. A day when couples boast about their togetherness with heart-shaped cards, chocolate and stuffed animals for all the single people to mope about their lack thereof. So, if you aren’t preparing an evening for that oh-so-special someone, or finding solace in Adele’s “Someone Like You” cynically watch your favorite love stories and these other films to remind you that being single is not that bad.

“Juno” (2007)

If any quick-tongued pregnant teenager can make you laugh off your desire for a relationship for a while, she is Juno, played by Ellen Page. Diablo Cody’s sharp teen lingo is bound to do it for you, but the film is also a whimsy reminder that pregnancy can be especially tough for a young person. During a night filled with flowers and heart-shaped balloons, your fertility always seems to increase and as Juno says, “pregnancy often leads to an infant.” So, stay home and laughing at all those great one-liners.

“Blue Valentine” (2010)

This, without doubt, will turn you off the need for a date and eventually a marriage in a

heartbeat. Ryan Gosling and Michelle Williams are captivating in this raw exposé of a failing marriage. It is all the more fascinating as it follows their relationship from the beginning, when everything was wonderful (Ryan Gosling plays the ukulele and sings!) to the rock-bottom hurtful end of their marriage. It is not an easy film to watch, but it is so honest and intense that you’ll be glad you skipped the possibility of ever ending up like that.

“500 Days of Summer” (2009)

This film was built to dismantle Valentine’s Day myths. Joseph Gordon-Levitt plays “the romantic” and Zooey Deschanel “the realist.” Both hold an unlabeled relationship that, unfortunately for Gordon-Levitt, doesn’t endure. So, accordingly, he moans and mopes at discovering that love is not that idealized fairy tale. It is a refreshingly honest romantic comedy with a killer soundtrack that charmingly champions the idea that love may just be lurking around the corner. The other corner, the one that comes after bitter disappointment, binge drinking and heart-break.

“Bill Cunningham New York” (2010)

Bill Cunningham, into his eighties, takes being single to a whole new level. The documentary follows the legendary New York street

photographer as he captures street apparel and charmingly leaves a mark among fashion higher ups and friends. In this endearing documentary, he reveals that he’s never held a romantic relationship, he only loves fashion. So fret not being single, it only leaves room to document your passion and make friends with Anna Wintour.

“Titanic” (1997)

Poor boy meets rich girl. They fall in love in a ship. Ship sinks. Celine Dion, play us out.

We’ve all seen this film and whether we like it or not, it remains one of the greatest ill-fated love stories of our time. But greatest of all, Jack freezes to death at the end (“I’ll never let go, Jack.” Cue tears) which only reassures us that single life on land is far safer, less heart-breaking and much warmer. Also, the film is three-and-a-half hours long. By the time it is finished, Valentine’s Day will be a thing of the past and you’ll be in need of some sleep.

And if all else fails, you can always rewatch any “30 Rock” episode. Liz Lemon is without a doubt the greatest and most inspiring single woman on the planet. “Blurgh.”

Andres Rodriguez may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

Tech

Exchange petals for pixels

BY JERRY ALDAZ
The Prospector

With Valentine's underway, a day for shameless signs of affection, one ought to avoid the predictability of sappy love songs, diabetes-inducing chocolates and dust-collecting bears. These tech gifts highlight a partner's sense of exploration, creation and recreation - long after the rose petals have withered.

PS3 Headset (\$100)

If your soul mate owns a PlayStation 3 and is prone to engage in prolonged gaming sessions, Sony's official headset will make their heart hear the beat. Sony's peripheral features 7.1 virtual surround sound, maneuverable audio levels and a seven-hour battery life. On-screen updates display headset information and the portable USB transmitter syncs the device within seconds. Comfortable ear pads and simple controls allow gamers to focus on their delicate weapon aiming, medieval-creature slaying or potato-chip eating.

Ollclip (\$70)

In capturing timeless memories, ollclip's iPhone 4 peripheral dramatically enhances mobile photography. As the wide-angle lens produces stunning panoramic vistas, the fish-eye variation brings notable objects into central focus and the macro lens

sharply heightens details in close-up shots. Tightly packed in a removable attachment, the ollclip snugly rests on the phone's outer edge, right above the camera. The three lenses are accessible through a single rotation of the peripheral.

Apogee Jam Guitar Adapter (\$100)

For passionate ballads between iLovers, Apogee's guitar adapter transforms into an inexpensive and clutter-free recording studio for penny-pinching musicians. From recording spontaneous inspiration on the iPad, to perfecting chord transitions on the iMac, the compact adapter enables an electric guitar to work in unison with Apple's GarageBand. Once connected, musicians have the added flexibility of alternating through GarageBand's virtual amps in order to find the desired sound. Unfortunately, for windows-based composers, Apogee's current rig is designed to function solely with Apple products.

Wacom Inkling (\$199)

Sketching the images of love, Wacom's Inkling system combines a digital pen and clip receiver to digitalize drawings, notes and incomprehensible doodles from any notebook. It can store hundreds of images on its 2GB internal memory, track image progression through a "layering" function, detect ink colors through interchangeable cartridges and effortlessly organize files through proprietary software. These digitalized creations can be distributed online or modified through image-editing software such as Adobe Photoshop.

Orbotix Sphero (\$130)

If Valentine's is a solo celebration, Orbotix's Sphero simplistic concept is a welcomed distraction. A Bluetooth apparatus for mobile devices, this spherical gadget is fitted with a compass, gyroscope, accelerometer, and can be steered like an RC car or travel pre-designed routes. Internal LEDs can diversify the gadget's glow and the one-hour battery life provides adequate rolling pleasure. Available for both Android and iOS devices, the Sphero can be paired with apps such as Sphero, SpheroDrive and Draw 'N Drive.

Jerry Aldaz may be reached at prospector@utep.edu



Photos special to The Prospector

Relationship

The history of Valentine's: Where is the love?



BY REBECCA GUERRERO
The Prospector

Once a year, the majority of the world turns red. Stores are filled with brightly colored streamers and chocolate is consumed by the pound. As Feb. 14 rapidly approaches, frantic people dash into the nearest store to spend increasing amounts of money on tokens that prove their undying affection for that special someone.

"Valentine's is a day that girls use as an excuse to get stuff," said Valerie Rocha, freshman art major. "They get mad when they don't get what they

Photo Illustration by Krystal Oblinger
want, but have no problem not giving anything. It has expensive, corny things that most people will go aw at, and then never look at again. It should be spent, not buying pointless things, but by being together."

To people from different countries, it might seem like insanity, but the truth is that the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Great Britain, France and Australia have all fallen under the Hallmark spell of Valentine's Day, and the fever seems to grow every year. It may have occurred to some, as they stand in line at Walgreens clutching that bear that sings Stevie Wonder's "Isn't She

Lovely," to wonder why it is that they're forced to prove their affection for the special people in their lives every February.

"V-Day is a corporate holiday, so guys can make up for their mistakes," said Jonathan Rye, junior mathematics major. "If that's the only day he feels he should treat her like royalty, he might as well be single 364 other days."

Contrary to popular belief, the origins of Valentine's Day have less to do with St. Valentine himself, and more to do with the Christianization of all pagan holidays. According to history.com, it is true that the name came from St. Valentine, a man whose life was shrouded in mystery. One legend claims he was a Catholic priest famed for marrying young lovers in secret under the nose of an oppressive regime that forbid their marriage. Yet, St. Valentine's contribution was mainly to offer up his name, whether he knew it or not, to Christianity as a front for the elimination of the pagan holiday, Lupercalia.

The Christian church may have decided to place Valentine's feast directly on top of Lupercalia, which was traditionally celebrated on Feb. 15, in an effort to wipe it out. Lupercalia was a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman God of agriculture. Roman priests would sacrifice a goat for fertility and a dog for purification. They would then strip the goat's hide, dip it into the sacrificial blood and take to the streets, gently slapping both women and crop fields with the goat hide.

Lupercalia was outlawed by the Catholic Church, and the Valentine's Day we know today is more closely related to the way it was celebrated much later, during the middle ages.

The modern-day version of the holiday comes with cupids, candy hearts, endless amounts of pressure and some levels of exclusion for those who find themselves without a special someone on the 14th.

"As much as people tend to think Valentine's Day is too commercialized. I honestly think it is one of the happiest holidays," said Darlene Perdue, junior organizational and corporate communication major. "It's neat to be able to buy or create these magnificent gift ideas for a loved one. I am the type of person who loves to give gifts, especially handcrafted gifts just to see the person's excitement."

In our day and age, when one mentions Valentine's Day, it's likely to evoke images of flowers and chocolates. Any company that specializes in either of these goods is sure to see business increase during this time of year. According to history.com, an estimated 110 million roses will be sold and delivered within a three-day time period this year and the majority of those will be red roses. On average, the Valentine gift giver will spend about \$75 on their gift, with the most popular gifts being chocolates, food, wine, and flowers

"I love the idea of taking a day to celebrate the ones you love most in your life, but do roses and chocolates really symbolize love?" said Samantha Wells, sophomore pre-business major.

"I think the holiday has become too commercial. I don't need you to spend money on me to show me how much you care."

The pressure not to drop the ball when it comes to this holiday seems to come from every direction nowadays. Television commercials for everything from top-of-the-line jewelry stores to department stores spread dire warnings not to forget loved ones. The reaction to this kind of marketing among students is very mixed.

"I do think that Valentine's has become more corporate in that now there are many more advertisements on things you can buy that are very expensive, instead of things that would make the other person be thankful for what they have received," said Michael Vasquez, sophomore civil engineering major. "After all, it is the thought that counts."

With all of these factors surrounding Valentine's Day, it can be easy to forget why people go through all the trouble in the first place. Yet, there are still those who retain hope for the holiday and who think that celebrating your loved ones is well worth the effort.

"Personally, I love it," said Tiffany Hannah, sophomore criminal justice major. "Yes, it's cheesy and sucks that it's just this one day, but that's what makes it exciting. If you got flowers every day then it wouldn't be special, it'd be just another ordinary day. So however cheesy it may be, I happen to enjoy Valentine's Day and all of the cute little things that come with it."

Rebecca Guerrero may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

Kickstart his heart

Player punts his way into love

BY DANIEL ORNELAS
The Prospector

Junior punter Ian Campbell has built his reputation on the football field as one of the nation's top punters. Campbell finished fourth in the FBS last season averaging just over 46 yards per punt. This spring, with the extra time off before football season and practices commencing, he's hoping to kick Cupid straight into his girlfriend's heart.

Q: How long have you been in a relationship?
A: About three months now.

Q: Any special plans for Valentine's Day?
A: I'll bring her over to cook dinner, have some flowers, chocolates. Maybe a stuffed animal, it's no big deal I think.

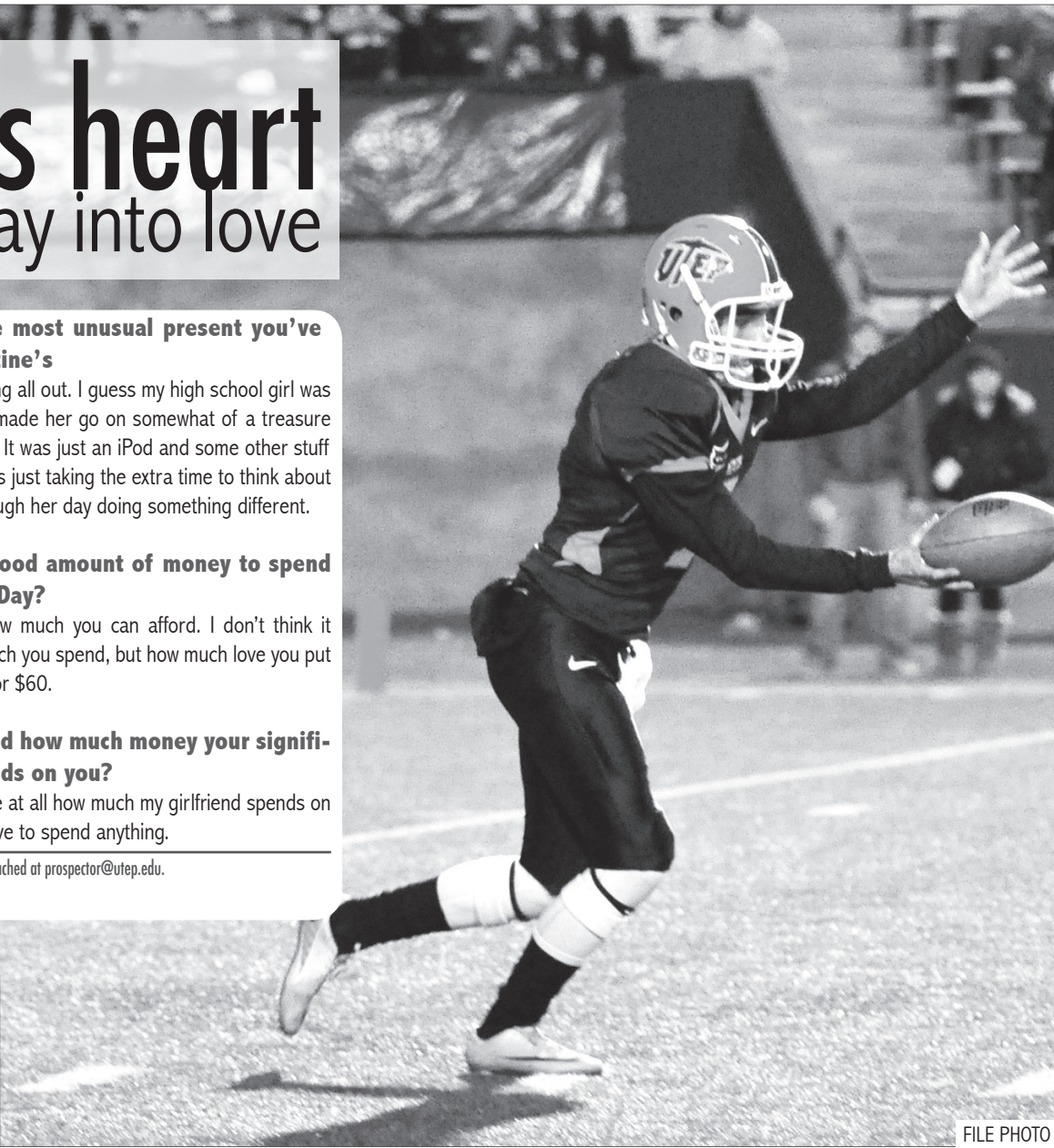
Q: What's the most unusual present you've received for Valentine's?
A: I guess a necklace.

Q: What's the most unusual present you've given on Valentine's
A: I don't like going all out. I guess my high school girl was kind of different. I made her go on somewhat of a treasure hunt to get her gift. It was just an iPod and some other stuff that she needed. It's just taking the extra time to think about making her go through her day doing something different.

Q: What's a good amount of money to spend on Valentine's Day?
A: It depends how much you can afford. I don't think it amounts to how much you spend, but how much love you put into it. Maybe \$50 or \$60.

Q: Do you mind how much money your significant other spends on you?
A: No, I don't care at all how much my girlfriend spends on me. She doesn't have to spend anything.

Daniel Ornelas may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.



FILE PHOTO

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BASKETBALL from page 6

"Being an athlete, you get a lot of attention from just people in general and sometimes women can get jealous making the guy run from that," McCulley said. "I have been with my girl for four years, going on five, and I have been blessed in a situation where my girlfriend is alright."

McCulley has no big plans for Valentine's just yet.

"I am going to give her a real big kiss. A real good kiss and tell her happy Valentine's Day," McCulley said jokingly. "I might take her out and give her a box of chocolates. I don't know yet."

Frankie Rodriguez may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

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5	7	4	2	1	8	3	9	6
2	9	7	8	3	6	5	1	4
6	4	3	7	5	1	9	8	2
1	8	5	9	4	2	7	6	3
3	6	2	1	7	5	8	4	9
4	1	9	6	8	3	2	7	5
7	5	8	4	2	9	6	3	1

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BRAIN ZONE

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ACROSS

1 Con game
5 Not-so-tall tale
8 Front projection
12 Needing a cane
13 Earlier than
14 Hold sway
15 Intl. cartel
16 Actress
17 Elevator name
18 Rallyard sight
20 Result
22 Every last bit
23 15-Across' product
24 Gulleys
27 And so on
32 — Beta
33 Vast expanse
34 Blue
35 Unrelenting pest
38 Snakes
39 Storm center
40 Keyboard abbr.
42 Take out of context?
45 Small yellow fruit used in preserves
49 Vicinity
50 "Hail!"
52 Loosen

53 Optimistic
54 Family member
55 Particular
56 Being, to
57 "Of course"
58 "Piggies"

DOWN

1 Messy guy
2 Mafia bigwig
3 MasterCard alternative, briefly
4 Gathering places
5 Intrepid
6 Mr. Robbins
7 Suitor
8 Toaster's word
9 Cruel
10 Medley
11 Into the sunset
19 Mr. Pacino
21 "Ufalueme" writer
24 Speedometer stat
25 "Caught yai"
26 Brit's radio
28 Ball-bearing gizmo
29 Negligent
30 Knock
31 Billboards
36 Sailor's assent
37 Collection
42 Love deity
44 Uncompl-cated
46 "Do — others ..."
47 "Zip- — Doo-Dah"
48 — River, NJ
51 Struggle (for)

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What you may have missed...



JUSTIN STENE / The Prospector
UTEP Athletic Director Bob Stull discusses the new multi-sport merger between Conference-USA and the Mountain West Feb. 13 at the Larry K. Durham Center.

Conference-USA, Mountain West join forces in all sports

BY WILLIAM VEGA
The Prospector

Conference-USA and the Mountain West Conference announced Feb. 13 that the two have agreed to create a new intercollegiate association, which will begin in 2013-14.

“We think that the institutions that we would be partnering with in the Mountain West are institutions that we’ve always had a great deal of respect for,” UTEP President Diana Natalicio said. “They’re major state universities, we like those institutions, we like the people who run them and I think they offer us great opportunities for competitive experiences for our students.”

Presidents from the 16 remaining schools from both conferences agreed to begin the new conference in all sports. Those 16 schools were UTEP, East Carolina, Marshall, Rice, Tulsa, Southern Miss, Tulane and UAB from C-USA. Air Force, Colorado State, Fresno State, Hawaii, Nevada, UNLV, New Mexico and Wyoming were the other eight from the Mountain West. Fresno State, Nevada and Hawaii are scheduled to join the conference in 2013. Hawaii will be a football-only participant, playing its other sports in the Western Athletic Conference.


According to the release, the new conference “will likely include” a “membership of 18-24 universities; national scope from the Atlantic Seaboard to Hawaii (in football); championship football game format that includes semi-final match-ups; regular season scheduling in divisions; mechanisms to emphasize and improve academic standards and fiscal responsibility.”

C-USA lost Houston, SMU and UCF to the Big East in December 2011 and Memphis announced that they would join in February 2012. Boise State, who joined the Mountain West in 2011 and San Diego State also joined the Big East in December 2011 and TCU will join the Big 12. All seven teams will join their new conferences in 2013.

“Both conferences have lost members, Mountain West and Conference-USA, and this creates an entirely new environment...” Natalicio said. “The stability issue is important. Frankly, it’s very wearing on everybody. Coaches and certainly me and others to have to adjust to new conference composition. That instability has hurt intercollegiate athletics a lot.”

William Vega may be reached at prospector@utep.edu.

Top 2012 Grammy Winners



Album of the Year	“21,” Adele (6)
Record of the Year	“Rolling in the Deep,” Adele
Song of the Year	“Rolling in the Deep,” Adele
New Artist	Bon Iver (2)
Rock Album	“Wasting Light,” Foo Fighters (5)
Rock Song	“Walk,” Foo Fighters
R&B Album	“E.A.M.E.,” Chris Brown (1)
R&B Song	“Fool For You,” Cee Lo Green, Melanie Lynskey & Jack Splash
Rap Album	“My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy,” Kanye West (4)
Rap Song	“Otis,” Jay-Z & Kanye West
Dance/Electronic Album	“Scary Monsters and Nice Sprites,” Skrillex (3)
Country Album	“Own the Night,” Lady Antebellum (1)
Country Song	“Mean,” Taylor Swift (2)


Total number of awards won by artist in parentheses.

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Summer in Spain

UTEP students will get the chance to live and study in Seville, Spain this summer. This trip will last from May 15-June 2 at a cost of \$2,350, plus airfare. Financial aid is available.

The trip includes roundtrip group flight, lodging with daily breakfast and dinner, excursions to Madrid, Toledo, Granada, Cordoba and Ronda, cultural activities and local excursions in and around Seville, health insurance and internet access.

The application deadline is March 1. For more information, contact Hector Enriquez at 747-7042 or by email at enriquez@utep.edu.

Paulette Wingo to speak at UTEP



Author Paulette Wingo, a UTEP Gold Nugget Award recipient in 2009 for the College of Education, will speak as part of UTEP’s Black History Month events at 1:30 p.m. Feb. 16 at Liberal Arts Building, room 318. His autobiography is called “The Person Behind the Passion: An Autobiography.”

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To: Jay Mendoza
From:A.J. Ramirez

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every day.You make me so
happy & I love you!



To: Shaunette
From:Jason

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heart on the line and step out
on faith.If you're with
me I am ready.



To: Jackie M.
From:Miguel R.

Thank you for two
wonderful years.
I love you bbi!



To: Honey Bunny
From:Your Loving Husband

My life has been a long
journey into your arms.



To: Diego G.
From: Crystal L.

I love you with all my
heart babe!
Forever & always!



To: Martha
From:Adrian

We first met here and I had
butterflies in my stomach.
haven't gone away.



To: Brittany Lujan
From:Asvin Kumar

You make me so happy my
love.You are an angel from
heaven.Be my valentine
honey.



To: Grizzly
From: Maximus

My heart is red but my
veins are blue and my brain
is full of thoughts with you.