

# New look not working

ANGELA MINOR

GUEST COLUMNIST

I rolled out of bed at 1 p.m., for as you know time has been reversed for this, the Class of 2000. We are such a dynamic, futuristic class that the standard 24-hour day, which is just fine for everyone else, simply would not work for us. At least six hours of the day are set aside for surveys and opinion polls administered by an institution which will remain nameless.

That same institution "provided" us with IBM ThinkPad computers, on which I attended my virtual cyberclasses. The professors held open chat sessions at the end of class for our questions and comments.

After classes I surfed the net for a while and picked up a virus when trying to download some shareware. I called up technical support and after being put on hold for a couple of days, I was finally told to call my Resident Technical Advisor. He was up to my room in a flash and after careful examination, his prognosis was to call tech-support.

But, being the Bill Gates, Jr. that I am, as are all the members of the Class of 2000, I managed to push a few keys, open a couple programs and get rid of the bug. Or did I just e-mail it to the entire network neighborhood? I guess I find out soon enough. There wasn't much else for me to do on the computer, so I shut it off and decided to venture outside for once.

I walked over to the post office, fully expecting to have mail waiting for me and, of course, there was. Mom sent a package with her world-famous, homemade cookies and dad sent a "we're so proud of our little girl" letter.

My parents will never stop writing, I'm sure. I bet they want me to move back in after I graduate, but I'll already have myself a job and

will be on my way to making my first million. After all, I'm getting an education from one of the top 25 schools in the country. I'll have my diploma, I'll have my computer and I'll have the world before me.

What else could one possibly need? But as I bask in the glory of

**... As I bask in the glory of my future, the people who are really in control watch me, along with every other member of the Class of 2000. They rub their chins, wondering if their little experiment will work.**

my future, the people who are really in control watch me, along with every other member of the Class of 2000. They rub their chins, wondering if their little experiment will work.

"Computers for all of them?"  
"We'll just have to see, but what better guinea pigs than the unsuspecting Class of 2000. Our pockets are filled, success or failure, so what could it hurt?"

"But their futures, their futures. What about their futures?"

"Their futures? What about ours?"  
While the powers that be argue about the ethics of the situation because of the cost of tuition, I con-

tinue on blindly in my freshman fantasy life, believing that I am truly something special as a member of the Class of 2000.

Little do I know that I am all a part of some grand power-wielding, tuition-hiking, *U.S. News and World Report* rank-pushing scheme to give the university that spit-polish shine. My class is being used as a way for the aforementioned institution to thumb their noses at other such money pits. But all these things I am oblivious to as I wander through the cloud of freedom only parentlessness could create, and wonder what I will do next.

Maybe I should get some dinner. With so many choices at the Benson Food Court and the Pit, how could I ever get tired of college food? I picked up a grilled cheese and a Coke. Oh, such a mistake. Pepsi is the beverage of choice at this school.

"That's right, little one. We aren't allowed to forget it, so we won't let you forget it either."

"Isn't that a little unfair?"  
"Oh, come on. Strike while the iron's hot, I always say. Give them Pepsi, offer them the world through IBM Global Network, it all just means more for us!"

"Don't you think they deserve only the best? They're paying enough to have caviar and Dom Perignon for every meal!"

"Don't you see? This is how it works. They get the Pepsi, and we get the Dom."

With the package from Mom under my arm and a ThinkPad strapped to my back in a stylish backpack promoted by the university, I make my way back to the dorm to plunge myself back into a world of tile floors, computer cables, refrigerators and bunk beds that as a college freshman, I somehow call home.



# Tapping into imagination packs profitable pleasure

JENNIFER BOONE

GUEST COLUMNIST

It was the key ingredient in our first mudpie. It was the blueprint for building the world's strongest fort with the pillows from the living room couch. It allowed us to spend hours alone venturing to distant galaxies in the comfort of our own rooms. This invaluable force is imagination. In children this ability is boundless, and for the adults who maintain it, imagination can prove quite profitable.

In our younger years we explore our creative capacity, inventing people, places and objects that are truly important and useful. If a child needs a sword, he may create an imaginary one, or if a little girl falls down and scrapes a knee, her friends may use an invisible Band-Aid to protect the wound.

As children we feel free to invent the things we need, and in doing so rarely encounter inconvenience. As adults, however, we temper or ignore our creativity.

The truth of the matter is that the kids who created the Band-Aids (you were probably one) have the potential to become great inventors. The challenge is to keep imagination alive in our mind's eye. The task is simple, and it can help you to earn a lot of money.

We can all identify the petty problems that we encounter each day, like the hair that won't stay in the elastic band, or the phone cord that is completely tangled around the leg of the kitchen table. At one time or another, each of us curses our bottom sheet when it rides up the side of the mattress, or complains to friends that there is nowhere in our car to put a Coke.

Do not despair. There is hope for the Coke-drinking drivers. Some bright individual invented a beverage-holder that attaches to your car window. The contraption even comes with an adjustable opening for different sized containers. So what do you think of that?

On the market today we as consumers can find just about anything we need to avoid life's annoyances. Phone cords will never again be a problem thanks to the invention of the phone cord detangler, a small plastic attachment that connects to your telephone and

tURNS BY ITSELF to ensure a tangle-free cord. Those with long hair will delight in the "Topsy Turvy", a plastic hoop with a pencil-like base that makes sophisticated do's a snap.

Smart consumers can rest assured that their bottom sheet will remain in its proper position, due to the elastic bands that clip on and hold the sheet from underneath the mattress. These fabulous devices are actually garters; they went out before platform shoes, and well ... they're both back.

You may be thinking, "Hey, I could have thought of that," or, "I could make that myself at home." Well ... you didn't, and now the person who did is making a million dollars.

Ingenious inventions like these have been mass-produced, marketed, and sold worldwide. Other seemingly inane but brilliant creations include pocket-sized shoe polishers, colored paperclips, personalized shoelaces, non-slip shoulder pads, and of course, the famous "Chia-Pet."

If you happened to be on the beach this summer, you probably laid eyes on one of those colorful six-foot-long foam tubes that treat children to hours of fun and floatation. The guy who came up with this thing was probably insulating his house and wondered what to do with the leftover foam. Now he's carrying a gold American Express Card and vacationing in Tahiti.

To all creative thinkers (and that means you), this is a call to action. We have proof that our society will buy just about anything that makes life a fraction easier. Your intelligence will really get you somewhere if you take the time to recognize what new inventions need creating, and what companies will produce them.

We are all full of brilliant ideas, but with an additional spark of the imagination, we can turn these ideas into profitable realities. Just ask Mr. Hoola Hoop.



# Connotations of language lead to prejudice, confusion

MARYAM RAHMAN-ESENE

GUEST COLUMNIST

In Nigeria there are over 200 languages. Due to this diversity of languages and dialects, English, the country's official language, is used often in everyday communications and transactions. This means that to the general populace, English words and expressions are taken at face value.

Thus growing up in this kind of environment, I never really had any personal encounter where words in the English language were used to exclude or demean others. But this was before I came back to the United States and discovered the underlying meanings in words like "there."

Coming from another country I have an obviously out-of-place accent that prompts people to ask me where I'm from. Ninety percent of the time my reply is followed by other questions that end with "there." For example people say, "Do you have this there?" or "Is there that over there?" At first I wasn't bothered, but after some time, the use of the word "there" sounded funny to me. Technically the word "there" has to do with a place, position, emphasis, etc.

But now I saw a derogatory side. It's a side that is used often but unconsciously. I felt like my country had been belittled to the extent that it was just "there," a place that had only been heard about, a fairytale country of the media.

This gave an obscure twist to the questions. For example someone would ask, "Do you have normal houses 'there'?"

After affirming, I would question their motive to the inquiry. And the person would say that it was because

he had read a newspaper article that said most Nigerians were homeless.

These sorts of answers made me realize that preconceived ideas, tainted by the media, are what made them unconsciously use the word "there."

Looking at the situation from this new angle, I realized that I was guilty of this offense too. I lived in my country's former capital, which was very modernized, so I didn't really expect much from other states which made me ask "there" questions too.

For example, I once asked someone from a slightly remote part of the country, if he had cable television "there." After I realized the underlying meaning of these "there" questions, I began to jump to the offensive.

In one incident, a friend asked me if it was true that it was all desert over "there." I immediately jumped to the defensive by becoming sarcastic. I said that the sunscreen lotion companies were really making money over there. She didn't understand why I was getting all worked up, and she put on an innocent air.

Who is really to blame for this abuse of language? A small common word can be made into a weapon just by the inflection of voice and context in which it is used as well as the circumstances. The media and other sources of information are the most likely targets for blame, but our minds are to blame the most for allowing this abuse of language to go on.

