

How college relationships work

by Alyssa Cornell-Blanco
Cultural Expressions Writer

From food in the fridge to money in the bank, it's hard to find anything that will last when you're a college student. Throw relationships into the mix and the odds we're left with resemble those of running into legendary head football coach Joe Paterno at The Mezzanine. So who's ready to dance?

All college relationships go through their fair share of makeup's and breakups- and yet more often than not their problems stem from or are a direct result of infidelity. A commonality in most college settings, and yet no one knows for certain why. An article entitled Resisting the Age of Infidelity argues that "the hook-up culture has wiped out the dating scene and has emerged as primary mode of interacting among young adults." This idea holds true when factoring in all the elements that contribute to hook-ups (i.e. alcohol, large student body populations, etc.) and correlating them with their popularity on college campuses. Penn State junior Ximena Checa agreed: "Attending a large school like Penn State leads to less personal connections and the need for more personal interaction, which makes it easier to hook-up." If this argument proves accurate for most college students, does this mean mutual fidelity and exclusivity is the new relationship faux pas? A survey conducted at Hamilton College revealed that "70 percent of students said it was difficult to find new long-term relationship partners at Hamilton but easy to find short-term partners." Tossing the idea of fidelity out entirely not only brings new challenges when feelings get involved, but also leaves people at a loss when they decide they want a serious and exclusive relationship.

Another argument suggests that the reasoning behind infidelity among college relationships at Penn State is a lack of romantic opportunities. The afore mentioned argument supports this idea in that a larger part of the student population expresses a greater interest in hook-ups. In contrast however, one only needs to attend a home football game to witness the thirty something thousand prospects in attendance. Finding just one among the 54% of men and 46% of women attending Penn State can't be that difficult, right?

One needs to weed out the players and swingers walking



down College Ave late at night to see that those percentages aren't always as encouraging as they seem.

Regardless of the statistics or the arguments, most would agree that sometimes college relationships resemble a very steep climb up Mt. Nittany. The lack of fidelity and other factors that arise in college settings stack the odds against countless relationships. However, this isn't to say that college relationships are inevitable failures. "After all, it is believed as many as 50 percent of people marry their college sweethearts." The previously mentioned study conducted at Hamilton College also revealed that "61 percent of students said they would prefer to settle down with one person during their college years rather than "play the field." The numbers speak for themselves.

So for those die-hard relationship seekers out there, don't give up. After all Happy Valley couldn't be named just for its remote location; there must be more behind it than that.

A complicated college relationship

photo courtesy of corbis.com

A Letter from the Editor

by Laura Padilla
Editor-In-Chief



Welcome back folks! New school year, new issue. The first newsletter of our Fall 2010 semester is packed with topics never covered before on Cultural Expressions (with the exception of the movies and music reviews, of course). We covered topics from clothes, to relationships, to current events. Also, for those who are "health freaks," we have a little treat for you (no, not a real snack unfortunately) in the September-October issue. So take a break from those eternal psychology and mass media law readings, and relax

for a few minutes with Cultural Expressions. As always, we like to keep our readers happy, so feel free to let us know what topics you'd like to see in our next issue for November-December (or any other upcoming issues). Send all inquiries and suggestions to lvp5041@psu.edu or mes5276@psu.edu. Enjoy!