

Airing the dirty laundry



Bryan Dixon Emerald

A young man's first load of laundry (done independently) brings forth a feeling of independence a philosophical look at letting go

Mason West

We've all been in college for just a little shy of a month now, but it was just last Sunday when I finally believed it. Until then it seemed like I was in summer camp. I got to make new friends. I was away from my parents. It was just one big party. But then on Sunday everything changed — I did my laundry.

That's right, laundry made me realize that I was in college. Now, some of you are questioning my sanity, some of you are wondering how I managed to go three weeks without doing laundry (actually, the first weekend here my neighbors did my laundry; so really, I only went two weeks without doing it), but I hope most of you would like to hear my rinse cycle revelation.

I can admit that I was a pretty spoiled kid. I hope none of you hate me because I didn't do my own laundry for the first 18 years of my life. It's not like my mom didn't try to teach me how; I just never paid attention and always conned her into helping me later. Doing your own laundry is a

sign of independence that I neglected for far too long.

Well, I was afraid. There are so many things that can go wrong in a washing machine. I could shrink all my clothes so tight that Brittany Spears couldn't fit into them. Or all my left socks could get stolen by the washing machine gremlins.

Huh? Oh, I'll explain, the gremlins take your quarters and then run around in treadmills to make the thing move and the others spray water, etc. How did you think washing machines worked? I know quarters aren't worth too much and every gremlin has to make a living, but not off my left socks dangit!

But I digress. The reason I finally broke down and did my laundry was, in fact, my lack of clean socks. So, I took my whites — I do know enough about laundry to separate colors and whites — and tossed them in the thieving machine in my residence hall. I read the instructions, gave the gremlins their precious quarters and said a small prayer that they would leave my left socks alone. After some confusion about what setting to program the infernal machine — as it turned out there was a "whites" section — I was doing laundry. And you

know, I was proud of myself.

The gremlins were good to me and all of my socks were left in their limp, wet, post-wash state. On to the dryer. Dryers are not as bad as washing machines for two reasons: 1. Dryers are run by squirrels, and squirrels have no need for quarters so dryers are free. 2. All the squirrels have to do is run around in circles really fast so there isn't as much that can go wrong as in a washing machine. I didn't have as much confusion with the buttons this time as I first looked for one that said "whites" on it. Luckily, such a button existed and I was on my way again.

I think that dryers are much more fun than washing machines because you can watch the action. Something about watching a wave of lifeless clothes perpetually breaking in front of your eyes is very calming. And if you listen really hard the hum of the squirrel-driven motor can even sound like the ocean.

While I was mesmerized by cycling socks my mind wandered and I began to ponder the deeper meanings of doing laundry. I saw my innocence being sucked away by the whirling vortex. All the mysteries of why my clothes would disappear and reap-

pear folded and much warmer than before were disappearing just like the clothes had before. But they wouldn't come back all warm and folded. No, I was coming to the realization of my independence.

College is all about letting go. Letting go of your parents, your friends, your siblings and your dirty clothes. It may seem silly to you that laundry could bring about this great epiphany, but think back to your last "first time." Do you remember the feeling of exhilaration you got by conquering the unknown? When you registered on Duck Web? When you actually made it to your first class on time? Well, that's what I was feeling staring at dryer.

The dryer finished and, low and behold, I had done laundry. I walked triumphantly back to my room with my warm bundle of vestments and plopped it down on my bed. And there it sat for the rest of the day. Sure, I had made a big step in doing my own laundry, but folding and putting it away are two things that I'm not quite ready to deal with yet.

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Letters to the editor

Boycott "Disco Dolls"

I am writing in support of the protest and boycott of the Bijou Theater's "rape-is-pornography" movie "Disco Dolls." It is one thing to do a film about rape that takes the subject seriously; it is one thing for pornography showing consensual sex to be protected by the Constitution. But putting rape and pornography together glamorizes sexual violence against women, invites people to enjoy watching the brutal acts taking place and treats rape as a sub-

ject of entertainment instead of a serious social issue.

Please boycott "Disco Dolls," a relic of a supposedly bygone era in which sexual violence was glamorized uncritically in the media. Instead, show up at 10:30 Friday night at the Bijou Theater on 13th Avenue in solidarity with those of us who stand for women's human rights and against sexual assault. Let us send a message to the Bijou that we do not consider violent pornography to be in line with "alternative cultural media" and expect better.

Charlie Carpenter
 Political Science

Communication required

I'm complaining about international Graduate Teaching Fellows. Let me clarify for the sake of the credibility of my argument: I am for diversity, and I encourage international students and staff to this campus. But the fact is, some international GTFs can barely speak English. While they possess the basics, teaching requires a mastery of the communications skills: an expectation all students should have for this University's employees. This expectation applies to discussion sections. I have been in two sections in which I experienced genuine dif-

ficulty in understanding the GTF. The other students in my section ended up confused and discouraged from asking questions. This is why I'm concerned.

When students get discouraged from participating, they become disinterested in learning; as a result their education is limited to the bare minimum information needed to pass. I think that the prevalence of this basic inadequacy is quite ironic considering all the recent headlines about the University's efforts to improve rankings. It's also important to mention that while protests of every color make headlines on a

daily basis, I am yet to see any debate or thought given to the University's original top priority: academics. Clearly we need to re-evaluate our priorities. So until international GTFs gain a better understanding of the English language, the students will pay the price. By denying our fundamental ability to communicate, it cannot be called higher education. Furthermore, I invite University President Dave Frohnmayer to sit in on one of my discussion sections and see what a waste of time it is.

Vanna Nordyke
 Comparative Literature