

There's something about "nothing"

I heard the greatest pick-up line the other day. This guy walked by a girl waiting in line at the theater and said, "Do you believe in love at first sight? Or should I walk by again?" Pretty gutsy. Earned him a smile, which quickly turned into "Get lost, loser," but for about 1.257 seconds he was the man.

When I tried to empathize by commenting on what a jerk he was, she told me to hang it in my shorts. Actually, she used fewer words than that, but you get the gist.

I don't get it. Women say they want our attention and they say they want us to be honest with them, but when they get it, they slap us down. Am I wrong here, gentlemen? Some of the worst conversations in my life have started with the question, "What are you thinking about?"

Ladies, here's a hint from the guy play book: "Nothing," is short for, "Nothing you want to hear." It's not the feminine "Nothing," (followed by a heavy sigh) which is code for "drop everything and drag it out of me." This is not to be confused with the sharply spoken "Nothing," (no sigh included) followed by an enamel-rendering gnashing of teeth. Translation: "Get the hell away from me."

There is also the dreamily uttered "Nothing," which is her way of saying a guy - or possibly another woman - has just wandered into view and become her moisturizer of choice. FYI, if she is curious about women, here's two things you need to know; (a) she's probably not thinking three's company; and (b) you may be surprised to discover she won't necessarily see this as fooling around on you. And you can forget what it says in Chapter 63, section 24, paragraph 5(a): threatening to start checking out other men is no threat. She's seen you gag on your own toothbrush; you're not going to convince her you can switch up that easily.

This, ladies and gentlemen, is the conundrum of the double standard.

Since I've already touched upon men's ability to raise their daughters and still enjoy a trip to XXXgotmilk.com, I'm going to point out to the ladies we know you have your own double standards, but we just wisely keep our mouths shut. If we don't, we know

Marvin Baker
Guest Columnist



we're going to get creamed with something we did that we don't know you know about and end up in bigger trouble than necessary.

My personal favorite, however, is when women cloak criticism as concern.

Here's my case in point: I have a female friend who visits a lot when her boyfriend's at work - get your minds out of the gutter, it's not like that. This particular instance she plops her narrow ass down in my living room and starts doing leg lifts while talking to me. This was during mid-terms. I'm doing my best to ignore her and think about the ice cream in the freezer, when, finally, she heaved a sigh at me and said, "You're not even listening." I told her I was thinking about ice cream - the truth - and she says, "You shouldn't be thinking about ice cream with a belly like yours."

She tried to gloss it over with, "Well, it's true," and explained how that exempted her from hurting my feelings - because she had my best interests at heart. Then she spent five minutes telling me how she was going to exercise until she had "an ass you could set a drink on."

When I tried saving her the effort by pointing out that's what the top of her head was for, suddenly I was the bad guy. All because I told her the truth about what I was thinking.

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PATTY MAMULA / Clackamas Print

The Print staff is pictured outside Warner Brother's Studio's theater where they saw "Death to Smoochy," directed by Danny DeVito. Left to right: Allison Gerfin, Nick Barron (back) Salena De La Cruz and Maggie Jirasek.

The Print lets loose in L.A.

SALENA DE LA CRUZ

Opinion Editor

Amidst the smog and sunshine of Los Angeles, Calif., four members and the adviser of *The Clackamas Print* attended the National College Newspaper Convention, sponsored by the Associate Collegiate Press we ventured to sessions on news writing, photojournalism, headline writing, design and more in hopes of learning how to make the paper better.

From Feb. 28-March 3, vendors from across the country offered services, free merchandise and promotional material for students while national newspapers sent experts to teach aspiring journalists. Some of the exhibitors included Newspaper Association of America, U-Wire, Associated Press and Artisan Films.

"I thought it was pretty cool to have all of these different people wanting to talk to me, acting like they were my best friend," said Nick Barron, business manager for *The Clackamas Print*.

The first day, the soon-to-be reporters were welcomed to Los Angeles by Tom Rosenstiel, director of Project for Excellence in Journalism and co-author of "The Ele-

ments of Journalism," with a rousing speech about the role of a journalist in society. The night ended with a special screening of "The Panic Room" at 7:30 p.m., sponsored by Sony Pictures.

On March 1, there were sessions from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. ranging from reporting on crime on campus, polishing your news writing, sports writing and special sessions for advisers of the student ran papers.

"Steve Padilla from *The Los Angeles Times* not only gave great hints on writing and copy editing, but also on working with writers to improve their writing, said Allison Gerfin, copy editor, *The Clackamas Print*.

The afternoon session was a press conference that lasted one hour called "Binge Drinking, Club Drugs, Airport Security: Welcome to Spring Break 2002." With Spring Break steadily approaching, the content was well timed.

Barbara Ryan, editor of "Prevention Pipeline" and "Prevention File: Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs", discussed club drugs and prevention. George Marcelle, communications and social marketing professional, Social and Health Services, Ltd., discussed binge drink-

ing and measures to prevent college drinking. Sgt. Leon Nixon of the Los Angeles International Airport police opened up about airport security. Four student panelists from different colleges were the primary interviewers.

I thought it was a great experience to be able to be an interviewer at this conference. I know I'll be taking a lot away from the entire conference. I learned so much.

The night ended with a trip to Warner Brother's Studios to see an advanced screening of "Death to Smoochy," starring Robin Williams, Edward Norton and Danny DeVito, who also directed the film. Then students interviewed long-time actor/director Danny DeVito.

The conference ended with an awards presentation for Newspapers of the Year for Excellence as well as an award for the best coverage of Sept. 11.

"It was very interesting to see how other papers worked. Also, to see that they had the same kind of problems we do and it was great to see how they dealt with it," said Maggie Jirasek, editor-in-chief, *The Clackamas Print*.

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Students build team leadership with Legos

MICHAEL REED

Contributing Writer

Editor's note: The following article received first prize in the Clackamas Regional Skills Contest's Journalism-Feature Writing category. The article was edited for clarity, content and grammar.

Imagine sitting in a crowded, noisy corridor, while your team is doing their best to piece together a replica of a Lego structure that is placed on a table in the center of the room. Does this sound like fun? That is what occurred in the Community Center Skylight Dining Room at Clackamas Community College on Feb. 28.

The contest was just one event at the 24th annual Clackamas Re-

gional Skills Contest. There were 19 high schools participating from all around Clackamas County. This particular event, the leadership contest, had six high school leadership teams scheduled to participate. Five of them showed up, along with two home-school teams. Each team could have no fewer than four and no more than eight people.

The event was an exercise in the team's leadership skills and how well they can work together as a group. If there wasn't very good communication between the people with their team, their success was limited.

"Teams need to display coordination and organization in order to be the quickest to make the Lego replica," said Leadership Competition Supervisor

Michael Caudle. "This exercise has great competitiveness, and it builds school spirit and excellent strategy skills."

At the beginning of the event, each team is given the Lego blocks that are needed to complete an exact replica of a Lego structure placed at the middle of the room. Teams can use as much time as they want to plan how they are going to piece them together, but as soon as the blocks are touched, a timekeeper starts a stopwatch. The first team to complete it perfectly in the least amount of time wins.

The leadership contest provided a fun and exciting atmosphere for students who participated. There were some that thought that the difficulty of the assignment added an interesting

twist.

"It was a whole lot harder than I expected it to be, and that made it fun," said Adam Hardlurd, a sophomore at Gladstone High School. "When I talked to people who did this last year, they said it was really easy."

Evidently, the contest last year was incredibly easier. In fact, most people thought that it was too easy. There were many changes made so that this time around teams would have more of a challenge.

"I really tried to increase the difficulty. Last year the first team finished completed it in less than one minute. It was so easy because it was only a Lego robot. Now, I designed a more complex figure that requires more work and concentration," said Caudle.

This year ranged from anywhere between 12-25 minutes on the first attempt. Also, the figure this year was not recognizable as anything, only a mass of red and white Legos. The color infrequency in the blocks causes more strategies and fewer people rushing to get finished.

"It's fun to see all of the teams using different strategies," said Elaine Garrect, a junior on the Country Christian team. "I can tell we are losing because we spent less time planning and too much time handling the Legos."

Although there was a lot of panic to get finished, most if not all participants had a good time. Prizes will be awarded to the top teams, but just being there was an unforgettable experience for everyone involved.