

Opinions

The Blue Banner

Editorial

A little laughter is good

The following short comments are from the brain of Steven Wright, which a friend sent to the Blue Banner to make us laugh. We hope you enjoy these as much as we did.

"I spilled spot remover on my dog. He's gone now. I bought some powdered water, but I don't know what to add. It doesn't matter what temperature the room is, it's always room temperature."

"It's a small world, but I wouldn't want to have to paint it. You can't have everything, where would you put it?"

"I went to a restaurant that serves 'breakfast at any time.' So I ordered French toast during the Renaissance."

"Right now I'm having amnesia and deja vu at the same time. I think I've forgotten this before."

"I went to a general store. They wouldn't let me buy anything specifically."

"I went down the street to the 24-hour grocery. When I got there, they guy was locking the front door. I said, 'Hey, the sign says you're open 24 hours.' He said, 'Yes, but not in a row.'"

"I love to go shopping. I love to freak out the salespeople. They ask me if they can help me and I say, 'Have you got anything I'd like?' Then they ask me what size I need, and I say, 'Extra medium.'"

"I installed a skylight in my apartment. The people who live above me are furious."

"On the ceilings in my house, I have paintings of the rooms above so I never have to go upstairs."

"I have an answering machine in my car. It says, 'I'm home now. But leave a message and I'll call when I'm out.'"

"I was going 70 miles an hour and got stopped by a cop who said, 'Do you know the speed limit is 55 miles per hour?' 'Yes, officer, but I wasn't going to be out that long.'"

"One time a cop pulled me over for running a stop sign. He said, 'Didn't you see the stop sign?' I said, 'Yeah, but I don't believe everything I read.'"

"The judge asked, 'What do you plead?' I said, 'Insanity, your honor. Who in their right mind would park in the passing lane?'"

"When I get real bored, I like to drive downtown and get a great parking space, then sit in my car and count how many people ask me if I'm leaving."

"Yesterday I parked my car in a tow-away zone. When I came back the entire area was missing."

"I replaced the headlights in my car with strobe lights. Now it looks like I'm the only one moving."

"When I was a little kid we had a sand box. It was a quicksand box. I was an only child...eventually."

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Nothing in our editorial or opinions sections necessarily reflects the opinion of the entire Blue Banner editorial board, the faculty advisor, or the university faculty, administration or staff.

Unsigned editorials reflect the opinion of a majority of the Blue Banner editorial board. Letters, columns, cartoons and reviews represent only the opinions of their respective authors.

The Blue Banner welcomes submissions of letters and articles for publication. All submissions are subject to editing and are considered on the basis of interest, space, taste and timeliness.

Letters must be typed, double spaced, and must not exceed 300 words. Letters for publication must also contain the author's signature, classification, major or other relationship with UNCA.

The deadline for letters and classifieds is noon on Tuesday. If you have a submission, you can send it to:

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That is the question

Nate Conroy

Columnist

A question is defined as "an interrogative expression." Here are some:

- How long until "Friends"-mania dies down? Will it take as long as Melrose Place? Has no one noticed that they've seen all those plots and actors before?

- Did anyone notice that MTV doesn't play videos anymore?
- When will people discover that the key to life is acting like you know what you're talking about? When will we realize that professors are professors because they're really good at this?

- What ever happened to "Lightning Cloud Bass Note?"
- When will people figure out that exercise and beer cancel each other out?

- When will people realize that you can't "run off a cigarette?"
- Who says the 80s are coming back? Didn't they just leave?

- Why does this question format make me sound like a Blue Banner editorial? Tell me, did they run the spell-checker on this column?
- Why can't people get over their hangups?

- Why do computer science students feel the need to ask "Is there a web site for that?" to show off for the teacher.
- Why don't people take their

lift tickets off their jacket for a week after they went skiing?

- What is the deal with free pizza on this campus?

- What happened to the heated debate over Uma, "the campus dog," that raged through the pages of the Blue Banner last semester? Did people realize what they were arguing about?

- What do some non-traditional students give non-traditional students a bad name?

- Why do people take the class if they already know it all?

- What's the deal with telling your irrelevant life story in the middle of Humanities, just because you want to talk?

- When is that laptop computer on the side of the scorer's table at the basketball games going to get smashed with a pass?

- Will Hootie come back stronger with their sophomore effort? Come on, do you really believe that?

- Will we ever have to put up with another "I'm cool because I'm a loser" bands like Offspring?

- Why do I wish Jerry Springer would come to UNCA to film his show, but I just don't think its going to happen?

- What enterprising young business manager came up with the idea of sending out surveys

about Dante's?

- Why pay all that money for tuition (not to mention the evil athletic fees, of course), if you're not going to go to class?

- Why the hell can't we get mail on Saturday like the rest of the world?

- What's the deal with Seinfeld? Who are all these people anyway?

- Why do people go to work so they can have money so they can make their car payments so they can drive to work so they can have money to make their car payments?

- What's the deal with soap operas? Why do I just not get it?

- Is the reason "My So-Called Life" is never coming back is because IT SUCKS?

- Who's the architectural genius that designed the Humanities Lecture Hall? Is it the same person that designed Pizza Hut?

- Why did almost all of the Chuck E. Cheeses, Digger Dans, and Showbiz Pizzas close? Is it because those freaky animatronics scare the crap out of little kids?

- Why are the seats so damn close together in Taco Bell?
- Who the hell told the cafeteria survey people that we wanted a "larger variety of casseroles?"

- When will people realize that pop-country radio crap just SUCKS?

- Why do I get the feeling that the only person who wants to be at a Humanities lecture less than the students is the lecturer?

- What's with all this freakin' snow?

- Why hasn't Vegemite been imported into the US?

- How come Dr. Ruth is the only person allowed to say "penis" on TV? Am I allowed to say it in this paper? What about bastard? Jackass?

- Do you realize how hard it would be to get around this campus if you were in a wheelchair? Have you really looked at those ramps?

- Where has Birdsong been this semester? Is it too cold for him? Why does he get so offended when you make fun of his shoes?

- Why can't they fix the three broken bricks in front of Mills that have been that way for at least two years?

- When will all that new gym equipment replace the medieval torture devices we have now? Will the money for it come out of the Housing budget?

- Is Doc the only person who cares on this campus or are the rest of us just lazy? (Its a compliment - this place would shut down without Doc.)

Trash TV: coming to UNCA or not?

James Hertsch

Columnist

In case anybody's had his head in the sand for the last two weeks, I'd like to remind everybody that there are folks trying to bring Jerry Springer to visit our campus.

I think there's a contest of some sort—petitions and a video, and Springer might come visit. Are we supposed to provide the neo-Nazi transsexual poodle owners who've been abducted by aliens?

Hmph. I say we should keep Springer away from our campus. Actually, I'm beginning to think I'm the only person around here who hasn't signed one of those petitions.

Jerry Springer should not be allowed to come to this campus. To allow and petition Springer to visit us here would be tantamount to an endorsement of Springer and everything that he and his ilk represent: sensationalism, titillation, and over-glorification of the fringe elements of our society.

Talk shows, in the last few years, have carried us to the very worst in American society. On a talk show, we watch hapless people "surprised" by their loved ones—who may be concealing anything from an obnoxious mother-in-law on up to transsexuals.

On a talk show, we, the American public, witness personal vendettas and family problems ("I'm your daughter/son/mother/whatever, why won't you talk to me/

sleep with me/love me/whatever?") played out to a raucous in-house audience.

And, the audiences! Where else can you find a group of people as rude, as crude, as despicable, as such people?

Undaunted by the high-flying emotions on the stage, the audiences only seem to egg on the guests. I can almost hear the audience in the Roman arena, chanting blood, blood, blood as today's most popular gladiator faces a bloodthirsty lion.

And the guests. Who knows whether to feel sorry for these folks, or to throw rotten tomatoes at them? Some of the guests seem obviously bewildered by the talk-show world around them, where the unusual is the norm. Many of the guests become unwitting victims of a surprise, something which often involves their own dirty laundry being aired for the public.

Other guests are there to gain revenge, to carry out the vendettas for the studio audience. These guests drag on an old lover, or a family member, or some other person with whom they have a grudge. And, on national TV, the predator guest will eviscerate the prey guest.

And the hosts. Yes, our friends, the hosts. Some of them actually seem to try to quiet the audience down. Some almost act like moderators.

Most, however, seem to want to do little else than add to the

raging maelstrom of human emotion. Most of the talk show hosts seem to delight in the mess that they have created, with the microphones and cameras and stages and lights and all the trappings of a real TV show.

And, here, is where much of the blame can be laid. On the steps of the show itself. Somebody here has provided a forum for the expression of the twisted views of guests. Somebody whips the studio audience into a raging pack of jackals, eager to pounce on hapless guests.

Somebody finds the guests, books them, asks the predators to come, sets up the prey to be eviscerated. Somebody blows the ill wind that generates such a tempest. And, somebody doesn't seem to care much about calming the winds once they blow.

Yet, there's one thing I'm forgetting here—the audience. The only reason these shows are still on, and that the talk shows, these perversions of American media, are still on the air is because somebody watches them.

Advertisers are still willing to buy commercial time, somebody is still watching, and somewhere, somewhere, is a little box recording all this, recording that people watch this trash, recording that the American media consumer is little more than a dung beetle, scrounging through the dregs of human society, searching for a sensationalistic "quick fix."

We have met the enemy, and he is ourselves.

As for myself, I want no part of

it. If somebody is a transsexual neo-Nazi hemophiliac transvestite homosexual poodle-owning suicidal homicidal masochistic poodle-owner who wants to contact the aliens, I want no part of it. Keep your dirty laundry put away.

And, to bring Jerry Springer, or any talk-show host to our campus, to invite any one of them to this campus, is an endorsement of the sort of television, the sort of entertainment, that the talk shows provide.

To bring Jerry Springer to campus is to approve, not only of him, but of everything that the talk-show hosts stand for, that the talk shows practice.

To sign one of the petitions is to make UNCA a willing participant in the confrontational tactics that these people employ. To bring Springer to campus is an insult to legitimate television journalists.

To bring a talk show to this campus is a slap in the face to anybody who's ever found himself receiving a "nasty surprise" on one of these shows. To bring Springer to campus would be to make ourselves party to the airing of all the dirty laundry that these people like to air.

I encourage students here to refuse to sign the petitions. I entreat UNCA students to say "no" to the culture that spawned these heinous creations. I UNCA faculty, students, and staff, to refuse to allow Jerry Springer to be a part of UNCA, even if only for a day.