

Friendship in the 21st Century

By Allie Bayat

Once upon a time friendships meant loyalty, camaraderie and confidant. When you were a child friendship meant the person you saw every day, shared your adventures, your dreams and sorrows. A friend was someone you walked to school with everyday, sat next to on the bus or who made space at their lunch table. A friend was someone you could trust. Beyond that there were acquaintances, people you knew or associated with in passing but never trusted with your heart.

Friendship before the advent of computers was defined by the daily interactions and connections maintained through face to face contact. Today friendship is defined by how many people you can add to your Facebook page or how many people

will follow you on Twitter.

Computers have changed the way friends interact and maintain friendships. Social media websites have changed the definition of friendship. It has also changed how friendships are made. It has affected the quality over quantity of "friends" and possibly diminished the force behind the word.

You wouldn't trust a stranger with the keys to your home or the password for your ATM card. Why would you trust them with your most private thoughts? Why would you trust them with your heart? In the 21st century if you skim through your Facebook you'll watch the torrent of failing relationships blow by blow. You may come across the hollow cries of loneliness through the words of those looking

for validation and possible connections. But you also see the comedy in people's lives as well. Youtube allows you to share the moments that used to be kept hidden away on videos in a corner closet awaiting moments for display. You no longer have to wait to see a friend to see pictures of their children, pulled out ever so joyously from their wallets and handbags. Now you get to see every moment of their lives splayed out for all to follow in storybook fashion, edited at times and at times not enough.

The internet began to chip away at friendships years ago. Social media websites hit the deafening blow of corruption and corrosion. For all its wonders and efficiency it has eroded the meaning and quality of friendships. It has deprived us of

the joy of meeting someone, sitting and talking to them face to face, getting to know them over a period of time, learning all their quirks. It has diminished the memories and moments because these phantom friendships have filled a phantom void and deprived of the joys of building a friendship layer by layer.

So now when we make a "friend" online and add them to our social sites, follow their daily "wonderful life" and "hangout" and "hookup" over sterile messages passed back and forth online we are fooled into believing we have made real connections.

Sometimes it's good for our emotional well-being to get back to the basics. I use my computer to write, but I treasure my notebooks and pencils. I use my reader but enjoy

my moments with a real book on my lap, turning each page. I post on my site that I've watched my favorite comedy, but I cherish the moments when I can sit with someone I trust and watch it and laugh together. There is a lot to be said for disconnecting from the "false" friends and enjoying the company of one good friend, learning to bond and connect the way we humans have done so for the majority of our history.

In my experience, I've learned that it's better to have one good friend than twenty "false" friends. I prefer quality over quantity. I still believe in trust, loyalty and integrity in friendship. Friendships take maintenance, care and time. You get out of it, what you put into it.



Senior Art Exhibit

"Unlimited Edge"

Friday, March 16, 2012

6:00pm until 8:00pm

Rosenthal Gallery:

Rosenthal Building
1200 Murchison Road
Fayetteville State University

The "Unlimited Edge" Exhibition features works from:

Malanie Bacchus
Keisha Edwards
Jacklyn Pope
Marlon Whitaker
Kinston Miles

Come see our artwork, both Digital and Painting!

Admission is FREE!!! Food and Refreshments WILL BE served!