

RAMBLE ONLINE POLL RESULTS

What do you consider cheating in a relationship?

An emotional, loving connection
2%

Phone/Cyber sex
1%

Intercourse
13%

Kissing
2%

None of the above
1%

All of the above
82%

To participate in the poll, register online @

thenewsargus.com

Social media a necessary nuisance

Famous author and American literary icon Edward Eggleston once said "Journalism is organized gossip."

Eggleston died in 1902 but if ever there was a prophetic voice that would define post-millennial information trafficking, the Midwestern novelist provided it for us more than 100 years ago.

You see it everywhere, and it's almost impossible to avoid.

Twitter. MySpace. Facebook. Social media dot coms have encumbered America to the point of dependency; checking your Facebook wall and scrolling down your Twitter timeline has become synonymous with having a cup of coffee every morning. In fact, it is fast becoming the Information Generation's version of the daily newspaper.

There are many critics on each end of the scale when it comes to weighing in on the topic of social media. Many skeptics say that technology is unreliable, and that society would do well not to depend on it as much as it does. They also say that in terms of accurate news reporting, these lightning fast sources of information have the tendency to be dangerously unreliable since anyone is able to post anything at any time; the gatekeepers (editors and commissioners of print, television and radio) are almost totally taken out of play,

leaving the end-user of the information to decipher the legitimacy of the information they receive.

I agree. As a journalist and an editor, much of my job consists of verifying the facts and maintaining accuracy. Responsibility plays a big role in delivering the news to its recipients.

However, I also believe that social media is a culmination of what the world has both wanted and needed. People want the latest news in the quickest amount of time possible. So, technology answered the call. And it has affected nearly every area of news, especially politics. Last year, Nick Schaper said "This is no longer a gimmick. This is how the American people want to receive their news and want to hear from us."

Schaper, the news-media representative for House Speaker John Boehner, was referring to social media and the American public's reliance on it.

Humans, by nature, are social creatures. Aside from catering to the wants and desires of our species, we have used communication in our society as a means of survival.

Consider the date Jan. 25, 2011. Thousands of protesters in Cairo and other large Egyptian cities took to the streets on a national holiday to speak

out against the atrocities that faced their country on a daily basis. State police attempted to assuage the situation to the world at-large by brutality and media blackouts, but thanks to social networks such as Facebook and Twitter the world got a glimpse of the Egyptian experience. Organizers coordinated through a Facebook page, where they were able to take a stand against torture, poverty, corruption and unemployment. One page called for protesters all over Egypt to gather after prayers Friday. Twitter began the trend #Jan25 to inform people of what was going on.

Despite the government's intervention on the technological front, social media were able to make an impact on the situation in North Africa; it caused the eyes of the world to become fixed on the nightmares that people have been living in Egypt.

The gossip that is entrenched in social media is similar to a common cold, annoying and incurable. However, the organization that it brings to the world is as necessary as our dependency on each other.

So tell me, what's new?

Jaye Cole
Copy Desk Chief

Politics as usual must come to an end

In lieu of President Obama's State of the Union address, I feel as though there are certain issues that we as Americans should be focusing on now more than ever.

It seems as though politicians have lost sight of why they were elected in the first place: to speak for us, the people, on issues that matter to us and affect us the most.

The greed of politicians has far exceeded the good that they do. They tend to lean toward the side which best profits them instead of the people, always asking the same question before they make a decision, "what's in it for me?"

As Americans we are entitled to certain inalienable rights, as dictated and protected by our Constitution. Our rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are

being slowly taken from us. We the people, are allowing the government that we trusted to protect us and our interests, to continuously vote against the wants and needs of the common man and woman.

Universal healthcare is no doubt a hot topic for many people. Republican politicians like Mike Huckabee are on television preaching against the purposed legislature that would allow for everyone to be able to go to the doctor, saying to the people "you didn't like having to take your medicine as children, why should you have to take it now that you're an adult?" To me, this seems like a slap in the face to people who actually need medical care and cannot get it due to some unforeseen circumstance.

The unemployment rate is 9.4 percent as of December

of 2010, meaning there is somewhere around 6.8 million unemployed people in this country. No job means no insurance and thus no way to afford the skyrocketing price of healthcare.

We pour tons of money into areas that we see absolutely no improvement from. If we are going to be paying money to the government's black hole bank account and, believe me we will, we may want to consider paying for something that could provide help for the average working-class person instead of continuing to fill the already overfilled pockets of America's richest 2 percent.

As if being poor isn't bad enough, now you have to be sick or ailing, unemployed, homeless, old and poor. Perhaps it makes it easier to kick some of the poor people when they are down.

At least 30 countries have some sort of universal healthcare. Afghanistan and Iraq also have universal health coverage that is provided through United States war funding.

The United States of America is supposed to be the greatest country in the world, the guardian and protector to other less developed nations, with the smartest scholars and the best systems.

How can we really be all of that when we can't even take care of our own?

Healthcare doesn't have to be 100% free; it just needs to be affordable to everyone. Even if we have to pay for the system, it is the American thing to do.

Jamie Hunter
Staff Reporter

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