

Anne
HJERSMAN

No more monkey business

Students, professors need to 'swing' together in class

Maybe it's because after four years I have become too entrenched in the college scene, or maybe I've just grown bitter with age (almost 22 years), but I am sensing some

negative energy between that breed of people we fondly refer to as "professors" and all the college-types who wander aimlessly around this campus every day.

There's a certain sense of hostility, seeded in disinterest and distrust, that seems to be festering under the surface of every classroom encounter, and I don't want to be there when this Mount Vesuvius of "education" erupts.

I can't really blame either party in this clash of the bright ones — then again perhaps both are to blame. My mother has always told me it takes two to tango, and there's just no dancing around this "us" and "them" mentality that is tainting the ivory towers.

A professor actually announced to one of my classes last semester that he was afraid — literally, physically afraid — of giving anyone a failing grade. He said one



MATT HANEY/DN

could never know when a disgruntled student might waltz into the classroom and blow one's brains out.

I'm not sure if I was more disturbed by the image or the idea that such paranoia could exist within the framework of the instructor-student relationship.

Something has gone tragically wrong with the collegiate system. Students aren't being studios, and

educators aren't educating.

Whether it's out of fear or frustration, I'm not sure. What I do know is that everyone is losing out.

It's the rare person — student or instructor — who brings vivacity into a classroom.

If I meet any more professors who think their job is done if they tell their students to "discuss the assigned readings" without doing any thought provocation, themselves,

I just might have to get ugly. Any monkey could conduct a class in that manner.

Of course, any monkey could go into a classroom and stare blankly at the instructor for an hour, too.

I'm not saying students should expect to have their education spoon-fed to them, but professors who have stopped caring about their classwork breed boredom. And there's no tougher audience in the world than a classroom full of unresponsive students.

Professors expect their students to disappoint them, and we students are all too ready to comply. It's too much work for any of us to care about college.

I don't know which came first, the uninspired instructor or the sloth-like student, but neither is a very appealing character, and both have a lot to lose.

More than time or money, opportunities are slipping away from us. And every day that goes by with not much more than an apathetic sigh is simply a waste.

No more monkey see, monkey do. Let's go back to giving it the old "college try."

Hjersman is a senior news-editorial and English major and is the night editor and a columnist at the Daily Nebraskan.

Brent
POPE

Malevolent munchin' monsters

Touchy feely doll provides a whole lotta lovin'

Mama always said, "Don't put toys in your mouth because they can't bite back," but I bet she never thought there would be a toy that could return the favor. We've seen it

in movies, bad movies usually, but not until just recently did it come to pass in real life.

In case you haven't already heard, I'm talking about the

Cabbage Patch Snack Time Kid. This rehash of a has-been children's favorite comes with a functional mouth meant to chow down on plastic carrots and french fries. But after over 100 complaints of the doll gnawing on people's hair, fingers, and other popular appendages that shall remain nameless for the sake of good taste, (there's a first time for everything) Mattel put the doll on recall.

Strangely enough, the real impact of this story isn't the victims, but the number of copycat products spawned by this phenomenon. After all, whenever something's put on recall, the demand always goes up. I managed to get my hands on a top secret marketing list, and here are just a few new items you can expect to see very, very soon:

The Tickle Me Elmo people are scrambling to get new versions of their giggling muppet on the market, because the Cabbage Patch Snack Time Kid debacle took a bite (Ouch! Now that's a bad pun) out of their post-holiday orders. Expect to see store shelves stocked with Bite

My Hair Elmo, Nibble On My Ear Elmo, and in various adult toy outlets, Eat My Hot Dog Elmo (it's a sick world, people).

And 20th Century Fox is hard at work on a new film entitled "Die Hard 158: Snack Time Island." The plot: Bruce Willis is on a plane. It makes an emergency landing on an uncharted island inhabited only by ravenous Snack Time Kids. And then, hooooooweeeee! Let the wacky hijinks begin!

The federal government is trying to cut into the deficit by marketing a cheap knockoff of the Snack Time Kid with a built-in paper shredder. They plan to use dolls with the faces of several prominent government officials, including Bill Clinton, Newt Gingrich and Sonny Bono.

The biggest problem seems to be what to call it. Possible names making the final cut include: My Congressman Ate My Homework Doll, the Shredding Incriminating Documents Doll and the Inhale My Drugs Before the Police Knock Down the Door Doll.

And even though the original Snack Time Kid had to be recalled, the Cabbage Patch creators still realize the potential here, so they are hard at work creating several variations, including:

SNACK TIME TRASH COMPACTOR KID: There'll be no more wasted time taking out the garbage with this trash-chewing doll, but careful, if you don't cut it into small enough pieces, the little guy's likely to spit up on you.

SNACK TIME BOTTLE OPENER KID: This loveable little fella will be more than happy to take the caps off of your ice-cold brews.



MATT HANEY/DN

They're sure to be a hot item at Super Bowl parties and my drunk Uncle Ebola's breakfast table.

SNACK TIME FINGERNAIL CLIPPER KID: Do you really need an explanation here? It cuts fingernails!

Historically speaking, I'm just glad I can say I was around when toys first began to fight back against the torture kids put them through. Technology is finally starting to turn against man. We are on the cusp of a new way of life. I can see it now...

(fast forward 50 years)

ME: "I know this might sound strange to you youngsters, but I remember when the earth wasn't ruled by robots, it was ruled by lots of old white men. And dolls didn't eat people, they were just for playing with."

YOUNGSTERS: "Whatever you say, grandpa!"

Pope is a senior broadcasting major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.