

Opinion

{ Your Procrastination Destination }



The art of debating

Debates have become a form of entertainment, rather than an informative source

JASON M. WALLACE
THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Like many of you, I have watched the recent debate between presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama. The candidates handled questions dealing mostly with the economy and foreign affairs. Though the option to judge their responses would be a thorough topic, I want to look at their point-counter-point strategies. The struggle to gain the opinion as to who will be the most qualified president, was seen through the use of a few repeated key words.

When McCain had the floor, he heavily backed up his reasons and points with his experience as a long-term senator. "I have seen" or "I traveled," and several other experience-centered beginnings opened many of his two and five-minute answers and responses. When asked about his thoughts on Afghanistan, McCain had to first set up his answer in comparison to his support in the Gulf War. His experience also gave him the allowance to call Obama out on not understanding the different shades of certain topics. McCain wants to gain the appearance of a seasoned politician by letting the viewer know that he has encountered many different scenarios as a congressional representative, and that he can handle any upcoming situation based on his colorful and aged career.

However, McCain's assuring career under Obama's light was exposed to contradictions and several mistakes. Obama started many of his responses by stating flaws in McCain's career and voting record. He was also very critical about his own career when he felt that McCain was telling untruths, like when he said Obama was anxious to attack Pakistan. Obama's points relied on McCain's policies, compared to those passed in the last eight years. Obama may have been using this tactic in order to achieve an appearance as an investigative leader.

The language in debating is such an art to behold. Each candidate is trying to use equal and strong ethos, pathos and logos to persuade the spectators. Watching the debate was like watching a dance or listening to a complex music style. McCain was stirring up the pathos of emotions when he talked about those who have suffered the loss of a family member in the Iraq war, and Obama had to follow him with his own tale. When Obama pointed out several logical contradictions in McCain's policies, McCain had to counter with his stance as an experienced senator who has accomplished many feats.

We don't watch the debates for information. If you've cared to follow the candidates, you already know where they stand on every topic. If you haven't, you can catch up with endless amounts of press articles. We watch the debates because it's an "American Idol" competition of persuasive words. Watch the further debates with caution because whichever candidate can stir up the most emotion will easily win your vote over whatever research you've done.

At the end of the debate, I still felt undecided. I felt that the two candidates focused more on outdoing each other rather than directly answering the questions. If you want clear information on the candidates' policies, don't just rely on the debates. Watch the debates in order to see how pointedly the two candidates contradict each other.

I feel that the only way to make the right choice is through research. Debates will only bring up the most critical issues, which are important, but each candidate will have plans for topics that usually aren't mentioned in the debates.

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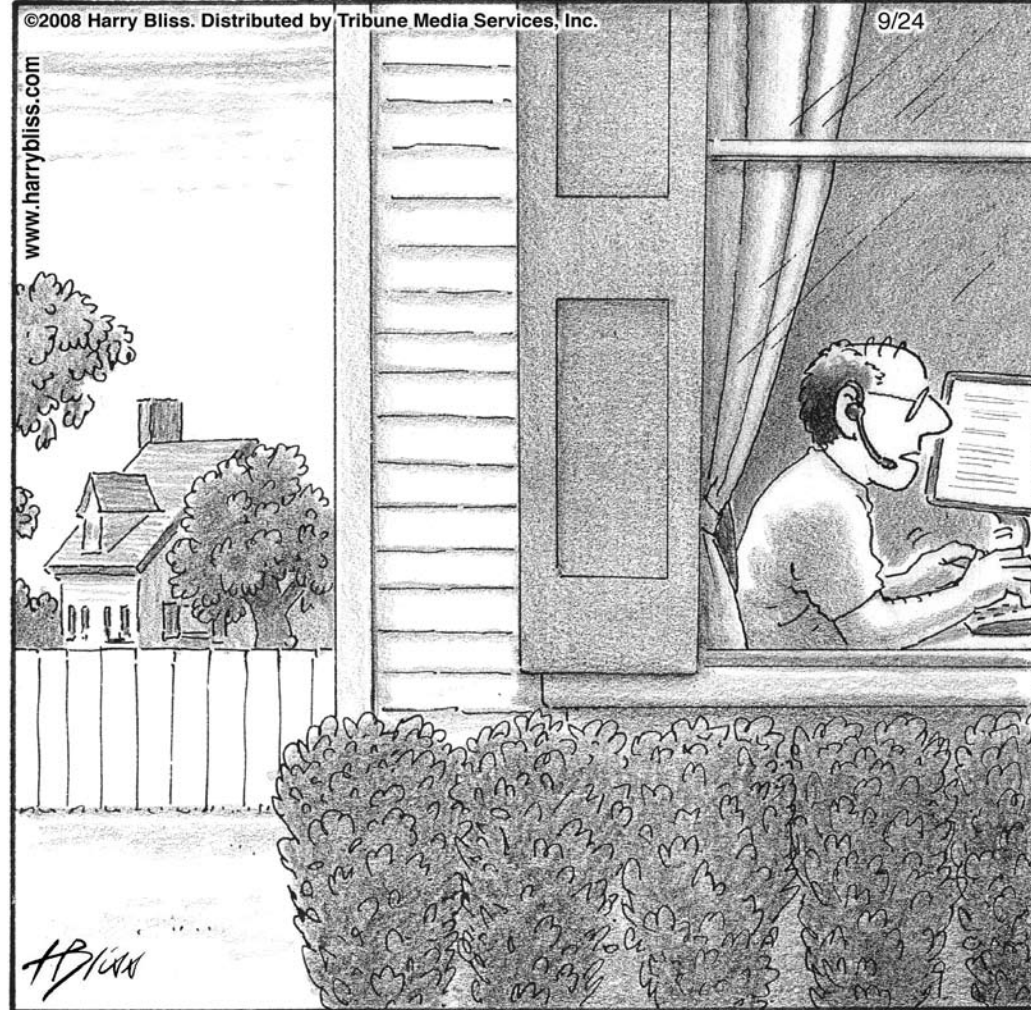
Long distance love lost to the long miles

MARY DIXON
THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Often, college students find themselves in long distance relationships. Leaving that high school sweetheart behind at home is truly one of life's most difficult rites of passage. But the question remains, is holding on to someone so far away really worth it?

In my experience, long distance relationships do not work. When I left home for ECU, I also left my boyfriend of four years behind. Initially, the departure worked fine for the both of us. However, things began to change rapidly once my boyfriend realized that my life was evolving, not in congruence with his own. Trivial issues like not talking long enough on the phone because I had homework caused intense fights between us. Eventually, the fighting created by the distance caused a rift between us so deep that it was no longer repairable. I was miserable, he was miserable; so we broke up.

Couples require togetherness. In the beginning of a relationship, the couple usually decides how much time both people feel



"Marie, forward my calls — I'm working on an ulcer from home today."

PIRATE RANTS

The East Carolinian does not endorse statements made in Pirate Rants. Questions regarding Rants can be directed to Elise Phillips, Editor in Chief, at opinion@theeastcarolinian.com. Log onto theeastcarolinian.com to submit a Rant of your own.

I don't understand how The Exchange magically changes their name to "The Landing" and then changes it back three days later... I'm so confused. Where do I live?

Don't worry, Ben is back in Greenville... I saw him in the library the other day when he introduced himself to me for the 13th billion time.

I have a 3.7 GPA and still feel like a failure.

Scavenger hunt! Five dollars in the Bell.

I laugh every day at the load of bull he fed you to get you back in bed... Saying my number is in his recent calls to tell me that we can't be friends anymore... HA CAN YOU GET ANYMORE GULLIBLE?

What if they were just making drugs in chem. lab for ECU's profit? Would we ever know?

Ask the girl out upstairs instead of playing Halo all day.

Has anyone seen the girl who recently died her hair really dark and lets it hang all in her face on campus? I often find myself mistaking her for The Grudge until she turns her head and I see how orange her face is. The Grudge girl is way too pale to be her... disappointed.

I'm the only guy in my class and I'm married. Fellas: Now taking bids on my seat.

That's what she said.

Seriously, Sean Kingston to talk about politics? Come on...

Flossin' ain't just for gangstas.'

I can't wait to finally take a year off of school and do nothing. Thank you Bush for ruining the economy and making it even more difficult to get student loans!

I'm an early bird and a night owl, so I am wise and I have worms.

To the boy who sits about three desks across from me in sociology Monday, Wednesday and Friday: I think you are gorgeous.

If you were a dirt nasty sex machine, we'd be married already.

Never let a lady Pirate check your prostate. You'll get "hooked."

She didn't "accidentally" get good in bed.

Parents weekend SUCKED! I should not have to be kicked out of my student parking for all the parents and they should NOT tell me to park on West End, or pay the \$20. FIX THIS NEXT YEAR.

My roommate's fish mysteriously died last year. Coincidentally after I sprayed Lysol disinfectant cleaner in the bowl. Oops.

People, when you go to the voting polls on NOV. 4 please do NOT wear any clothing that represents anybody running in this race...THEY WILL TURN YOU AROUND AND REFUSE YOU THE RIGHT TO VOTE. Real talk...pass the word, PLEASE!

Someone called me a cracker.... I laughed so hard! I wish my homework was sex; I would do it all the time.

To the girl who started her

period late Saturday night, you left your dirty thong in my dorm room. Please come get it, I'm not sure what to do with this...

The only thing funnier than Tina Fey on SNL as Sarah Palin is the real interview Palin had with Katie Couric. Pew, pew, pew!

To the two boys who play football in the Campus Towers parking lot: Find somewhere else to play. I recommend the huge grassy area right in front of Mendenhall...it's like two feet away.

To: The straight, short, dark-haired gal with freckles and the tie die shirt that walks to class like she's walking the cat walk for iPod. From: The lesbian you think is awesome. WHY CAN'T YOU BE CURIOUS?!?!?

My roommate moans when she sleeps. I can handle it if you snore, but moaning...I just have one question for you, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING!?!?

My boyfriend puts on camouflage at least once a week and hides in the woods until I find him.

Stop blaming Bush for the economy. It takes almost a decade for economic policy to kick in. So thank your buddy Clinton. And Clinton can thank Bush, Sr. and Reaganomics for his "apparent" economic success.

Brunettes, take a hint. Pigtails are sexy! national rainforest.

OK, so I get the poof hair when it looks neat, but why do other girls on this campus think it is cute to have a rat's nest on their head? Or maybe the IBF look?

Don't worry, be happy

LAUREN COLLINS
THE EAST CAROLINIAN

With midterms just around the corner, students are spending longer hours studying, fewer hours sleeping and much more time stressing about how to balance friends, family and schoolwork.

I know I'm one of many procrastinators at ECU, and once test time rolls around, I'm completely frazzled and loaded with Amp or Red Bull for nights on end.

Procrastination seems to be a great idea for some students, but the stress that can build up due to putting off assignments and study time will begin to take its toll soon enough.

Some days seem as though not a single thing can go right and even the simplest of tasks feel overwhelming, zapping all of your energy. Though daily stresses can be caused by a number of things, from test anxiety to the angst of driving down Greenville Boulevard in 5 p.m. traffic, our response to stress can be beneficial but most of the time, it is harmful. Because stress is an inevitable part of life, we have to prepare ourselves to cope with stress before it has more hazardous effects on our health.

It is not ironic, or pleasant, that students tend to have hacking coughs, runny noses and fevers around test time. Approximately 60 to 90 percent of illness is stress-related. Stress prevents the body from fighting off disease and infection. It affects the digestive system as well. Our mentality is also thrown into overdrive by stress, but the effects of anxiety, depression and substance abuse are often not as obvious as the physical problems we tend to suffer. Such stress results generally take longer to acknowledge and cope with, as opposed to stress-related aches and pains.

External stressors are not the only things responsible for deteriorated health. Worrying about grades or upcoming tests, having a pessimistic attitude or having unrealistic expectations can also lead to chronic symptoms of stress. Pain, migraines and heartburn are medical conditions associated with stress, as well as skin problems and irritable bowel syndrome. Stress also leads students to do a number of things in excess or less of, such as sleeping or eating. I often suffer from the I-don't-want-to-get-out-of-bed-and-face-the-world-syndrome.

Weight gain is likely one of the most obvious or recognizable effects of stress, which is why some of us are befuddled when we can't find anything that fits right during some of the more stressful times in life.

Those pounds that seem to pack around the abdominal area aren't necessarily from the doughnuts you ate for breakfast or the late night pizza run. Cortisol is a stress hormone that can slow metabolism when released during the "fight or flight" response to stress.

There is no way to get away from stress—it's everywhere. But I feel that it is necessary to take steps to avoid negative effects on your health. Stay active, take time to relax and prioritize appropriately.

I try to make lists of priorities, but inevitably waste more time listing what needs to be done, than actually doing the tasks. Avoid procrastination, even though we are all guilty of it at some point in time, and make it a point to avoid additional stressors.

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