



peter leo

the shakedown

This is my last column of the semester, if I'm not mistaken. To begin, I want to say thanks for all the positive feedback I've gotten from everyone, and I hope that our much-deserved winter break treats you all very well.

Picking a topic for the last column was a challenge, but certainly a welcome one. Not to worry, something always presents itself. And, go.

It's come to my attention that there are people on this campus, some I know well, others not so well, that really don't think too much of this place. Yeah, they like their friends, they like to party or hang out, but there are a number of things about Grinnell College as well as Grinnell, Iowa that don't always agree with them. That's okay. Some of these things are issues I've addressed over the past semester, others I'm sure I haven't. As difficult as it might be to look at Grinnell on a map and not think about how interesting and glamorous it isn't when compared to everyone's hometown, I challenge each and every one of you to tell me where else in the world you could have a day like this.

Where else could you go to a basketball game and be guaranteed an exciting 40 minutes of play? Not only that, but the gym is small enough that every opposing player hears your taunts, jeers and chants. Did I mention your admission was free? One of the nicest, coolest and it just so happens most enormous human beings EVER is leading the wave. Over and over again. And campus security loves every minute of it. A player on the team makes five consecutive three-pointers and the crowd goes nuts. It's unique because unlike a huge school someplace else, after the game you will see that player around campus, and be able to congratulate him personally.

Where else?

Where else are you allowed to head over to a dorm room with a keg of beer just sitting there, cold? There are people drinking out of fish bowls, paper bowls, plastic bowls, dirty cups, gallon jugs of apple juice and even the trendy Nalgene bottles. You argue about your favorite sport over a beer or two.

Where else can you go to dinner drunk and get away with it? There are plenty of colleges all over the country that would probably write you up instantly if you did such a thing. But here it's okay to have a stack of three plates underneath the one you're actually using, obnoxiously mix Tabasco sauce with pink lemonade, and give everyone a high five as they walk by. Not to mention, one of the nicest, coolest and it just so happens most enormous human beings EVER is leading the wave. For a second time. And the dining hall loves every minute of it.

Where else can you walk from party to party, chat with all the people you know, and enjoy a variety of different drinks all night long, all without paying a dime? There's just something about a planned formal occasion that breaks your everyday rhythm, but in a good way. It's impossible to feel like your life is monotonous and boring when you have a chance at least once a semester to go out at night, dressed to kill, and get out of your comfort zone a little bit.

Where else is there a formal dance that everyone on campus is invited to? Yeah, there are other small colleges all over the country that probably do the exact same thing. It doesn't matter. It's a chance to get dressed up for once, go dance to a different kind of music than you might be used to and have a great time with your friends.

Where else can you look up on stage and see one of the crazy-

est dudes ever (Kettle) looking like he's about to pass out while he thanks you all for coming ... I think? It was unintelligible good buddy, but classy nonetheless. Old Blue Eyes would've been proud of you.

Finally, where else could you have done all of the above and then some, every single day if it suited you? Without "Big Brother" looking over your shoulder all the time, or checking your fridge for stuff you aren't supposed to have or walking into your Harris Party looking to write public intoxication tickets?

I guess the point I'm trying to make is that here, at this college, we have so many little things to look forward to that they easily become overshadowed by the difficulties we might face from day to day. Yes, schoolwork can be tough. Yes, there are other things in people's lives that make them upset besides work. But don't forget the good stuff. We're given the chance to support our peers, for free, at any sporting event or extra-curricular activity we want to attend. Even though we don't always do a good job of it, we go to school in a place that allows us to govern ourselves, and regulate our own behavior, rather than pay older students to do so.

For those who don't agree with me, feel free. I won't be upset. I understand that not everyone sees Grinnell through my eyes. But if there is one lesson that I've learned this semester, it's that all the people who told me that my college experience, no matter where it took place, would only be as good as I chose to make it were absolutely right. And come hell or high water, I'll be damned if I'm not going to make it rock and roll.

It's impossible to feel like your life is monotonous and boring when you have chance at least one semester to go out at night, dressed to kill, and get out of comfort zone a little bit.

Letters to
 the Editor


Wind farm controversy

"I'm ... at my Cape house." Not the first thing I intended for my soon-to-be college roommate to learn about me. But there you have it; my family owns a summer house in Cape Cod, Mass. This has long been a source of embarrassment for me, especially at a school like Grinnell. However, I have decided to use my life-long understanding of the Cape's socioeconomic situation to provide insight into an issue that many Grinnellians probably view as cut and dry: the proposed wind farm in Nantucket Sound.

Nantucket Sound is located south of the Cape's mainland, north of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket islands. In 2001, a company called Cape Wind proposed building a wind farm consisting of 130 420 foot tall wind turbines in 24-square miles of Nantucket Sound's waters. The farm would be the first of its kind in the United States and would, in theory, provide a substantial portion of pollution-free energy to the Cape and Islands. Since its proposal, there has been heated debate involving the varied interests of energy companies, the local government, environmentalists, local residents and summer residents.

From an environmental standpoint, the wind farm may seem like a great idea, yet a number of underlying issues exist. The Cape Cod Canal, physically separating Cape Cod from the rest of Massachusetts, divides "year-rounders" from the significantly wealthier summertime residents. The weaker economy of the Cape is highly dependent on tourism and many locals would like to see this dependence reduced. I have worked on Cape Cod and have friends whose permanent homes are no larger than my family's summer home and whose backyards certainly do not end on a private beach.

Having experienced, to some degree, life in each group, I can attest to the interests of each. Of importance to year-round residents are the potential economic benefits of a wind farm. According to Cape Wind, the farm would provide an average of 420 megawatts of pollution-free, renewable energy to three-quarters of the Cape and Islands, at a lower cost than current sources. The construction and subsequent maintenance of the wind farm would provide, by some

estimates, up to 1,000 new jobs for local residents, thereby decreasing dependence on the tourism industry. It is worth noting that the wind farm is likely to reduce income generated by tourism. It is possible, however, that this loss in revenue will be matched by an increase in an eco-tourism industry.

On the other hand, such well-known and respected public figures as Robert Kennedy Jr. and Walter Cronkite, both owners of affected property, have publicly opposed Cape Wind's actions. Robert Kennedy Jr., despite all his green talk, is not willing to give up the view from his Hyannis port compound. This NIMBY (not-in-my-backyard) mentality, sadly, is held by many summertime residents, some of whom are quite wealthy and powerful. The relatively untouched beauty of the Cape is what draws many of us to it in the first place. Some of my most peaceful moments have occurred in the Atlantic in sight of a vast, uninterrupted horizon of water. I've spent many summers fishing off Nantucket, near the area under consideration and, all things being equal, I would like the view preserved. Unfortunately, the 40-story turbines would be visible from beaches along the southern mainland and parts of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. According to Cape Wind they would appear one half inch above the horizon. And efforts to conceal the turbines by painting them to match the ocean will be negated by the necessity to light the farm at night for boat and plane traffic. Another concern for the Cape Cod elite is property values. It's safe to say that building 130 turbines, each one taller than the Statue of Liberty, in one's back yard is likely to reduce the desirability of that property.

Robert Kennedy Jr., despite all his green talk, is not willing to give up the view from his Hyannis port compound.

As if the situation weren't complicated enough, there are the central environmental issues that often take a back seat to the power struggle. The current primary generator of the Cape and Islands' energy uses about 320 million gallons of fuel oil a year, some of which undoubtedly ends up on the Cape's beaches due to oil spills. With the help of wind power, oil dependence could be reduced by over 90 million gallons every year. Cape Wind argues that the impact on bird migrations and marine life will be minimal. More importantly, movement toward wind power would reduce global warming, responsible for the rising sea levels eroding Cape Cod's beaches. Any reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, by switching from traditional to renewable energy, is beneficial to everyone owning or using property on the Cape. If greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced, NIMBY-ites will have bigger problems than dropping property values as the ocean draws nearer to their million dollar homes. Hopefully research will continue to resolve some of the murkier aspects of the wind farm and reduce the fears of potential wind users across the nation, allowing Cape Cod to become a pioneer in environmental innovation.

That having been said, if anyone is in the New England area over the summer, give me a call. We'll take a boat ride out to Nantucket and with any with any luck, spot a rare wind turbine.

—Lauren Dewese '05

Re: Geneva Initiative

Alex Muller's denunciation of the Geneva Peace agreement exemplifies the racist attitudes which prevent peace from being achieved in the Middle East. Specifics of the agreement aside, Muller propagates an idea that is tantamount to genocide; he denies the very existence of the Palestinian people. Before the mass Zionist migrations of the late 19th century, the land now known as Israel and the territories was the land of an indigenous arab population with a unique history. Since the 7th century, the territories and land now Israel has had a population of Arab majority. Though Zionists touted their project as "A land without people for a people without a land", the land was in fact inhabited. The 700,000 Arabs in British Palestine in 1919 vastly outnumbered the Jews there. The late Edward Said, professor at Columbia and an ethnic Palestinian, explains the history.

"Palestine became a predominantly Arab and Islamic country by the end of the seventh century. Almost immediately thereafter its boundaries and its characteristics—including its name in Arabic, Filastin—became known to the entire Islamic world, as much for its fertility and beauty as for its religious significance. In 1516, Palestine became a province of the Ottoman Empire, but this made it no less fertile, no less Arab or Islamic. Sixty percent of the population was in agriculture; the balance was divided between townspeople and a relatively small nomadic group. All these people believed themselves to belong in a land called Palestine, despite their feelings that they were also members of a large Arab nation. Despite the steady arrival in Palestine of Jewish colonists after 1882, it is important to realize that not until the few weeks immediately preceding the establishment of Israel in the spring of 1948 was there ever anything other than huge Arab majority. For example, the Jewish population in 1931 was 174, 606 against a total of 1,033,314."

It is wrong to deny history and it is racist to deny the very existence of a people.

—Andrew MacDonald '07



david clark

The History of Doniphan (,) Nebraska

The birth and death of Doniphan (,) Nebraska

When we last left our heroes (Doniphan Nebraska and Davey Crockett) their fine and fresh young settlement (Chelsea, Iowa) had just published its first written code of law, a document of such unique vision and strength that it sparked a violent fit of jealousy in the heart of the American government. Finally, in 1836, President Andrew Jackson could restrain his passionate insecurity no longer; he sent a sizeable portion of his sizeable army to Chelsea, Iowa with orders to bring back *Il duce* (Doniphan) in chains.

The army's arrival in February was marked by a cataclysmic battle, during which our two gallants held out against their indomitable foe for a week straight. (Do not bother scouring the encyclopedia for an account of the Battle of Chelsea, Iowa—do not even bother scouring the internet—A government cover-up of mammoth proportions has successfully blotted out all memory of this event. Yes, those leaders of ours can do just about anything if they put their minds to it.) The battle was viciously fought on both sides, but the outcome was decisive; and, as happens all-too-often, fate did not favor virtue, courage, love, piety, a pretty face or friendship: once again, fate did not favor the Good.

The battle reached its devastating conclusion when Davey Crockett was drawn away from his companion, ambushed and filled up on the inside with bullets. (The Battle of the Alamo, the accepted setting of Crockett's final demise, was, in fact, entirely fabricated—a patriotic story that the authorities created in order to twist our com-

munal memory of Crockett to their own crooked ends.) Doniphan Nebraskan no longer stood a chance: left broken and unsupported, like a flower with no stem, an ocean with no ocean floor, he was forced to flee—and flee he did. Once he fancied himself to have escaped the long arm of America, Doniphan Nebraska organized a band of similarly heroic fugitives and founded a new settlement in the far-reaching wastelands of modern-day Nebraska.

Doniphan, Nebraska thus began as a last-ditch effort at positive human companionship for a well-aged pack of fallen idealists, held together only by their fear of lonely death and their tales of failure. But through the years it became, as we all know, a beacon and a symbol for all things worthwhile—the very soul of the world. Doniphan Nebraska was laid to rest only 15 months after the foundation of Doniphan, Nebraska; but, before he died, our hero saw the town that bore his name and personality flourish into the miracle that it remains even today.

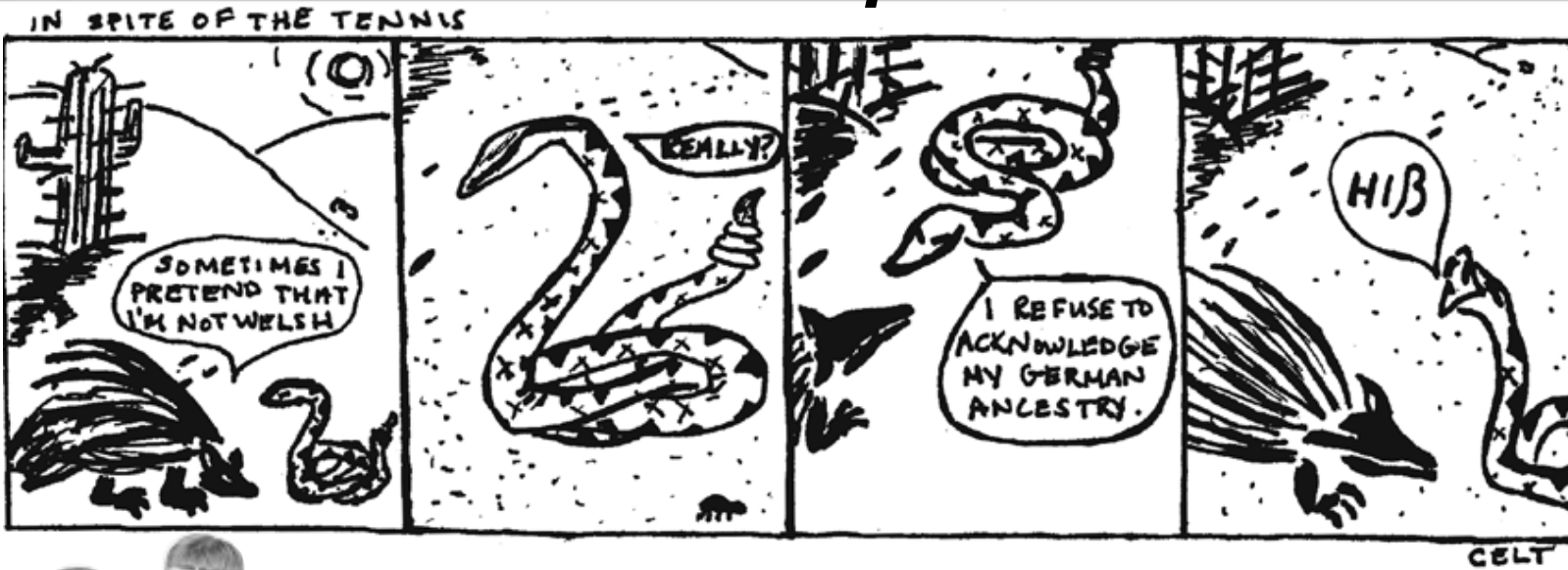
O Nebraska!

But enough about Doniphan (,) Nebraska. Let's talk about race

cars! Politics! Or, better yet, baboons! They are the most bloodthirsty breed of the worst kind of beast, driven to life by a singular and passionate longing to kill—and they direct all this energy, the very force of their being, against the human race alone. As though nothing else were worth killing. In all honesty, now: I myself have known at least one person who has been torn to shreds by the baboons. With no weapons, either—nothing to supplement their strength but the most fervidly murderous of wills that Evolution has yet created. Abandon your fears of nuclear war, of global warming, of highway driving, of the Chinese, for we have some *real* problems to deal with and those problems have silky, olive-brown fur, expressive faces, tremendously threatening canines and multicolored rumps that blow up like sweaty balloons during the mating season!

One more thing: if you have continued to read this far, through all of these weeks, you probably want to hear a moral—and, by God, you deserve a moral! So here's a moral: This is not a circus, this is not a playground, this is not a game! Quit dicking around! And here's another moral: Trust no one! If you want something done right, do it yourself!

A government cover-up of mammoth proportions has successfully blotted out all memory of this event. Yes, those leaders of ours can do just about anything if they put their minds to it.


 carly schuna
 with tim hart

the worst case scenario:

How to survive when free time knocks

Students at Grinnell are not exactly accustomed to having bountiful resources of the elusive “free time.” In fact, when asked about it, many students have been known to respond with, “Free time? What’s that?” Even though free time is so rare to come by, it’s important to realize that all Grinnellians need to learn to deal with it somehow, at some point during their lives. With winter break quickly approaching, there’s no better time to prepare.

How to react when free time arrives:

1. Stay calm.

It is important not to panic, as free time is nothing to fear.

2. Assess the situation.

Keep the following questions in mind: How much free time do you have? Is it really “free time,” or just time that you will inevitably spend checking e-mail and Plans, or playing computer games? And, most importantly, should you be sleeping instead?

3. Make sure you’re finished with all of your homework.

Homework is tricky, and can sneak up on you when you least expect it. If you suddenly find yourself with free time, but then remember that you have a 10-page paper due the day after tomorrow, then what you have is not really free time, but procrastination time. Recognize the difference.

What to do with your free time:

1. Check e-mail and Plans.

Unless you have strong willpower, or are not a Plans user, you’ll probably be doing this anyway, so you might as well get it out of the way.

2. Play simple-minded computer games.

A favorite of mine is Tetris, or the

trashcan-throwing game at <http://game.panlogic.net>. The great thing about these games is that you don’t have to think. No Nietzsche, no calculus formulas, no organic chemistry graphs, no literature analysis or conjugation of foreign verbs! It’s pure glee!

3. Read a book—for fun.

That last part is the clincher. I’m going to let you in on a little secret that you may vehemently deny, based on what you’ve been exposed to for the past few semesters. The secret is this: not all books were written to be analyzed—some were actually written to *provide enjoyment*. I’m deadly serious. If you won’t take my word for it, go and find out yourself, by reading something other than a textbook.

4. Shop online.

There’s a wealth (quite literally) of retailers which sell their products on the internet, and it can be fun to wade through items on eBay or similar sites, looking at things you want but can’t really afford... which, for me, is pretty much everything.

5. Hang out with your friends.

You know those people that you go and bother when you don’t really feel like writing your paper or doing your problem sets? Well, if the universe is entirely cosmically aligned, there are approximately two points in time during every 60,000 years that the both of you (or all of you) will have free time at the same moments. If this happens, don’t pass it up, because the circumstances won’t be right again for hundreds of millennia!

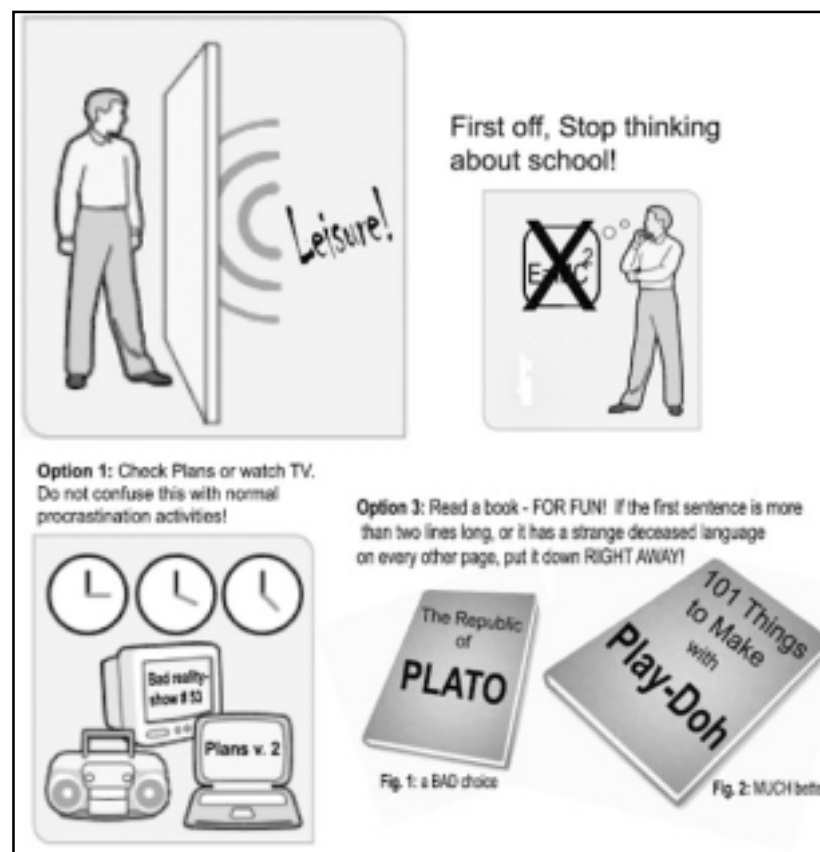
6. Sleep.

Oh, glorious sleep. Contrary to what you may be convinced of, almost all adult

humans need at least seven hours of sleep a night. This “fact” may be a colossal joke to you, as it is to me (Seven hours? At least? Every night? Ha! Ha!), but if you actually do have free time, then spending it on sleeping may be a better idea than, say, spending it in Burling just because you’d feel guilty if you didn’t.

7. Relax, smile and be thankful.

The prospect of not having work to do and not being forced to think might be a bit daunting at first, but it’s guaranteed that before too long, you’ll forget how to do work, and the prospect of actually returning to it will be far, far more terrifying.



Option 1: Check Plans or watch TV. Do not confuse this with normal procrastination activities!

Option 3: Read a book - FOR FUN! If the first sentence is more than two lines long, or it has a strange deceased language on every other page, put it down RIGHT AWAY!

Fig. 1: a BAD choice

Fig. 2: MUCH better!

The Sledge

My sources indicate that while the orange juice button in Cowles may be misbehaving, the stop button above it works in its place.



Cowles and Quad go head-to-head

Christena McIntyre asked 217 people at Cowles and Jill Caly asked 100 people at Quad the following question this week:

Naughty or nice?

Quad

42%

naughty

58%

nice

Cowles

41%

naughty

59%

nice

? Glad you asked...

Scientists at the Whitehead Institute recently fertilized a mouse with sperm made from stem cells.

Source: BBC News Health

random rants

Students speak out about what’s on their minds in 142 words, and you’re invited! If you have a random rant, email it to me at anderseb@grinnell.edu. After all, complaining in a public forum is always more fun than doing it alone.

Parking spaces of mass disappearance

On behalf of my fellow student motorists, I would like to relate to Campus Security our recognition that they have purposefully stacked the deck against us. Parking spaces along East Street have been torn apart and replaced with wooden barricades without a solution to the disappearance of parking. The lot across from Quad, a bastion of parking, is always full. I received my first ticket for my crime of parking in one of many vacant faculty spaces in this lot; few faculty park there. I am not asking for an underground parking facility, but instead I propose that two thirds of the faculty spaces in the lot across from Quad be opened for student use, ending the shortage of parking and the frustration of all car owning and ride loving students. In return for my suggestion, I permit you to forgive my parking violation.

—David Kennedy ‘06

Repercussions of liberation

I know all y’all know that snow belongs outside, eggs in their carton, silverware in the kitchen, barf in a trash can and paper posters hanging in the loggia and underwear in your god damn drawers. But lately, these things have been liberated from where they belong by some benevolent fuckers. I’m gonna go out on a limb and say that those reeking this havoc on campus are just self-concerned and (should I say it?) bourgeois assholes. I don’t care if the giant snowball thrown down the stairs was for science, if the silverware was taken in protest against the conventions of “the man”, the underwear strewed along my hallway in celebration of modern feminism or the eggs were thrown because your ex-girlfriend hooked up with someone else: these actions have real and tangible repercussions for students and staff that you petty criminals forget about once your anger or drunkenness or curiosity has been satisfied. So to you assholes I say “just fucking stop it”; even though me and Sue love to shovel up snow in the stairwell, scrape up dried egg and clean up puke, neither of us would mind a little more free time to catch up on our soaps.

—Cori McKenzie ‘06

Emerson writes on library books!

Certain activities are most frequently performed anonymously in the confines of a dorm room, or otherwise. Without the community’s disapproving eye these activities occasionally turn devious and the perpetrators escape unpunished. I don’t know what you have in mind, but I’m talking about writing in library books. Don’t do it! It’s selfish and it destroys and distorts the human record for the next reader. It’s incredibly irritating to filter what some previous fool thought important. And as Emerson wrote, “In the highest civilization, the book is still the highest delight” except when some bastard vandalizes the page before you get to it. Moreover, the library possesses single copies of many of these books, making replacement expensive, and sometimes impossible. So resist the urge to deface our books out of respect for your fellow students and the keepers of the books.

—David Archer ‘05