

Students show affection at Puppy Love for Tally



Rose Sparks/Index
Left, graduate student Jenny Welker poses with a puppy at Alpha Sigma Alpha's annual charity event "Puppy Love for Tally" on Monday on The Quad. From left to right above, freshman Bianca Kliethermes, junior Paul Froeschle and junior Gail Harmata gather around a puppy on The Quad. Right, Froeschle holds a puppy.



Cinema's most overrated

Index reviewer identifies some of the most overrated films

BY KEN DUSOLD
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This week marks the return of "Titanic" to theaters. If the financially motivated re-release of this unduly praised and oversized chick flick wasn't bad enough, the updated version is in 3D — because apparently a film isn't a masterpiece until it includes the effect of frozen corpses floating off the screen.

Director James Cameron's vain execution of one of history's dumbest fictionalized recreations of true events is not alone in its uncalled-for adoration from moviegoers. The following films have taken their turns on the bloated pedestal of misplaced glorification.

"Avatar" (2009)

What better way to begin this list than with James Cameron's other technical marvel-turned wrongfully labeled "masterpiece." I concede that the visual effects of the film are impressive. Cameron's mystification of the already majestic Halong Bay (which serves as the primary influ-

ence for Pandora's look) deserve the acclaim it receives. But that alone cannot save the picture from bland performances, unoriginal themes and the three-hour long tripe that is the story. Hundreds of millions of dollars were spent on production, and the most Cameron has to show for it is a pretty setting and the successful use of Hollywood's newest toy, motion capture (the recording of actions produced by an actor, which then is used to animate a digitally created character on screen).

Anything Baz Luhrmann directs

Luhrmann has helmed the production of four films. His debut work, "Strictly Ballroom," boasts a dull dramedy romance reminiscent of "Easter Parade" in plot. Luhrmann's second film, "Romeo + Juliet" is an affront to Shakespeare, his fans and artistic taste. "Moulin Rouge" is original in its gaudiness at best, while insufferably headache-inducing in the least. By the time Luhrmann got to "Australia," he

apparently was "creatively" burnt out — the film's use of "Over the Rainbow" boggles the mind. To call the Aussie filmmaker a director is like calling Rush Limbaugh an entertainer — people listen, but only for the impending embarrassment. Luhrmann's next project will be the anticipated desecration of F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby."

"The Sound of Music" (1965)

Julie Andrews is at her vocal best, Christopher Plummer is reliably imposing and the setting is incomparably beautiful. The film also is incredibly dated. The characters in it seem to live within a fantasy world only found in a musical — breaking out in song didn't help the people of Europe fend off Hitler. For many, this film elicits fond childhood memories. It is a terrifically sweet movie

that perfectly reflects the term, "family-friendly." But it isn't groundbreaking, doesn't include stellar performances and can't seem to find the ending fast enough.

"The Wizard of Oz" (1939)

The story of Dorothy, Toto and their whirlwind trip through Oz makes for a quirky adventure-fantasy film, but its silliness also is its weakness. The special effects, which might be the movie's strongest individual aspect, is uneven (think about the flying monkeys out the Wicked Witch's window or Glinda's bubble appearances). There can be no denying the film's status as a beloved example of Americana. It's a very good bedtime story. It is not one of the best films ever made. The performances are exaggerated to the point of almost mocking the profession and the use of color,

which appears stunningly bright, was not new.

"2001: A Space Odyssey" (1968)

In the March 22 issue of the Index, I stated my preference for watching paint dry to sitting through a film adaptation of "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer." Well, enduring a "Tom Sawyer" movie would be far less torturous than viewing this Stanley Kubrick-directed film. Like so many other films assessed too highly, "2001" relies primarily on its visual effects. Almost a decade before "Star Wars" and a year before Apollo 11 landed on the moon, Kubrick took audiences into space — if not literally then effectively enough. The minimal use of dialogue was a landmark moment for the industry — and a complete bore for viewers. The closer the film gets to surrealism, the closer the viewer gets to napping. It fails in its most basic responsibility: telling a story adequately. This is impossible if the only people watching are doing so to observe a few techniques.



Mastering the art of the status



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Generally, I would consider myself a patient, accepting person. However, once Facebook is thrown into the mix, my patience goes out the window. And no, the problem isn't the annoying application requests, or even the excessive number of events clogging newsfeeds. It is the statuses. My goal is not to purify the Internet, but merely to do some spring-cleaning and make the Internet a better place, one status at a time.

Now you might be asking yourself, "John, how will I know if I am making a stupid Facebook status?" Wonder no more, because here is a short checklist to help you prevent further tainting of the Internet.

1. Frequency

When was the last time you posted? If your answer was a few days ago, last week or a longer period of time, you can continue to step two. If you posted earlier today, back away from the keyboard. You've had enough, buddy. It's time to cut you off. A status a day is acceptable, but more than that is excessive.

2. Content

What are you posting about? Consider the content of your status. Facebook asks "What's on your mind?" This actually is a trick question, because unless it's interesting, no one but you cares what is on your mind. Avoid

pointless statuses like "John hasn't eaten lunch yet."

Going out with the girls? Hitting up the store? Good for you. That's cool and all, but not status worthy, so please put down the laptop.

Avoiding angry or sad statuses is also much appreciated.

Next time you want to make an "Ugh, I h8 my life" status, save time by merely stating "Give me attention." Also, I don't care how much you have been wronged by someone — it will be you who looks foolish when you post an angry, vague status like "I wish some ppl knew how to be more mature."

3. Spelling

So your status has passed the content test. Congratulations, it officially has gotten further than many statuses would have, had they been filtered properly. The next step is to check your spelling.

The Internet is riddled with grammar-bots waiting to correct any mistake you make. Stop them in their tracks with this unknown secret — spell words correctly.

This might come as a surprise, but "your" and "you're" are not the same, much like "where" and "wear" and "to," "two" and "too."

4. Target Audience

Who are you writing this status to? Statuses aimed at one person are unnecessary and easily could be made into a wall post. With that being said, avoid tainting the Internet with any status professing your love for your significant other.

If I see one more "I luv mi boifrend so0o much!!!" status, I might vomit.

Note: to make your status more likeable and popular, avoid tagging another person. This excludes others from your status and makes them awkward.

If your status has safely made it past the spelling errors, whininess and expressions of love for your significant other, you might have a fairly decent status. Good job. Post safely and be responsible.

Cooking in college



News Editor suggests one of her favorite recipes for students to try

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One of the most valuable things I learned in college I taught myself—how to grocery shop and cook. Sure, I made mistakes along the way. Crockpots of chili and boxes of instant mashed potatoes met moldy, lonely deaths, but now in my last semester of college, I know what I like to eat.

When I sat down to write the first and last cooking column of my journalism career at Truman State, there was no question what recipe to feature: Jackie's All-Star Tahoe Quesadillas, which is a name I invented just now for the dish I ate for 60 percent of my college meals.

I've been making different versions of this quesadilla for four years and I'm not sick of it. I'm even eating one as I write this column. I added sweet potatoes after a life-changing sweet potato burrito my friend made in Lake Tahoe, hence the name.

This recipe is easy, healthy and keeps well. It has vitamin A from the sweet potatoes, iron from the greens, protein from the beans and most importantly, cheese.

Make a big batch, put it in Tupperware and reheat three meals a day.

Jackie's All-Star Quesadillas

Ingredients

Olive oil
1 sweet potato, diced
1 can of dark red kidney beans, rinsed
A bunch of a dark leafy greens, like spinach or chard
Half an onion
Mexican or Colby-Jack cheese, shredded
2 cloves of garlic, minced
A pinch of cumin, to taste
1/2 T. brown sugar, less or more to taste
Salt, to taste
Franks Red Hot Sauce (optional)
Tortillas

Directions

1. Toss sweet potatoes with olive oil in a medium-size pan on medium-high heat. Add enough water to cover the sweet potato chunks. Cover and bring to a slow boil until tender, about 5-10 minutes.
2. Reduce heat to medium. Empty excess water, add a splash more oil and toss in chopped onion. Sauté onions until translucent, about 3 minutes.
3. Add seasoning, stir well.
4. Add beans. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring frequently to distribute spices, salt and sugar.
5. Add chopped greens. Cover and cook until greens are steamed.
6. Remove mixture from pan and transfer to container.
7. Place tortilla flat on pan and let it heat for 2-3 minutes. Spread desired amount of mixture on one half and cheese on the other. When cheese begins to melt, fold tortilla in half and flip until both sides are brown.

With exactly a month until graduation, these quesadillas will be one of my fondest college memories, in a completely non-pathetic way. But just because I invented them in college doesn't mean I'll stop making them. I will make this for my children on Christmas morning.