



Sex Tech

THE SEX AND RELATIONSHIP ADVICE COLUMN

Sweet Pseudonym
SEXTECH EDITOR

Q: I'm super shy, which is a huge hindrance when it comes to getting with girls. I've tried using a wingman before, but it never ends well. Any advice?

A: Two words: eye contact. It's super easy, get's the ball rolling, and you don't even have to speak to her (yet)! Find the girl you want to talk to at a party, and just make eye contact with her from across the room. Don't be creepy about it: when you catch her eye, smile, and look away. If you find her looking at you after that, take that as a galvanizing hint! She's obviously into it, so there's no point in being nervous. Go over to her and ask her if she wants a drink. Then just go from there and try and have fun!

Q: I'm a girl who often takes the initiative with guys that I'm attracted to. I'm not afraid to ask them on dates, but it seems like my "aggressiveness" always turns them off. I'm beginning to think I'd be better off playing the demure little woman, but that's not really me. Help!

A: Welcome to a world of gender stereotypes and double standards, my dear! Most people would tell you to stop being the aggressor if you actually want to land a man, but I disagree. I think the fact that you're comfortable enough with your sexuality says tons about you as a person, and if a guy can't handle it, he probably won't be someone you want to be with for long anyway! It's also important to consider the fact that courtship is a dance; nobody gets away with being too up front, because then they don't have any cards left to play. So, in a nutshell, my advice is to keep doing what you're doing; who wants a guy who can't handle a girl who's in control of herself anyway?

Submit your question through
<http://tinyurl.com/sextech2>

Vis-à-vis: The lost art of songwriting



By Vlada Gaisina
OPINION EDITOR

A quote by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow reads "The human voice is the organ of the soul." It implies that voice gives expression to what the soul holds: joy or contempt, wisdom or innocence, adoration, despair, gratitude, pride, etc. Perhaps few actually vest that much importance into the voices they hear daily, but taking Longfellow's words into consideration would help many a cause, prime among them – the music industry.

Yes, I am referring to the sad state to which song lyrics have come. If anyone has listened to the contents of chart-toppers lately, they would notice the lack of meaning, rhyme, meter, and proper grammar. Unfortunately, current trends seem to put rather lax requirements on lyrics; as long as there is a syncopated beat, some electronic elements, and a strained attempt at singing, the "song" can become a quick hit, especially if there is something scandalous about the performer.

It is no secret that a majority of all-time favorite songs are about love or relationships. With that in mind, I don't necessarily criticize the choice of topics, but rather the "Baby, baby, boom, boom" quality and the hidden or overt misogynistic messages in the songs. Don't assume it to be just rap and hip-hop music. For instance, take the hit "Just the Way You Are" by Bruno Mars – a disgrace to Billy Joel's original song. On the surface, it appears inoffensive, if not flattering; however, every line in the song

refers to the woman's perfect appearance (save the one qualifying her laugh as "sexy"). Never once is there mention of her personality or intelligence. Obviously, none of that matters when "there's not a thing that I would change" about one's face. What is up with that compliment? Tell someone you don't think they need plastic surgery and see if you get a date.

A good counter-example of less surface, more interesting, though arguably naïve lyrics comes from America's sweetheart Taylor Swift. In "You Belong With Me," her arguments for compatibility include getting his humor, knowing when he's really upset and being able to cheer him up, and good communication ("I know your favorite songs, and you tell me about your dreams"). Sounds like a solid basis for a relationship.

Rihanna's recent single "Only Girl (In The World)," however catchy, has not escaped my questionable lyrics radar. The opening line goes "I want you to love me like I'm a fast ride" (with several websites actually suggesting "pie" or "guy" instead of "ride"), which is a poster child line for female (self!)objectification. The song "Whatever Lola Wants" from the 1955 musical *Damn Yankees* takes the opposite approach to the same sentiment: "Whatever Lola wants, Lola gets, and little man, little Lola wants you."

In the past few years, I've heard everything from creepy, like Clay Aiken's "Invisible," to

downright offensive, like "Don't Trust Me" by 3OH!3. Singing "If I was invisible, then I could just watch you in your room" can only result in a restraining order (not to mention it should be "were" and not "was"); and tell me if hearing "Shush girl, shut your lips, do the Helen Keller and talk with your hips" does not make you want to put the writers back in 4th Grade and make them redo their entire education.

Is the art of lyric-writing lost? Where are the Cole Porters, Irving Berlins, and Johnny Mercers of our generation?

At this point, you might be asking "Who?" These are the great lyricists who penned classics like "You're The Top," "Too Marvelous for Words," "Cheek to Cheek," and even "White Christmas," among others. Originally written in 1934 for the musical *Anything Goes*, the song "You're The Top" has since been performed by Ella Fitzgerald, Barbra Streisand in the movie *What's Up, Doc?*, and Patti LuPone in a Broadway revival of the musical. It has some of the cleverest lyrics I've heard, referencing over 50 cultural phenomena from Mickey Mouse to the Mona Lisa.

If the lyrics snob in you squirms when you turn on the radio, I suggest you check out the songs mentioned above, plus classics like "Somethin' Stupid," "Strangers In The Night," "Woman in Love," or any Frank Sinatra song. And let today's song-writers learn from them, too.

CAMPUS

IPRO 333 goes to Uganda

By Rebecca Waterloo
A&E EDITOR

The title "Building Sustainable Communities through Coffee" is an understated name for IPRO 333's class. The project started in the Summer of 2010 as a proposal for a banda (a hut) for coffee farmers in Uganda. Crop to Cup Coffee Company, a company that pays farmers 20% over market price for their coffee beans, approached the IPRO program with this project. Transparency is Crop to Cup's main goal, allowing the coffee drinkers to know exactly who grew their coffee and coffee farmers to know they are receiving fair prices for their crop.

Over the past few semesters, the project has expanded outside of the classroom. The group members sold coffee and Crop to Cup's story at farmers markets during the summer, and through partnership with IIT Dining Services, the on-campus café completely transformed their line of coffee, so that they now exclusively sell Crop to Cup. All profits from the market and \$2-per-pound coffee sold at Global Grounds went directly to the travel fund to send the IPRO 333 team to Uganda to do their necessary research.

After an unfortunate trip postponement during the summer, the team finally headed

out to Uganda a few days before Christmas to experience the culture of Uganda and obtain much-needed information. The trip was such a fundamental step for the continuation of the project, and it tripled the amount of work to be done since the team found potential opportunities to help the farmers in addition to the banda.

The trip abroad strengthened the relationships between the students, Crop to Cup and the farmers, turning the faces on the farmers' profile publicity cards into handshakes and friendships. The trip was spent mostly in Mbale, a town at the bottom of Mount Elgon, which holds the villages from which Crop to Cup buys a great deal of the coffee it exports. Not only were the students introduced to the farmers, but they also met the families and friends of the villages, spending Christmas with them at their homes.

Conversing positively with the head farmer, Geoffrey, regarding their banda design, obtaining site information, new contacts, and friendships, being exposed to the Ugandan culture, and learning about the coffee process brought an intense amount of excitement to the students continuing the project this semester.

Perhaps IPRO member and traveler Ryan Bloom (5th year architecture student) said it best: "Certain barriers occur when you don't



The IPRO 333 team in Uganda (Photo courtesy Rebecca Waterloo)

have tangible research from the actual location at which you're working: the community, the site, the feeling, the people. Visiting the farmers and the site on which we will be building broke down those barriers and opened new doors of possibilities for our team. It became a

fundamental step for the progress of our project."

The hope of seeing this banda built is rapidly becoming a reality. The team plans to return to Uganda to begin construction on it in summer 2011.