

The Chariot

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The "F" Word

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By Joelle Lamboley Ostrich

Just today, I was down in the lunchroom because I had heard a story that some students were making fun of the way another student in the same class looked. I wanted to monitor if any more bullying was going on. Yes, making fun of someone's appearance is bullying and sometimes borderline harassment. As I was walking out of the lunchroom, another student reported to me that the person at the table next to hers was calling her "fat", even suggesting that she "move her fat (unmentioned body part)." Because I didn't hear it, I could not report it. However, I did warn the student that if it were said again, I would have to take it to administration.

In fifth grade, I gained a lot of weight due to puberty and poor eating choices. I have struggled with my weight my entire life and only tennis and highly restrictive dieting have really saved me. There have been several occasions

where the "f" word was spewed at me as some sort of pejorative judgement. At the age of 46, I now have the wisdom that those words don't matter to me. Now I am more concerned about how my own daughter will conceive of her body image in an era where we feel free to discuss another's appearance in an aggressive, hostile tone.

The older we get, the more regrets take form. One of my biggest regrets is allowing those people who felt it appropriate to call me "fat" to have any power over my self-perception. The hours I have spent trying to avoid having the "f" word flung at me could have been better spent being a better student, a better teacher, and a better person.

For those of you who use "fat" as a way to insult someone, stop. You have no understanding of that person's health status, and frankly, you have no right to make judgement about anyone's appearance. Weight is a

health issue. Would you make fun of someone if they had a cold?

For those of you who have been subjected to fat shaming: stop worrying about how others perceive you. Embrace your flaws or try to improve whatever your biology is. Fat shaming is a form of bullying and should be reported to an adult, especially if it is used as a way for the speaker to gain power. It is an act of aggression. It is not acceptable.



<http://www.fvvsd221.org/vnews/display.v/ART/5615809aa4b44>

Mr. Comerford: Beating Bacteria with a Helping Handshake

By Joe Cullen and Matt Driben

The human body is an amazing machine. Confronted daily by myriad destructive germs, innumerable cells liable to become cancerous at a moment's notice, and the task of keeping its systems functioning without a single blip, the body should be overwhelmed by the sheer enormity of its responsibilities. Yet it keeps humming, its performance as smooth as Leonardo DiCaprio.

At the pinnacle of the body's durability against such threats is our very own Mr. Comerford. Before he drills the fundamentals of the English language into his students' brains, he greets students with a handshake outside his door. In doing so, not only does he teach students the importance of a firm grip and eye contact, but he also comes in contact with the multitude of germs that unsanitary adolescents carry.

Logic dictates that because of his exposure to so many germs, he should be absent from school more than a second-semester senior. However, this is Mr. Comerford—ruler of rhetoric, paragon of polysyndeton, and sovereign of semicolons. When others fall victim to various illnesses, Mr. Comerford keeps going as strong as the Energizer Bunny. According to legend, Mr. Comerford has not gotten sick since the second grade, when he caught a cold after reading for 87 hours straight.

How does Mr. Comerford continually outfox the sicknesses infesting our school? A variety of theories exist. First, because his handshakes are so firm,
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Have you experience Mr. Comerford's handshakes? Matt and Joe discuss the importance of his bacteria-crushing grip. Page 1

Chip Schroder introduces the next great Wyo debate: Mr. Miller vs. Mr. Minich. Who will will the computer science title? Page 3

Learn all about Mr. Comerford's spring break trip to Ireland, and why you should visit too. Page 2

Mr. Beck details the return of a victorious Roman general, illustrating the grandeur of the empire. Page 2

"All Glory is Fleeting."

By Mr. Beck

Conquering Roman generals reentered the city of Rome amidst a vast celebratory array. The scene set before them included captured exotic animals, such as lions, tigers and elephants; spices, including saffron and salt; beautifully dyed cloth; and chests stuffed with gold, silver and pearls. The assemblage represented the spoils taken from their fallen opponent, laid at the feet of the Roman people by the commander of the victorious side.

Rome, at one time, controlled all of modern Europe, including Britain and Russia. North Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia were also either influenced or directly administered by

Rome. This administration included a complex web of brutality, bureaucracy, political appointments, nepotism, wealth and power.

The controlled lands not only paid for their Roman administration in burdensome taxes, but also in the blood, sweat and toil of their peoples. All the indulgences that they could extract were sent back to the capital city for the greater glory of Rome itself.

And glorious it was. Rome's main streets were paved with the finest marble and alabaster, materials we wouldn't think of using as pavement today. The statues and monuments, created by the finest artisans of the day, stood on each corner of the capital and served the dual role of remembrance and warning: remembering those who came before, and warning those new to the city. The massive Coliseum, topped with a canvas awning to shield the sun from those in its attendance, looms over the city, silently saying, "This is Rome in all its splendor." Gold gilded archways,

resplendent with victorious fervor, serve as a constant reminder of Rome's ever-growing military might.

Our conquering general would have seen all this before him. He would have literally felt the roar of the crowd, and smelled the familiar scents of the city, as his chariot made its way to the Senate for the official ceremony. From his vantage point, he would have been able to experience all the platitudes that Rome had to throw at him.

Amid the aforementioned array of loot serving as his victory parade, there were always a few members of the enslaved peoples. If the general's abilities enabled the capture of the enemy's ruler, that ruler would ride at the front of the general's column, chained, in full defeat. One can almost imagine the smile spreading across the general's face at the thought of this brilliant event, created to celebrate his victory, but Roman generals never smiled.

On his golden chariot rode a member of the enslaved enemy, usually a member of the defeated military, tasked with whispering one phrase into the victorious general's ear: "All glory is fleeting."



117 AD

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire



<http://kingofwallpapers.com/coliseum.html>



<http://teachingcompany.fr/yuku.com/topic/18514-Triumphal-Processions-Victory-Parades>

(Continued from Mr. Comerford)

some conjecture that Mr. Comerford uses his handshakes as a weapon to crush bacteria in his grasp. Because they receive such strong handshakes, Mr. Comerford's students are therefore not only more prepared to greet bosses and colleagues in the working world, but also better equipped to reduce their own chances of getting sick. Another speculation as to why Mr. Comerford has stayed healthy is that he reads so much complex literature: As the old saying goes, "An *Absalom!* a day keeps the doctor away." Last but not least, rumor has it that Mr. Comerford keeps Purell hand sanitizer by his door to kill 99.99% of the germs he encounters, but this hearsay has not been confirmed.

No matter how he achieves this absurd feat, one thing is clear: Wyomissing is better off for it. Between his incredible wit and expertise in teaching the English language, Mr. Comerford is an invaluable presence at Wyomissing. So thank you, Mr. Comerford, not only for having an immune system stronger than Arnold Schwarzenegger, but also for making us better students and better people. Wyomissing would not be the same without you.

Céad Míle Fáilte!

By Mr. Comerford

Céad míle fáilte! Literally, "a hundred thousand welcomes," the expression greets travelers across the Emerald Isle. This year for Spring Break, I traveled throughout Ireland, and I cannot imagine a better vacation.

The trip started with our arrival in Dublin on April 8. I was prepared for the seasonal weather of 50 degrees and rain each day, and I expected driving on the left side of the road would take some getting used to; I was right. A trip across the country takes only five hours, with plenty of small towns and abandoned castles to stop at for capturing perfect pictures. In an afternoon's time, we were in Shannon on the western coast.

A highlight of the trip was clay shooting at Dromoland Castle, where we stayed on Monday and Tuesday. I believe our instructor was the oldest living person in Ireland,



Clay shooting



Irish Countryside

complete with a very heavy brogue. I caught about half of what he said; I clearly understand, though, when he put his hand on my neck and said, "Bang." Translation: "Shoot when I tell you to, sonny." A marksman I'm not, at least not yet, but it was fun to try, and I would most certainly try again.

Lots of car time, lots of the most beautiful scenery. I've heard that the Irish brag of "40 shades of green."

That number is an understatement. One view was better than those before it. From Limerick to Killorglin and a different side of the Atlantic Ocean to Killarney to Cork and back to Dublin, we covered a lot of the southern part of the country. Cars are compact, driving lanes are narrow, and speeds often exceed 100 kilometers, or approximately 62 miles per hour, on roads where everyone should probably be driving a little more slowly. Country driving involves often pulling off the road to allow incoming traffic, especially tour buses, to pass safely.

It's good to be back in the USA, but I'd venture to Ireland again. And I invite you to do the same: Tabhair cuairt ar Ireland! (Visit Ireland!)

"The Computer Science Debate: Minich VS Miller"

By: Chip Schroder

Ah, the debate that has turned the school upside down: Who is the superior computer science teacher? Many would assume that Mr. Minich owns that title due to his wealth of experience, but Mr. Miller does possess a fresh spunk that comes with his early years of computing instruction. So who's your best bet if you wish to enter the innovative field that is computer science? Hopefully the following article will answer your question.

More experience gets priority, so let's start with Mr. Minich. So many words can describe this man, yet at the same time, no word truly captures the essence of our beloved computer science whiz. A product of the University of Pennsylvania, Mr. Minich has been preaching the importance of computer science long before the rest of the world caught on. He's steered countless students in the right direction, giving birth to many a career at Snapchat, Google, Microsoft, and more. Don't believe that? Ask him, and I'm sure he'll rope you into at least a 20 minute conversation, noting the fact that the majority of those he taught now make more than he does. This is not a wisecrack on Mr. Minich; rather, it exemplifies how much pride he has for the lifestyle that is computer science. He could have taken his knowledge elsewhere. Plenty of organizations could use a computer scientist with a background like Mr. Minich's. Yet Mr. Minich chose Wyomissing, and that deserves admiration.

Now get out of the computer lab and head down to Mrs. Orwig's room, but don't be surprised to find computers instead of sewing machines. You're not going to find Mrs. Orwig there either. Instead, you'll run into none other than Mr. Miller. We're not talking Mr. Miller the artist, we're talking Mr. Miller the mathematician—except he divorced math to pursue the younger, hotter field of computer science. Mr. Miller was once an algebra 1 and algebra 2 teacher whose room was right across the hall from Mr. Minich's, while Mr. Minich's is right next to Mr. Zechman's. It's a well-known fact that Mr. Miller and Mr. Zechman were arch-rivals when they were fighting for students to enroll in their respective algebra 2 classes. When Mr. Miller switched to computer science, however, most came to the realization that Mr. Miller's frequent acts of hovering around Mr. Zechman's room between periods in attempts to infiltrate him from the outside were actually intended to peer into Mr. Minich's room and long for the luxurious life that comes with computer science. So, Mr. Miller made the switch and now lives on the bottom floor. Little is known about his current relationship with Mr. Zechman, but one can assume that their rivalry has dissolved as Mr. Miller has acquired a new enemy in Mr. Minich. I mean, come on, two computer science teachers can not simply coexist right across the hall from each other without engaging in vicious brawls every other day. The threat of such instances occurring led to Mr. Miller's relocation, but there is no doubt that administration is conflicted about where Mr. Zechman stands. Is he helping his old foe out of gratitude for giving him sole control of Wyomissing's algebra 2 program, or is their bad blood still broiling and leading Mr. Zechman to help Mr. Minich plot against their shared enemy? The drama that has arisen around the infamous teaching trio is worthy of its own television show (or perhaps a feature film)—and don't even get me started on how Mrs. Bansner fits into the equation—but people must know that Mr. Miller made a wise switch. His mind is clearly built for technology, as he has taken the caterpillar that was Mr. Minich's robotics course and turned it into an innovative butterfly. Not only that, but he also rose to the challenge of teaching AP Computer Science Principles in its first year as a class. With both mathematic and computing backgrounds, it's tough to argue against Mr. Miller.

Both Mr. Minich and Mr. Miller know their stuff. Both are guiding the next great leaders in computer science. Both know how to lay down the law: Mr. Minich is not shy about sending troublemakers out to the hallway. Both love to talk as well. So, who's the best?

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"The Computer Science Debate" Continued

Well, the answer's not that simple. Both of these men have impressive resumes. Both have serious impacts on the pupils that dare to enroll in their classes. But both of them have their drawbacks as well. Thus, can we truly resolve the "superior computer science teacher" debate with two teachers that lack the necessary luster to gain an edge over each other? Nay, Wyomissing is one of the best schools in Pennsylvania, and the best computer science teacher needs to be flawless. Neither Mr. Miller nor Mr. Minich can wear that crown—but don't worry, someone will. The true answer has been sitting right in front of us the whole time. So who is it? Enter the school through the trophy room (across from the A field). Walk out to the hallway, take a left, walk a few steps, and turn right. There you will find the shiniest trophy of all: Mr. Ackerman.

That's right. While everyone was evaluating the pros and cons of Mr. Miller and Mr. Minich, frustrated to the point of no return, they forgot that a third computer science teacher peacefully coexists within the halls of Wyomissing. He may teach only freshman level Python (formerly Visual Basic), but his impact can not be matched. Here's a cold, hard fact to prove it: All 4 of the seniors (Tom DiCarlo, Louis Kim, Chip Schroder, and Tristan Heslop) who are enrolled in Honors Android/iPhone Design, the highest levels of computer science at Wyomissing, were enrolled in Mr. Ackerman's Visual Basic class freshman year. Coincidence? Nope, there are no coincidences in the world of computer science. Plus, Mr. Ackerman is an accounting teacher and librarian, so he truly has the best of all three worlds. To put the cherry on top, Mr. Ackerman is also a graduate of Boyertown High School, who as we all know hoisted the state championship basketball trophy just this year. You may think that such a statistic is irrelevant to this debate, but let me assure you that everything is relevant when it comes to computer science.

So next time you walk by Mr. Miller or Mr. Minich's room, just keep walking. Head to the library, you'll probably find Mr. Ackerman there. Stick with him, and you might just be the next Mark Zuckerberg. Trust me.

