

Clinton Ascends Into Relatability

BY OLIVER VALENTI

My relationship with Hillary Clinton is kind of like my relationship with my aunt.

Sure, maybe she posts semi-coherent ramblings on my Facebook statuses; and, yes, perhaps she loudly lamented the infrequency of our phone correspondence to my mother at my cousin's baptism; and, fine, she may or may not have been accused of gross incompetence for her response to the 2012 attack on the United States diplomatic compounds in Benghazi, Libya.

But then she sends me \$20 in the mail for a non-major holiday, or lets me have another glass of wine at Thanksgiving dinner, and I remember why I love her all over again. Not that I'm going to, you know, visit her at work or buy her a scarf or talk to her about my feelings, but all in all, I tolerate her and am even, at times, charmed by her busybody, empty-nester insistence on becoming my friend.

Monday's debate was similar to one of those times. Finding common ground with my aunt is tough, what with me knowing the names of all 649 Pokemon and zero of the Brady Bunch.

Yet, we can always agree on one thing: Donald Trump. It's something akin to how I imagine the Weasley relatives talking about Voldemort. Suddenly, we are two human beings with a common perspective: we live in the same world, see the same things.

On the debate stage, rather than appearing, as she often does, in isolation, Clinton was allowed the rare treat of being a spectator. While Trump tiraded about airports or China or whatever, Clinton had to appear respectful, serious, even interested in Trump's tired nonsenses.

The situation was inherently comic. Nevermind "Between Two Ferns" or Humans of New York; the debate was the gateway into the stubborn youth vote the Clinton campaign had been waiting for. Her practiced nods

of feigned attention at Trump's gross gorings of the truth are funnier than any script you could write for her. It offered her a gateway into what she had always sought: genuineness and human relatability. She was thinking the same things I was, and for once, we were on the same page.

Yes, Bernie Sanders is out of the race, and his shadow hangs long. But just because Batman is gone doesn't mean that Gotham has to elect the Joker.

The truth of the matter is that, come November, I have to vote for either Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump, and only one of those is a real option.

I'm not stupid; I know what I have to do. But, damn it, can you blame me for wanting to whine about it a little longer?

Monday helped ease the pain. Clinton felt like more than just the "alternative." She felt like a real possibility. When she laughed at Trump, when she barely suppressed an eye roll, I felt a trace of Bernie's heroism: an unwillingness to compromise, a recognition of absurdity. In other words, I felt honesty.

Maybe she has a little bit of "cool Mom" in her after all. After all, she was on "Between Two Ferns." With the guy from "The Hangover!" Just like my aunt trying to dab, I can appreciate the effort, even if (especially if!) it's not really working. At some point, I have to let myself be won over.

Yes, Hillary Clinton probably texts in complete sentences with periods. And sure, Hillary Clinton doesn't know how to pour a beer. And, I admit, Hillary Clinton is strongly in favor of unconstitutional drone strikes, which violate the very principles our country stands for.

But just like I can't choose my mother's biological siblings, I also can't choose the Democratic nominee for president of the United States.

So get in here, Hillary, for a stiff hug and the awkward kiss on the cheek that my parents always make me do.

Valenti is a member of the Class of 2017.

Laptops in Lectures: A Mixed Bag

BY VENNELA PANDARABOYINA

One of the most distinct memories I have of my first day of classes at UR is of my first political philosophy lecture. As class started, about half of the students pulled out their laptops. The professor started to introduce himself and the course, and midway through his introduction he started talking about laptops.

More eloquently, he said that he hated them. While he continued to explain why, one by one, each student with a laptop slowly and quietly closed it and put it in their backpack.

In that moment, I remembered that something similar had also happened in my chemistry class. It made me wonder: if students can learn without a laptop, why do they need one? And if laptops are so distracting for students—which is the argument both professors used—then why are they even allowed out during class?

So, why do people use laptops in class? Of course, some people love having the Internet at their fingertips: for looking up supplemental information

for whatever lecture they're in or just for scrolling through Reddit.

"I use the laptop in only one of my classes—economics—because my professor talks very fast and it's hard for me to decipher when he's talking what's important, so I basically type everything that he says," said freshman Scott Daniels. "Then later [...] I go back and actually write my notes in a notebook because I like that more than typing notes [...] [It] helps me retain things better."

Like Daniels, many people actually prefer taking notes by hand because it helps people remember what they're writing. But in some circumstances, using a laptop is unavoidable—whether because of a fast-talking professor or a lack of PowerPoint presentations to refer to after class for details.

Another freshman, Genesis Campos, said she takes notes on her laptop to stay organized. "Using a laptop in class helps me keep all my stuff together," she said. "In Google Drive I can make separate folders for all my classes, and I can't lose them. I lose a lot of my paperwork."

If laptops are so helpful, why do people still take shorthand notes when virtually all college students own a laptop?

Many find taking notes by hand to be one of the best ways to learn.

Others can't handle the hassle of bringing a laptop everywhere they go. As freshman Annabel Selino commented, "my computer is pretty heavy to carry to class [...] and handwritten notes absorb into my brain a lot easier than typing it."

Also, one doesn't run the risk of being distracted by Facebook or online shopping when they're taking notes the old fashioned way. For me, there's something almost comforting about taking notes in a notebook. It's a tried and true practice that has stayed with me since my high school days.

Having the ability to have your laptop open in class is an experience mainly found in college: many movie scenes set in recent college classrooms feature them. The reality is that having a laptop does have its benefits, but there are such powerful drawbacks that, for some, having a laptop in class may not be worth it. In the end, it is up to each person (and ultimately their professors) to decide whether the pros are worth the cons.

Pandaraboyina is a member of the Class of 2020.

Image is Key in First Debate

BY VICTORIA SEREMETIS

The most exciting and disappointing moments of an election year are the presidential debates. Exciting, because it's the first time voters can really juxtapose the presidential candidates' ideas against each other, making their decision a little more informed. Disappointing, because it never goes as expected.

It is not, however, the arguments set forth by each candidate, but rather their images, that really settle in the hearts and minds of voters.

Facial expressions, tone, hand gestures, eye movements, and re-

spect for formalities carry crucial information about a candidate's personality.

When arguments become muddled, these observations are easy to notice and remember. Watching last week's presidential debate was like going on a blind date with Clinton and Trump. In the first fleeting moments of getting to know a person, we most often notice their mannerisms.

Generally speaking, Hillary Clinton seemed to have the better image last week. Several major news outlets, including the New York Times and the Washington Post, announced Clinton as the winner, saying she was confident and prepared.

In terms of rhetoric, both Clinton and Trump's arguments were essentially equal, but clearly on opposite sides of the political spectrum. In the end, however, neither candidate put much effort into polishing their own image, and instead threw their resources into sabotaging that of their enemy. This form of argument is timeless in American politics, possibly because it is difficult to make oneself look better than everyone else in a politically equal nation.

Hopefully, the next two debates will provide a better portrayal of the candidates' policies.

Seremetis is a member of the Class of 2019.

UR OPINION

BY SAM PASSANISI & JUSTIN TROMBLY
OPINIONS EDITOR & MANAGING EDITOR

"WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ABOUT MELIORA WEEKEND?"



MOUSTAFA LUTFY, '20
"Trevor Noah show, 100%."



ALISA GROOM, '18
"The libraries won't be as full."



JOSEPH VROOMAN, '18
"All the alumni coming around."



JOSEPH DE LA CERDA, '18
"I didn't know Mel Weekend was going on."



REBECCA HOLLEY, T5
"I'm looking forward to seeing my friends who graduated."



CHRISTOPHER GRANATA, '18
"The free stuff."