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English 100

29 November 2006

Part 1: Introduction

My New Favorite Friday-Night Activity!

"No guys, sorry. I won't be able to make it to the party. I want to check 'All Things Californian.'" Seriously though, throughout the semester this project was something I looked forward to each week, hoping to see if anybody posted anything interesting or commented on my posts. I enjoyed keeping a humorous tone throughout my blogs and comments, but some of my writings kept a serious tone when I felt it necessary. The post titled "Voted Against Parental Involvement Law" made my hands shake as I typed a sarcastic, bitter, and angry comment. I realized that my response would come across as biased and irritated, so I rewrote the comment after I calmed down. I included this comment in this project because I am very proud of how it turned out.

As the semester went on I noticed that I evolved to see things not only with my original humorous view but also a serious one. I often used "it is" and "there are" in my earlier posts so I was much more conscious to omit those in later posts. My wording and style greatly improved as I carefully chose which words were most effective.

The blog post with which I became famous for early in the semester described me as "Shallow Jeff." I always laughed whenever Jim brought up my shallowness in class, and it led to some fun conversations between classmates and me. I enjoyed this ability to post ideas online because it gave me a sense of concealing my identity. So, if I wrote something that evoked

hostility, it did not directly attach me to the whole world. In the future I hope I will be able to continue writing into public forums like these where I could debate my own views against others'. Maybe I could continue posting on Professor Sullivan's blogs?!

Part 2: Collected Blog Posts

Total Number of Posts Included: 3

Total Word Count of These Posts: 1130

Post Title: **I'm shallow but not alone!**

Date Posted: 9/11/2006

Word Count: 393

Having grown up in Carlsbad all my life, I have learned that certain assets of the female anatomy are unnecessarily very important to me. I believe my degrading rating system has been imprinted on me through experiences with family, friends, and the Hollywood of southern California. A pretty face on top of a thin figure accentuated with nice curves in the right places has been pressed into my mind as the kind of girl I deserve and the kind of girl I want. And I do think this was etched into my brain due to growing up in Southern California near the beach, with so many bikini-clad girls nearby and the influence of television/film/media. A girl can essentially "advertise" her figure to show off and attract attention. I'll be honest. I am shallow: not necessarily a quality I'm very proud of but something that defines me and is part of my character. However I also know that I am not alone. Most of my guy friends will look at a girl and rate her based solely on looks. This judgmental action is just so automatic, and something that we can't help doing. I don't mean to sound one-sided either, because plenty of girls have their own rating system on physical appearance.

Something interesting to me is how people might try to cover up the fact that we base so much on looks. One thing I disagree with is when people get the question "do you believe in love at first sight?" and they reply "no" with reasoning that if you do experience love at first sight then this "love" is simply brought up by physical attraction. I laugh when they add "I'm not shallow like that."

Anyways, I blame the fact that I am Shallow Jeff on being brought up in California, a place where bikinis are what can define a pretty girl and an hourglass figure is usually necessary to get the guy. I don't know if I'm supposed to feel disappointed that I'll be missing out on so much because of my views. Should I be mad at myself or do I try and blame someone else that I can't look at an ugly girl romantically? The Beach Boys had it right when they sang the phrase that continuously plays in my head: "I wish they all could be California girls!"

Post Title: **Extreme Grocery Shopping!**

Date Posted: 10/9/2006

Word Count: 341

Judging by the title, you probably think this blog has to do with Johnny Knoxville's version of racing grocery carts through the aisles of Ralph's and knocking down displays of canned goods. Instead of a skit from Jackass, my pet peeve at the grocery store is very real: the inability of shoppers to return their shopping cart to a specific area. Many think it is ok to rest the cart against a neighboring car or to let it occupy part or all of a parking spot. Nothing gets me more than pulling into a prime spot only to see that my car won't fit unless I hit the shopping cart out of the space. The only valid explanation I am willing to believe is a shopper who runs around sweating bullets trying to find what she needs at the best deals. Then she races from the register

to her SUV to pack her kids and goods inside. Because of exhaustion and not having an extra 20 seconds, she pushes the cart into the neighboring car and speeds off to get the kids to soccer practice. This is the Extreme Grocery Shopper.

The typical southern Californian is generalized as having a laid back attitude with a hint of laziness. A negative stereotype of us southern California residents would normally include a beach-going person who is willing to waste all day outside, too lazy to be the least bit productive. A person lazy enough to not return a shopping cart only helps to strengthen this unfair preconception. Is it really so difficult for us to take care of ourselves and to clean up after ourselves? Everyday, a person can witness this shopping cart phenomenon in any grocery store parking lot. Stores even have employees that have to collect them! The extreme shopper is oblivious of his action and is also too busy to throw away trash in a wastebasket or even to recycle. It is insensitive people like these who carelessly pollute our nature; from water, to air, to grocery store parking lots.

Post Title: **Can you hear me now?**

Date Posted: 11/16/2006

Word Count: 396

Cell phones are without a doubt the worst things ever invented. Why have they become so necessary and why do us Californians feel naked without our cell phone? We have become so accustomed to carrying a phone that we take it for granted. Then, when we don't have it on us and we feel so disconnected from the world, we ask ourselves, "How did I ever live without one?" These phones keep track of our daily lives with calendars and reminders, and at the same time they allow us to look up any number in our address book to make and change plans. While

cell phone use keeps increasing along with the number of cellular subscribers, everybody is bound to experience this dependency. (Actually, I don't believe everybody will come across this addiction; I have this narrow-minded view about "them country folk" in Kansas and I reckon that some of them have never thought about owning a cell phone.) Californians' reliance on the cell phone supports the belief that we are lazy: too lazy to organize, to make arrangements, and to remember.

People come to California to fulfill the California dream: a dream that includes the hope for freedom and mobility. One of our class readings spoke about how owning a car leads to the paradox of mobility. Purchasing a car includes the freedom of driving whenever and wherever desired, but the freedom is simultaneously limited by the gridlock traffic our cars produce. This same paradox of mobility goes along with owning a cell phone. With a phone, we can go anywhere and do anything without worries because any contact we need is at our fingertips. However, without our phone we become stuck. Problems with phones can range from no service, to no minutes, to no battery! The mobility promised by a cell phone can ultimately limit us!

Nowadays, Californian parents are buying cell phones for their kids. This doesn't seem like a bad thing until you see that these children are in elementary school! When I was a young'n, my parents cared enough to make sure I knew where and when to meet them and to come to them if I had a change of plans. This youth cell phone craze is occurring because parents don't care enough to keep close tracks on their children. This trend emphasizes the laziness and carelessness of us Californians.

Part 3: Collected Comments

Total Number of Comments Collected Here: 2

Total Number of Words in Collected Comments: 519

This Comment Responds to This Post: **Shopping Addicts**

Date of Comment: 10/11/2006

Number of words in Comment: 228

I think that everybody in California possesses the desire to seem appealing and impressive to others. This instinctive yearning for attention just seems so natural and regular for us. When we start to believe that people care how much we spend on materials then showing off the expensive things we buy becomes a priority. These trends are always going to be replaced by the cooler ones that Hollywood celebrities start, so there is no stop to this spending; luckily for you, Ariana! And the worst part about spending so much money at Macy's and Nordstrom's is that other stores have similar and less expensive imitations of designer-brand clothing. You obviously do a great job working there by selling so much merchandise, but the customers should be the ones holding themselves back from spending as much as \$1800 (and for what, 5 blouses and a pair of pants?) especially when they have to open up a credit card to pay for it! Here with the California Dream, a credit card allows people to get whatever they want without really having to pay for it!

"Drew, you have to be careful with girls over here. They are all wearing their Gucci sunglasses and their biggest problem is trying to figure out which Louis Vuitton purse to buy next." -my sarcastic advice to a Colorado friend while driving through Del Mar

This Comment Responds to This Post: **Voted Against Parental Involvement Law**

Date of Comment: 11/16/2006

Number of words in Comment: 291

So with this law, girls under the age of 18 reserve their "natural" right to an abortion by keeping it secret from their parents. I am very concerned that when I am older and perhaps have a sexually active 12-16 year old daughter, she can keep it from me and have an abortion without my ever knowing it! I would hopefully teach my children to be responsible for their actions, and I would always want them to know that they could come to me whenever needed. What kind of parent would I be if my child had to keep a huge, huge secret like abortion from me? Imagine one of your beautiful children not having the chance to be born into this world because of irresponsibility of minors and the ease and availability of abortion.

You mentioned rape; do you know how many pregnancies are caused by rape? Less than 0.2%. You mentioned "back-alley" abortions' risks; do you realize how many problems are common with "legal" abortions?

This cannot be compared to women's suffrage. A woman's right to vote cannot be compared with a minor's right to an abortion. Wikipedia's Susan B. Anthony excerpt says that she opposed abortion. Elizabeth Stanton's entry says that she believed abortion was "infanticide." I do believe that women deserve equality, ranging from the right to vote to being President. But I also believe in classifying a fetus as a human; after only 3 weeks it has a heartbeat. And I don't agree that women have the right to kill humans.

"When we consider that women are treated as property, it is degrading to women that we should treat our children as property to be disposed of as we see fit" (Elizabeth Cady Stanton in 1873).