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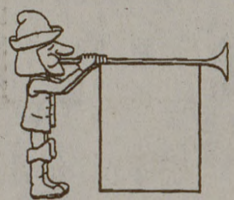
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AGGIELIFE

Love at First Byte

Internet not viable substitute for real life romance

According to National Geographic, the pseudo-intellectual's pretty picture-book, the number of Internet hosts has increased more than sixfold since 1995, meaning there are well over 200 communications satellites orbiting the Earth, and the United States alone boasts over 23.5 million networked computers.

Telephone lines are quickly becoming obsolete in lieu of the maddening chirps of rapidly multiplying fax and modem lines. Personal contact between individuals is becoming unnecessary for business and/or social acquaintance. The cold and impersonal efficiency of the "Information Age" is abruptly taking precedence over the bumbling yet lovable frame of the Disco/Moon Walk Era. And for the destitute throngs of the lovelorn, nothing has sounded better.

Yes, for some the computer is proving to be quite the matchmaker, but with that in mind, the chat room is becoming the venue of familiarization, the modem is becoming the essential link between two lovebirds and Bill Gates is becoming Barry White.

Computers play such an important role in much of modern American society. They operate everything from public television broadcasting to the delivery of factory-made baby formula to cloning my automated monkey killbot army so that I might rule the world!!!

The point is, however, almost everyone worth their weight in beans uses a computer every day and the possession and level of mastery of the instrument often act as an indicator of a person's worth. This is especially true regarding computer romancers. The faster one can convey a message, the more likely they can impress and win a fellow Internet dweller's affections.

This presents some alarming similarities between the computer-love and mundane worlds. Just as in the real world, the computer romancer with the biggest hard drive has the most luck with love. Plus, everyone wants more RAM in their lives. No one appreciates a floppy disk in either world, although it is only in the real world that a small, blue pill can solve software problems. And finally, in the virtual world, those who are without a significant other often spend their weekends calibrating their joystick. Of course viruses abound in both this world and the binary. The best solution thus far for both is to abstain from pre-networked downloading.

Pathetic as it may be, the chat room has become the mainstay of teen-age hormone outlet and expression. Untold volumes of messages concerning personal availability, popularity and anatomy are posted every day. It is almost sickening. One cannot enter a chat room while using the nickname "English

Major" without being assailed by a bombardment of requests for unspeakable services and deeds such as "Make me your major, baby!"

With the advent of the popularity of the Internet as a social element, a new language has surfaced among the electro-socialites. Abbreviated words and phrases are used as a convenient way to convey specific messages. Here are just a few of the many computer-lingo terms used today:

ROTFLMAO = Really Old Texan Findin'
Luv Muffin At Once
BTW = Big Tamale Warehouse
LOL = Likes Old Ladies
BILL GATES = Satan
EVIL = Campus Parking

When did this transition take place, some may ask? When did a simple box go from such harmless games as Pong and FBI sub-

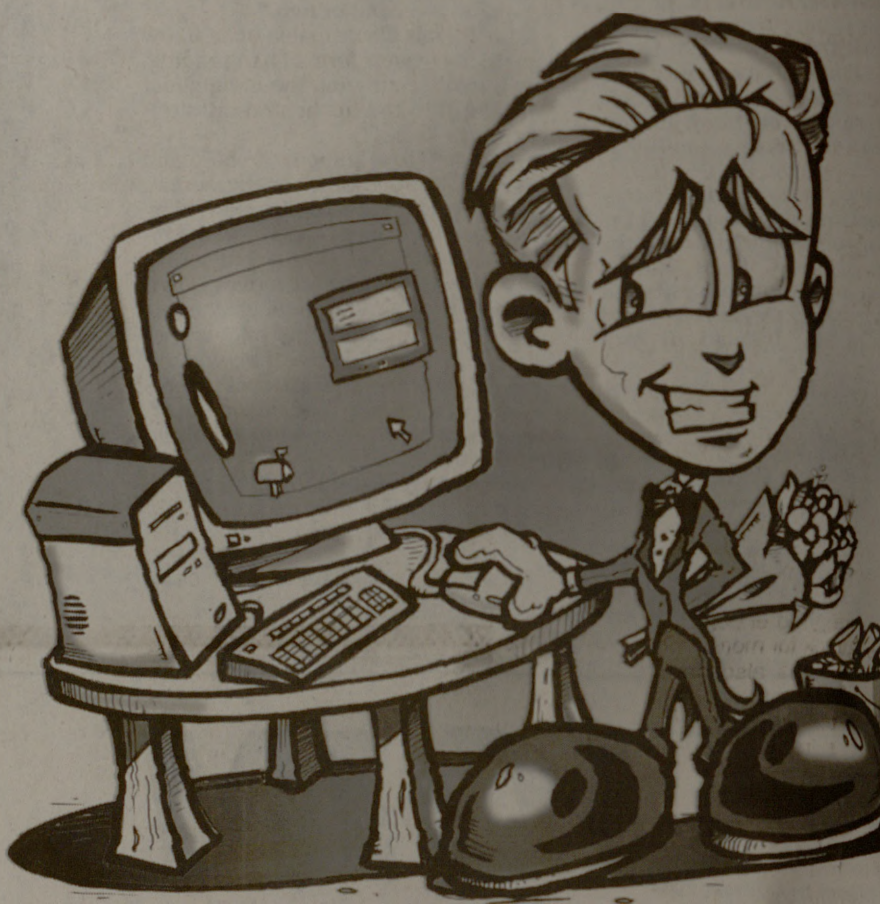
terfuge, to the havoc that is long-distance affection? To find this out, one has to go to the source, the very creator of the Internet, Al Gore.

Gore once claimed to have invented the Internet, and considering this on top of his charming personality, there is no doubt he was Mr. Popular in high school.

So if one feels loveless and desperate for personal attention, look no further than the Internet. Sure it's expensive and a lot of strings are attached, but there is no need for dinner, a movie and dancing.

This writer for one will stick to the traditional ways and make out with an abso-

Jacob Huval is a sophomore English major.



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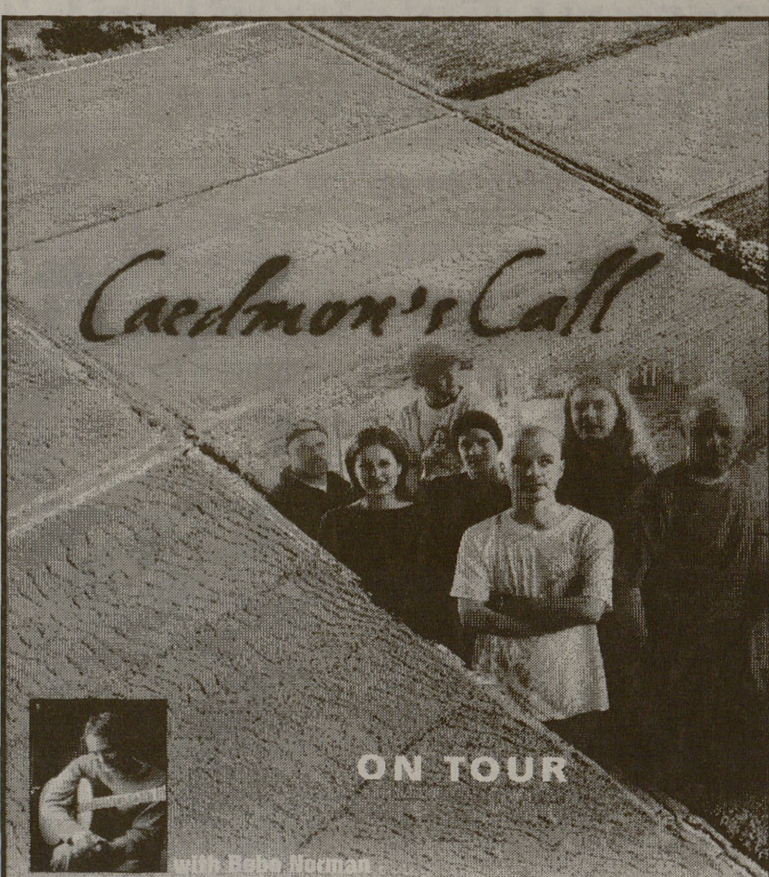
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Kevin Costner reflects on career

NEW YORK (AP) — After huge hits like *The Untouchables* and *Dances With Wolves* gave way to big flops like *The Postman* and *Waterworld*, Kevin Costner knows that whatever he does, he does it in a big way.

He also knows that trait makes some vocal critics see him as the perfect example of everything they hate about Hollywood. "I hear things," Costner says in Sunday's Daily News. "I'm not immune." Despite his failures, the Academy Award-winner has no regrets. "Maybe I don't see myself clearly, I don't know," Costner

said. "Maybe there's an arrogance about me or whatever. But I know the way I feel about movies is really pure." "I'm happy about the things I've done. I'm not always happy about the results, but I'm happy about the choices I've made, because I've made them myself. I love *Wyatt Earp*, and I really love *The Postman*, and I loved making *The War*,

he said, referring to three box office bombs. "I would stack my movies with anybody's movies, all the titles included." In his latest film, *For Love, the Game*, Costner returns to baseball diamond. Costner has succeeded in *Bull Durham* and *Field of Dreams*, both baseball films.

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