Editorial: Rumors everywhere

How often have you heard something “through the grapevine” about someone you know or perhaps about yourself that made you so angry that you wanted to run right out and yell and scream and tell someone exactly what you think of them? Then you find out it didn’t go down the way you heard it did.

A college campus is kind of like a small town. Everyone knows everyone or at least they know someone who knows them. So, rumors abound and they travel fast, kind of like high school. But things are a bit more serious than they were in high school, or at least, the stakes are higher in many ways.

All of us know of a relationship or friendship that hit the rocks because of bad things people heard about each other. It is such a shame that something so trivial and childish as a rumor could end a relationship.

However, some would say that if a relationship is so fragile that it could be destroyed by a rumor then it wasn’t worth having in the first place. That’s partly true, but even good relationships can be complicated or made more difficult than they have to because of the goofy things people hear about each other.

It is not always a purposeful or malicious attempt on the part of some mysterious rumor-starter. Often someone is involved with an event or they seem to be involved, and the facts of the actual occurrences that take place are misconstrued through the retelling of a story.

It’s like a game of telephone or whisper down the lane, that you most likely had to play in elementary school, where everyone sits in a circle and whispers a sentence into the ear of the person next to them. By the time the sentence travels through the entire circle it is usually barely similar to the original sentence and often doesn’t make any sense at all.

Well, picture that circle as a really big one with some people in it who harbor bad feelings toward others. It is no wonder that rumors that barely hold a grain of truth or fact are so easily produced on campus.

There’s no stopping it. So what can be done about it? The only solution is to not instantaneously believe everything that you hear, even though it is your gut reaction to do so. When something sounds too outrageous to be true it probably is.

The best thing to do is just to ask the person about the rumor that concerns them. Of course, if a rumor is really bad and it actually did happen, the person may be inclined to lie about it. That’s always a possibility so you can judge for yourself how truthful you think the person is being.

Another way to gauge the accuracy of a rumor is to ask the source of the story about it. If they say something like, “I heard from someone that...,” or, “Bobby told Sammy, who told Jim, who told me that...,” don’t listen. The chances that they are telling the truth is about as likely as the sentence coming out flawlessly at the end of the circle.

Rumors are not a worthy reason for losing a relationship of any kind. Before you decide to believe, or become angry for that matter, about something you hear about someone, ask yourself if it seems logical, who the source is, and what you really think happened based on what you know about the person. And please, give them a chance to explain and keep your mind open.

This weekly editorial expresses the majority opinion of The Rider News editorial board and is written by the Opinion editor.

Letters to the Editor: The Rider News welcomes letters on all subjects of interest to the campus community. Letters must be typed and include the name, address, phone number and signature of the author for verification. Send to The Rider News via e-mail (ridernews@rider.edu), campus mail, or hand deliver to Centennial House. All letters must be received by midnight Monday preceding publication. The Rider News reserves the right to edit all letters for space and clarity.

Innuendos: Dating’s caste system part II

As a part of my theory about the current day caste system, I feel that there is another factor that shapes the rules of dating. I feel that a person’s career can also dictate what type of man or woman he or she can be involved with.

It is not common practice for a corporate executive to have a relationship with a blue collar worker. The reason for this is pure social expectations. It is not based on something as superficial as looks. Instead, it is based on money. Money influences many things in our culture, its swaying power does not stop at dating.

In the same respect as my previous theory, those who are in power and hold the purse are expected to fraternize with people whose hands are on the same proverbial pocketbook. People who only have to hold on to their pants pockets are expected to be with others whose pockets are equally as deep.

Such things as economic opportunity and educational background leave a gap between many people. People who went to the best medical schools in the country couldn’t possibly have anything in common with people who spend their days working at the local McDonald’s...could they? I think it is more than possible, but many simply do what society says is proper with upper class with upper class and lower class with lower class.

However, there are problems for those who date within their specified caste. When one makes more money than the other, it puts strain on the couple. Furthermore, when the woman is the one to bring home more bacon, the man feels somewhat inferior. This sense of inadequacy is a by-product of another social expectation. It is no secret that in our culture, the man is likely to earn more money than a woman.

When this norm is broken and a relationship is involved, the results can sometimes be hectic.

Quote of the Week

“Revolutions have never lightened the burden of tyranny: they have only shifted it to another shoulder.” —George Bernard Shaw

This Week in History...

Nov. 18, 1928
Mickey Mouse, one of the most well-known characters of our time, made his debut on this date in the animated cartoon Steamboat Willie.

Nov. 19, 1863
President Abraham Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address.

Nov. 22, 1963
President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas on this date.