

Here's to you, Heath

By Rich Coleman

FROM TIME TO TIME, MY ROOMMATES and I will see that *Brokeback Mountain* is on TV. And once it is confirmed, the following question occurs: "Haven't you seen *Brokeback Mountain* twice?"



MY OPINION

Have I seen *Brokeback Mountain* twice? Yes, I'm comfortable enough in my own heterosexual affiliation to admit that I have seen it twice. Once with my ex-girlfriend, the other with a lesbian.

The question here is what could make me, a standard male hetero, even think about seeing a movie that contains enough guy-on-guy action to make Nathan Lane blush?

The answer is simple: Heath Ledger. My first couple of experiences with Ledger weren't anything too prophetic. He played the rebel-with-a-soft-side well in *10 Things I Hate About You*. I then saw him perform a more serious role as Mel Gibson's son in *The Patriot*. The Australian actor played his parts well, but these early roles of his weren't showcasing his range as an actor.

Then came the story of forbidden love between two cowboys. It almost seemed like an exact steal from *South Park*, when Eric Cartman explains that independent movies are just about "gay cowboys eating pudding."

To say the movie caused controversy is an understatement. I was skeptical of all the hype it was receiving. So with that mindset, I set out to watch *Brokeback Mountain*.

Surprisingly, I actually enjoyed it. Its importance was probably exaggerated because of all the controversy surround-

ing it, but it entertained me.

However, what really struck a chord with me was Ledger's Oscar-nominated performance. He was always just "that guy" to me, but after seeing his performance, it showed there was a lot of potential there.

Then he dropped a bombshell. He signed on to play The Joker for *The Dark Knight*, the sequel to *Batman Begins*. Comic book nerds and Batman lovers (I guess that's redundant) across the country were buzzing.

The gay cowboy was going to play the most important Batman villain ever? Just as I was skeptical about how well a movie about gay cowboys would turn out, I was indeed dubious of this odd decision.

But then the *Dark Knight* trailer was released. My doubts were crushed, to say the least.

Seeing Ledger with white face-paint in the classic, purple-and-green suit growling the line, "Why so serious?" nearly made me wet my pants in excitement. It must have excited the whole 16- to 25-year-old male demographic in general, because almost everyone I talked to was equally thrilled. Suddenly, Ledger wasn't just a good actor. It was obvious he was a genius, at least when it came to method acting.

But on Jan. 22, 2008, Ledger's potential vanished.

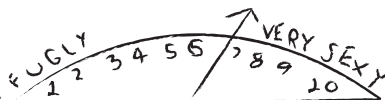
The world will never know how good he could have been, and you know what happens when you assume. True, *The Dark Knight* still hasn't even been released, but with what I've seen, there's no way Ledger handed in a bad performance on this one.

One thing is for certain: The day Ledger died was the same day a promising young actor was taken from us.

Here's to you, Heath. Rest in peace.

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SEXYMETER



HOT **Thon this weekend**
Showing celebrities the real meaning of "exhaustion" since 1973.
points: 8 comparable to: The Twist

MEH **Activists confronted while wiffle-balling in Old Main**
Wrong sport; Old Main loves football. Trick play: the tuition hike.
points: 5 comparable to: Cabbage Patch

UGLY **PSU ranked low for security study**
Another study preying on our insecurities.
points: 2 comparable to: Lawn Mower

FUGLY **Pugh Street fight amid crowd of 200**
That's like what, 10 football teams?
points: 1 comparable to: Macarena

STATE COLLEGE'S SEXINESS THIS WEEK: UNSEXY

overall average: 4 comparable to: The Charlie Brown



William A. Wellock III

WOULD YOU RATHER: HAVE YOUR PANTS CATCH ON FIRE OR BE ATTACKED BY HORNETS?

"Pants catch on fire, because you can take off your pants."

Angelica Garcia
sophomore-hotel, restaurant and institutional management



"Attacked by hornets, because I don't want to get burns that will scar when I can get sores that can heal."

Nicole Apgar
freshman-undecided



"My pants catch on fire, because you could just jump into a body of water."

Melissa Krechmer
junior-sociology



"I'd rather have my pants catch on fire because I'd stop, drop and roll."

Ben Quick
junior-hotel, restaurant and institutional management



"Attacked by hornets, because the pain would eventually go away."

Matt Yankowitz
junior-kinesiology



"Pants catch on fire, because I think I would die if I was attacked by hornets."

Becky Conner
junior-elementary education

