

## Starting over and moving on



Chit chat for change  
**Christine Kleck**  
editorial columnist

This semester has been a total blur for me so far.

Difficult classes, national tragedies, and overwhelming personal crises (and yes that word is plural) have all contributed to these feelings of anxiety and confusion.

Where do I go from here? Mounting stress and overall busyness have given me little time to even begin tending to any of the personal issues that have invaded my life.

Isn't it funny how future plans can go from being an overwhelming blessing to being an overwhelming curse as they fade before your very eyes?

So here I am, taking one day, one hour, one minute, one second at a time, going through the motions disguised by the best visor that I can muster.

The only place I can move is on, up, forward, and beyond. Take what little of myself is left through the ever-ending roller coaster that is called starting over.

I keep telling myself that the past is the past and because of that I need to surround myself with the future - where I'm going from here, and not necessarily who I'm going with.

Grad school, North Carolina, my own life, the life that I've always wanted - that is my focus now. Consuming myself with the elements of the future makes it a little bit easier to get up (and fall asleep) each day.

Similar to my situation, our country has also been going through several of these same experiences and processes as it too suffered a great loss and change of the norm. This life changing, life shattering, and confusing catastrophe is far greater than mine, but all in all, we've both suffered a great deal.

Like me, it will take a while for people to come to grips with this, and the aftermath will never entirely go away.

With the combined efforts of leaders, volunteers, law enforcement, and all those involved in the aftermath of the tragedy, the country's Sept. 11 disaster is little by little being cleaned up and the pieces of the larger puzzle are slowly being affixed and re-affixed back together.

In a way we are all starting over and becoming whole again. Our recollections of chronological time and order of events are now separated and categorized as "before it", "during it" and "after". In most cases the "before" is looked at as the positive, happy times that we hold dear in our heart as the way we want to remember things. The "during it" period is obviously the negative side of the situation and the steps after and away from it begin as negative, but get more and more positive each day.

But isn't that how it always is - isn't that just the grief process that every person, and country for that matter, goes through as they move on.

Feelings of regret and "what if..." constantly loom in our minds as the little reminders of the tragedy and the positive days before it cross our path.

Where do you go from here? Where do I go from here?

Where do we all go from here?

Comparing my problems to that of the country and to that of other people makes me feel a little selfish. But is my problem that insignificant that my whole being should only be focused on these national events and situations that are considered far worse than anything that I've ever gone through? That is a really tough one for me. You can't possibly throw away all of the memories of life, both tangible and non-tangible, that occurred both before and during a tragedy. It's not possible.

What do you do when you can't even brush these images and memories aside to move on? I know that I'm not the only one. I'm sure that there are others like me who have a hard time letting go.

But, like our country we need to let go, rise up and overcome. We must realize that no matter the tragedy, it has in fact, affected you. We all need to realize that grief is ok. Letting it take over your life is not, but feeling grief is natural, it's human!

It's how you deal with that grief and how you move on and up and away from the tragedy and the grief that matters.

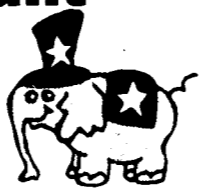
The United States is a great example of that. Whenever you think that a tragedy and the feelings of grief that follow will be too much for you, look at our Nation. Look at how this country that has gone through so much and that has lost so much is still able to move up and onward.

You are not alone - as I have learned. We all (including me!) must move up and on. We shall overcome!

Kleck's column appears every three weeks.

## At what cost freedom?

### The Elephant says...



In the wake of the disaster that has affected all of us on campus, it would seem immature and insignificant to debate the differences between liberal and conservative views surrounding civil liberties. I think that liberals and conservatives alike can and will agree that action must be taken in order to prevent an atrocity of this magnitude from ever reaching American soil for a second time. However, we each have our own unique and separate paths in order to reach this goal.

Back in the Clinton era, our commander and chief proposed and acted on a number of civil liberty protection programs ensuring the American citizens that safety and privacy were a given. No one person, terrorist or not, had to concern themselves with whether or not "big brother" was watching them. Unfortunately it was these programs (i.e. The Clinton administration's "National Plan for Information Systems Protection") that might have insulated the American people from the real danger in the world. These programs made the American people ignorant to a danger that the government couldn't even offer protection from. These programs hindered national security and cut intelligence to nothing. Now in the wake of the disaster that transpired on Sept. 11, we the American people are pinned behind our wall of civil liberties.

In this more enlightened time, I must propose that we let the government do what it was intended to do and protect the people. If this means giving up a few civil liberties in order to stay safe, then I am all for it. I don't care if in the future I need to be stripped searched before I get on a plane, as long as those measures will prevent me from being victimized by some anti-American terrorist organization. I think that "Big Brother" does need to keep an eye on us. That's what we pay him for.

-James White  
College Republicans

### The Donkey says...



Since Sept. 11, our country has been and will continue to be transformed. Part of this transformation will include increased security and many have called for a relaxation of civil liberties to ensure security. I agree we need to increase our security at our airports and other public places. However, I feel we do not need to compromise our civil liberties in order to be secure.

Often many Americans give into irrational fears and request excessive security measures that reduce our civil liberties. We need to resist the knee jerk reactions that increase security at the cost of civil liberties. An example of this knee jerk reaction is the innocent man who was riding on a train in Rhode Island and was detained just because he had a beard and turban. We should not investigate or detain someone on the basis of his or her racial or ethnic background.

We need security measures that are efficient and effective and measures must make common sense. We cannot throw together superficial security measures that do nothing but cause delays and violate constitutional rights. We need to be willing to spend a large sum of money and make sure that our security measures are effective. Parking cars on runways and frisking grandmothers makes us feel that the proper security measures are being taken, however, the previous examples are just knee jerk reactions that do not make sense. Excessive security measures that are not effective have the potential of violating a citizen's rights. Our country was founded on the basis that all Americans are guaranteed certain rights and just because our nation is being threatened does not mean we should abandon our guaranteed rights.

Americans need to be aware of terrorist threats and protect themselves from these threats, but we have to protect our civil liberties and constitutional rights above all.

-Stephen Webb  
College Democrats

Every two weeks members of the College Democrats and the College Republicans will debate a partisan topic. Send your suggestions to: BEHRCOLL2@AOL.COM

## 'The Hot Debate of The Week' Is our nation safe?

Is biological warfare elements thrown in the United States?

Just look at the precision, the accuracy, the ingenious way those terrorists were able to strike at the heart of our country. This is a breed of terrorists like no other. They have moved past the conventional car bomb and are now much more sophisticated than we could ever imagine. Why should they stop with airplanes?

If we tighten up airport security, then terrorists are going to look to something bigger and better in their war against America. The only possible thing they could do that would be worse than what occurred on Sept. 11 is to use biological and chemical agents. Remember a few years ago when Saddam Hussein refused to let U.N. inspectors into certain laboratories? He could have easily been manufacturing chemical weapons right there, and that may be only the tip of the iceberg.

The scariest part is biological/chemical weapons are not only cheaper to manufacture but are almost undetectable. They can be transported with the greatest of ease in a closed container, and just a small amount can infect a whole city in no time. A CIA report stated that "clandestine production of [chemical and biological weapons] for multiple casualty attacks raises no greater technical obstacles than does the clandestine production of chemical narcotics or heroin."

Once they figure out how to manufacture them, which they probably could find on the Internet, there will be almost nothing that will stop them. To terrorists like Osama bin Laden, producing these kinds of agents would require pocket change. These weapons strike such fear and terror into Americans because we cannot be protected from them no matter where we go. It's obvious by now terrorists can exploit any weakness we have, and preparation for chemical warfare is one of those weaknesses. The bar is raised for these terrorists, and after seeing what those attacks did to our country, they will want to reach as far beyond that bar as possible.

-M. Bello

It's no joke; there are countries in the world that possess the capabilities of developing biological and chemical weapons. It seems that just that fact alone has been enough to scare people into buying gas masks, latex yellow suits and 20 pound spaceman boots. But is there really a need to worry? There is a line between developing the technology and implementing it.

First, education is the key, ignorance is bliss. People should learn more about bioterrorism and its risks before locking themselves in small underground sheds. The real issue at hand is how terrorists will go about releasing their chemical agents against the United States. For example, the frequently talked about anthrax strain must be inhaled in large amounts before a person becomes infected with it. And although it could be very possible to release the lethal agent in the U.S., it would have to be launched into a building via ventilation ducts. The probability that any rogue nation could amass an amount deadly enough for an entire city is unlikely. In addition, anthrax is not contagious.

Smallpox seems to be another concern among people. The problem with smallpox is that it is contagious, yet procurement is slightly more difficult. Until just a few years ago, it was recognized that the United States and Russia had the only remaining strains of smallpox in deep-freeze. Lately, however, there is speculation that one or two Middle-Eastern nations like Iran or Saudi Arabia may have their hands on a few strains.

The main point to realize is that even if terrorists were able to release a biological or chemical agent in the U.S., the responsiveness of our people would most likely result in another triumph over terrorism.

-R. Wynne

Every week, two editors from the staff will debate a topic that is hot. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to email suggestions for the hot topic. Send ideas to behrcoll2@aol.com

## Has anyone seen my 'pot'?



Press 'I' to Graduate  
**Katie Galley**  
The Manager

Hey now, simmer down! I wasn't talking about actual marijuana, but a wonderful thing on campus called the BUDPOT. For those of you that don't know what I am talking about yet, it's The Behrend Underground Dispatch Post Observer Times. The BUDPOT is the best thing to happen to campus since...well probably since forever, at least during my three years on campus! Still don't know what I am talking about? Let me fill you in.

Earlier this semester, a mysterious box showed up next to the Beacon rack in the Academic Building. Inside the box was a completely rudimentary-

looking newspaper, and yes, it was the BUDPOT. I perused it, and was pleasantly surprised when I got to the end. At the beginning I was grimacing for fear that it was yet another sorry attempt to tork off the Beacon for not being good enough, or not covering enough Greek activities or whatever the gripe was that week, but, thank goodness, it wasn't. What it was however was the funniest thing I have read since the April Fool's edition of the Beacon! It was a refreshing change from the same old things that the Beacon has to report about. Now, don't get me wrong, the events that take place year after year on campus are important and merit coverage in the Beacon, however, after awhile, even the sex cabaret gets old. Trust me, you can only see a wooden penis so many times before it starts losing its thrill.

That brings me back to the BUDPOT. The guys that publish this non-traditional newspaper just might be my heroes. Not because they are vulgar, rip on sororities, teachers that don't like them or various other things on campus that have a tendency to irritate me, but because they are merely doing it. Does everyone understand what I mean? Let me explain better.

For all the years that I have been on the Beacon there has been some group, individual, professor, or local radio bigot that doesn't like the final product that gets distributed to the students and community. Well, lemme tell ya a little something about these people...they are all talk! They absolutely LOVE to come down to the Beacon office and rant and rave and wave their hands in the air in a fury, but when it comes right down to it, that's all they do! They don't try to actually join our staff to make a difference, nor do they want to hear our explanation about things, they just want to do a little something that rhymes with 'witch'. Period. Heaven forbid they actually get some initiative and either contribute to something or produce something independent from the Beacon! But that my friends, is what I like about BUDPOT, and oh, there are other reasons too, stick around.

For starters, the people in charge at the BUDPOT staff have never said a cruel word about the Beacon; heck, for all I know: they may actually enjoy the Beacon. Yet, they wanted to see another brand of newspaper

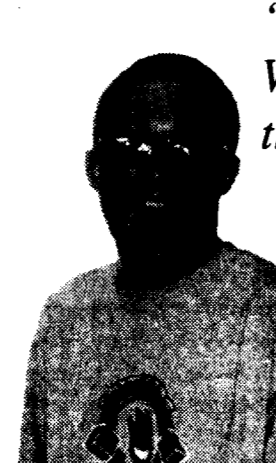
at Behrend and they went out and did something about it! Yes, now I know that these guys are my heroes. Or course, all this admiration may simply be because they get to write and say things that I cannot in the Beacon, who knows. All I know is that with these guys (and excluding Tori Spelling, I don't think that they have any women on their staff), are stirring up controversy, and the owner of a very successful chain of newspapers once told the Beacon staff that if we aren't causing controversy then we aren't doing our jobs. Kudos to the BUDPOT for doing their jobs!

Who knows, maybe the campus will get really lucky and the BUDPOT staff and the Beacon staff can team up for the April Fool's edition of the Beacon and make it the best it has been since the year 2000! Thank you, thank you BUDPOT staff for bringing this new venue of entertainment and news (sort of) to the campus.

Galley's column appears every three weeks.

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## Smoking is cool...ha ha



'Sweet' Lou Whitaker and the '87 Tigers  
**Mike Butala**  
Humorist

All you ever hear from the government and those "truth" commercials is that smoking cigarettes is bad. Quite frankly it offends smokers like myself. Well, fear not because there is more than one way I can prove that smoking cigarettes is good for you.

First of all, look at all those people on those "truth" commercials. If there was some clan going around my hometown preaching that smoking cigarettes is bad, I wouldn't hang out with them. That's just annoying. I don't want complete strangers telling me about my problems. They have their own problems to worry about.

And believe you me they got PLENTY of problems.

Second, the government says smoking is bad. I'm not buying it. They already said that smoking was good for you way back in the day. They just don't like it because the cigarette companies are making more money than the government thought possible, that's why the federal tax on cigarettes is so low. Now, they want a bigger piece of the pie and are getting irate because we can't even pay off our world debt. The government should sell cigarettes to earn money. It should have a cigarette itself and chill out.

The Surgeon General doesn't know what he's talking about. What school did he graduate from? That's right, I don't care either. He's in cahoots with the government.

Now you might be thinking, "All right, I see where you're going with this, but I still don't see why I should start smoking." Well, allow me to indulge why you should. How many times have you kissed your girlfriend or boyfriend and it's like kissing an ashtray. Well, if you smoked too, then you wouldn't even notice. Case closed. And if your significant other doesn't like when you smoke, why waste your time chugging Scope to get rid of the smoke when she can just light up a

smoke and taste nothing awkward about your breath?

Now I have to put down all you coffee drinkers. Nicotine, a very special little ingredient in cigarettes, is a stimulant. So I say, put down that cup and pick up a carton of smokes. "But Mike, cigarettes stain your teeth." Cry about it. So does coffee.

"I heard smoking kills brain cells." So does sniffing magic markers but everyone still does that...or maybe I'm alone there. This all relates to Cliff Clavin's "Buffalo Theory." To sum it up, buffalos can only travel as fast as the slowest buffalo in the herd. And when these buffalo are hunted, naturally the slowest and weakest buffalo are killed first and the herd as a whole is faster and healthier. Much like the human brain. Smoking cigarettes kills the weak and damaged brains cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine.

Now some people may be concerned about their health. Don't worry about it. It's all taken care of. Smoking cigarettes thins out your blood stream. That way, you have less of a chance to get a blood clot. "Smoker's Cough"? Not a problem. All

that crap you cough out of your esophagus is a good thing. You're basically cleansing your air pipe and getting out all the crap that is being built up from breathing air pollutants like pesticides and herbicides. It's also a great abdominal workout. People say laughter is the best medicine, but everyone hates a fake laugh. But don't worry fellow EMO kids; a smoker's cough is the next best thing.

In conclusion, everyone should smoke cigarettes. There are absolutely no downsides to it. And always remember, "Smoking isn't just cool. It makes YOU look cool." And if you don't believe me, look at Burt Reynolds, Frank Sinatra, Keith Richards, Hugh Hefner, and Snuffleupagus Well, maybe not Snuffleupagus, but he should have.

Butala's column appears every three weeks.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mike Butala is not a licensed physician. He's just a plastics major, and a mediocre one at that.