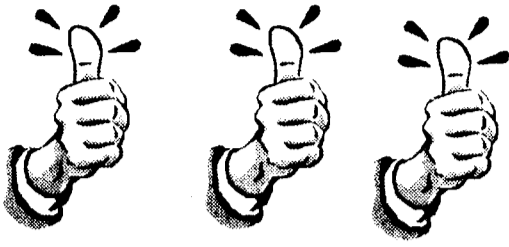


OPINION

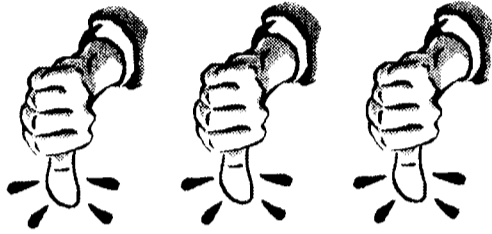
Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. - The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

Beacon Thumbs Up

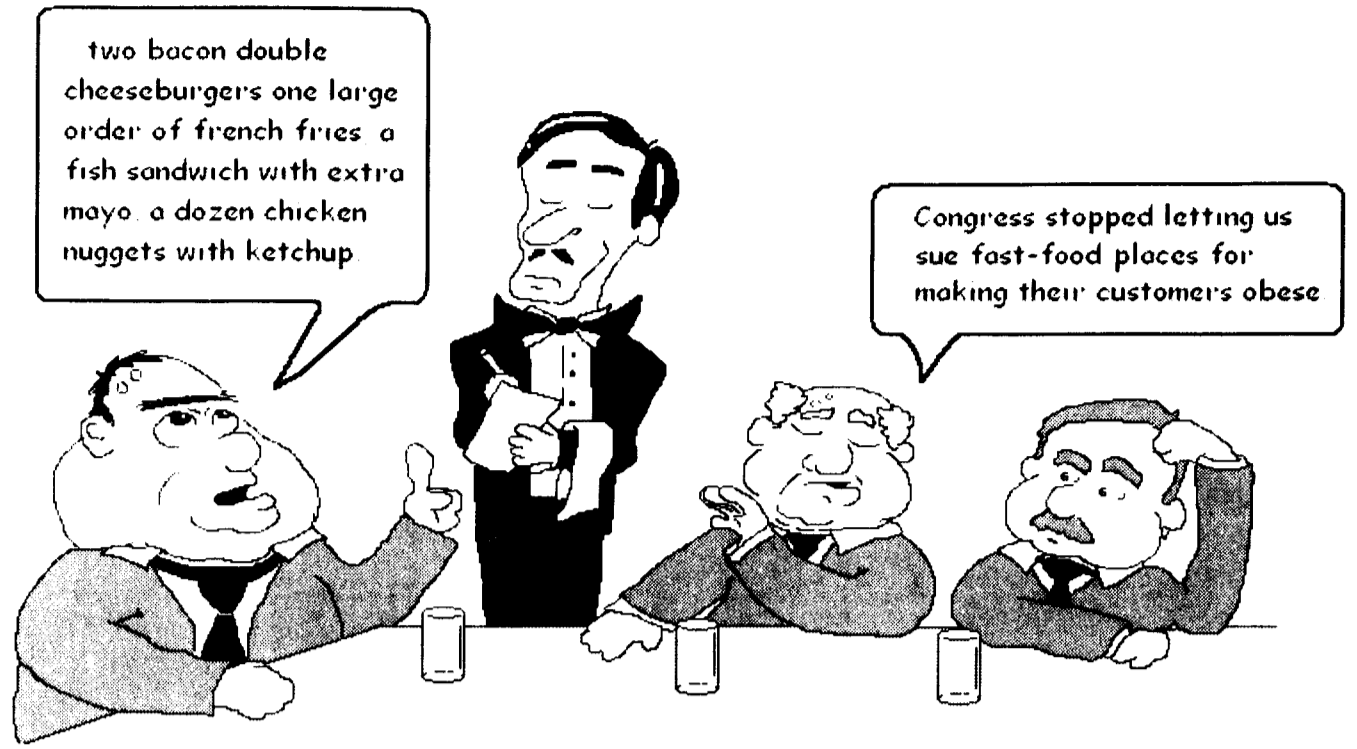


- Numerous halloween activities on campus.
- Greek Sing.
- Ken Miller's support of the "Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down" section.

Beacon Thumbs Down



- "Music At Noon" parking congestion.
- Lack of student/faculty letters to the Beacon Opinion Page.
- Diet and regular soda mixing together in Bruno's fountain drinks.



ZACK MENTZ

Dude, please don't be "that guy"

By Chris LaFuria
sportseditor@psu.edu
sports editor

I'm sure you have seen the cliché figure that has become the typical stereotype for all men. Maybe you fit the mold of the type of guy that I am going to describe. By either seeing this characteristic on television or encompassing the traits personally, you know that the whole demeanor of the average male is changing into something not worth bragging about, and it's giving the whole male species a bad name.

A few weeks ago, I was watching an episode of MTV's Crips and I noticed a startling trend. When the show and its crew take a tour of a female celebrity's house and entered the bedroom, the woman would always sit on her bed and describe it as a place to relax and get all the sleep that was necessary. On the contrary, during an episode featuring a male celebrity, the bed was always referred to as "the place where all the magic happens" or the host would always blatantly shake the bed to prove its sturdiness in a "time of need." This deliberate display of primitive behavior is the main factor of the promiscuity epidemic facing this country: this world.

Almost every weekend I encounter a similar situation dealing with sexually-focused males. When I ask my guy friends-what they're doing over the weekend, without hesitance, each of them answer, "Getting wasted and finding chicks!" This may be a common lifestyle for a majority of guys at Behrend or around the country, but, for me, this is absolutely disgusting. Using sex as the only criteria for a healthy relationship could be the unhealthiest ideal when it comes to dating and relationships.

I am not placing the blame solely on the male gender, but it seems as if the promiscuity epidemic is plaguing males for the most part. Every now and then, you encounter a female sex-fiend looking to get her action, but, as displayed on television, in movies and almost every weekend on campus, the men are the ones looking for the "quick hit" or the "easy tail," as I've come to realize.

According to the Official White House website, statistics were taken and it was found that 70% of the people infected with AIDS or HIV are male. Although this statistic has sexual orientation and other methods of receiving the virus factored into the percentage, sexual promiscuity must play some role in the percentage being rather high in favor of men.

It is my opinion that this attitude towards women is basically a lack of respect for the female counterpart and for oneself. Sophomore English major Kara Hesch said, "It's very unattractive to see a guy who has a big head and is only out to get girls. I am more into the easygoing type." Many women concur with Kara. While the "bad boy" image is somewhat desirable, the sensitive and decent type of male with a genuine respect for the opposite sex is what is needed for a successful relationship.

Ladies, next time you see a guy approach you and before you even exchange names, he tries to get physical with you, my advice is to try and get away as fast as you can. Gentlemen, be gentlemen. This isn't directed towards all men in general, but show some respect. I promise that with a little admiration and compassion, your relationship will be much more successful.

Have a "Thumbs Up" or "Thumbs Down" ?



Send Suggestions to opinion@psu.edu

Quote of the Week

"Remember, democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There is never a democracy that did not commit suicide."

~John Adams

The Behrend Beacon

Published Weekly by the students of Penn State Erie



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Allison Gray
Tracie Kendziora
Justin Plansinis

Penn State Erie,
The Behrend College
First Floor, The J. Elmer Reed
Union Building
Station Road, Erie, PA 16563

Contact the Beacon at:
Telephone: (814) 898-6488
Fax: (814) 898-6019

Leave behind No Child Left Behind

By Pat Webster
newseditor@psu.edu
assistant news editor

The No Child Left Behind Act, passed a few years ago, has recently started coming under scrutiny yet again as more false reporting is being unearthed, and school and administration officials admit to taking steps that make the program seem more successful than it really is.

I know of a good many teachers who do not much like NCLB. For one, it fuels the current attitudes in America of "It's not my fault." I've been through high school--I know why the kids there fail. It's not usually for lack of intelligence or opportunity, but because those kids put absolutely no effort into their schoolwork. The kids get bad grades, and instead of blaming their kids or themselves, it's much easier for parents to blame the schools.

My father is a teacher. He'd occasionally get phone calls, and some parent would rail at him because their kid got a bad grade and how it was obviously his fault because their kid was perfect. Usually, it would take nearly a half hour of explaining why the kid in question got such a bad grade before the parent would leave him alone.

Sixteen percent of my graduating class did not graduate. Why? High school is not hard. I knew many of these people, and most usually, it was because these kids were too "cool" or lazy to do enough work to satisfy even the simplest curricula. School was an imposition on their life, not a valuable experience in which to learn and succeed.

Changing everything over to private schools certainly won't change this. It will still be the same kids--now on vouchers--failing at the same subjects for the same reasons, unless the guaranteed money they bring in with them ensures their passage regardless of academic success.

Many people think teachers are overpaid. This is the most blatantly false thing I have ever heard. Not only are their wages below what they should be for an occupation of their importance but also for the sheer

amount of work they must do for their classes. Be it elementary or secondary, teachers put in several hours of work each night beyond the 8 hours they work every day, planning lessons, grading tests and papers and filling out school paperwork, besides any research that they may wish to do. NCLB has only increased this paperwork. Teachers aren't evil demons that live in closets and try to think up new and brilliant ways to fail kids out of school. School has been like many other things in life--you only get out of it what you put into it.

Why do kids become this way? It starts at home. If their parents have a no-touch attitude toward their kids' work, kids will right off lower it on their list of importance. If their parents don't care, why should they? Furthermore, their parents may not be able to take interest in their child's schoolwork due to the ever-increasing problem of lower incomes in America, struggling just to make ends meet. In either case, the children will come away with the impression that school and the associated work are not important, either for lack of interest or the belief that it is more important to just get a job and start earning money.

Since public school funding is based on and taken from property taxes, it's no wonder that schools with the wealthiest students and families do the best. Further stripping struggling schools of yet more funding is hardly a sensible solution. Judging schools by using standardized tests that do not take into account geography, socioeconomic status and actual intelligence is not helping. Instead, schools have to take more resources from education and put them towards specific classes teaching how to take these tests.

If education in this nation is to be changed, the change must start in the homes of those attending. Cutting funding to strapped schools and imposing new standards that are impossible to keep without the attendant support will not help. What we have here is a system that, instead of making children better educated, simply makes them better at taking standardized tests and avoiding responsibility for their academic careers.

Submission Guidelines

The Beacon welcomes readers to share their views on this page. Letters and commentary pieces can be submitted by email to opinion@psu.edu or directly to the Beacon office, located in the Reed Building.

Letters should be limited to 350 words and commentaries should be limited to 700 words. The more concise the submission, the less we will be forced to edit it for space concerns and the more likely we are to run the submission.

All submissions must include the writer's year in school, major and name as The Beacon does not publish anonymous letters.

Deadline for any submission is 5 p.m. Tuesday afternoon for inclusion in the Friday issue. All submissions are considered, but because of space limitations, some may not be published.

All submissions must include consent to be edited before they can be edited for publication.