

PERSPECTIVES

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:

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.

Introverted or just intellectually engaged?

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I recently came across a survey on Facebook that was designed to determine a person's personality type. After honestly taking this quiz, it gave me the answer of being called an "introvert." It stated a few more traits that introverted people typically have. Needless to say, these traits all had a common theme: they say that that kind of person is ridiculously boring.

Feeling somewhat dejected, I tried other surveys such as: "What sexual position are you, what superhero are you, and finally what *Twilight* character are you?"

Surprisingly enough, none of these came out to be particularly interesting: Missionary position (lame), Superman (douche), and Jacob Black (my favorite character, actually, but everyone else hates his guts).

So, am I really this boring and tedious just because I enjoy reading on the weekend and tend to spend a lot of time on the computer?

First, we should probably define what being an introvert is. My dictionary defines it as someone who is quiet, shy and primarily interested in his own feelings and well-being. Great, so now I'm a "selfish computer geek whose only redeeming trait is his literacy." No wonder I'm still single.

Inadequacies aside, do my lonesome study habits and choice in leisure activities solely define my social placement? Or is it the fact that I choose to think for one damn second before acting on impulse? I like to think that it is a result of the latter, but only time and a tremendous amount of failed friendships will tell.

However, the thing that upset me the most about being tagged as an "introvert" was their supposed "self-

ishness" that the dictionary described. Now, I'll be the first to admit that I am an introvert. I enjoy playing video games on a Saturday night or sleeping the weekend away, but never did I feel like I was acting selfish. Hell, my behavior is anything but selfish. The solitude I just described sounds more self-destructive than self-centered.

Besides, I always thought that being an introvert was simply the result of a lack of confidence or possibly a need to get some space for a while. Someone can easily be quiet and not be selfish. Seriously, if you don't believe me find the closest shy/quiet person in your vicinity. Approach them in a nice and calm manner and politely ask them what they did last weekend. I'll guarantee that all of those genuine introverts will say that they don't have herpes (half of my graduating class) and that they don't have a criminal record.

College to Career

While sitting in a room cluttered with desks and students frantically scribbling trying to finish their last finals at Penn State, I never once envisioned myself becoming a Cost Analyst for a nuclear power company. Sure enough, infinite internet searches, multiple interviews, five resume rough drafts, and a few months later I found myself living in Charlotte, NC working a full-time job in Fort Mill, SC.

I received my Bachelor of Science Degree in Management which has transposed into what I hope will be the start of a career in the nuclear power industry. My search for a job was extremely stressful and for those few months I felt more lost than I've ever felt in my life, but in the end I persevered and found a place that aligns with both my needs and my personal goals.

I am writing this letter because I know how grueling the period between finishing college and finding a job can be, now more so than ever. All people seem to focus on lately is the economic downturn, falling stock prices, diminishing retirement savings, and how things are only going to get worse. Where does that leave young adults who have little work experience and who are looking to find a job and begin their lives? I am not saying that we need to be oblivious to what is going on, but we need to stay positive and focus on what will make us stronger. We cannot just fold and admit defeat after a few rejections and blame it on the economy. That's no excuse. Yes, it is extremely difficult right now to find a good job but it is possible.

The corporation I work for is called URS. It is a multibillion dollar company operating in 34 countries with 55,000 plus employees. URS provides services in planning, engineering and architectural design, environmental, construction, pro-

gram and construction management, systems integration, operations and maintenance, and management. URS has aided in the construction of the Hoover Dam and the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, the designing and engineering of NASA projects such as the Mars Rover, the building of the Denver International Airport, and is serving as the construction manager for the reconstruction of the World Trade Center just to name a few. The corporation recently opened its nuclear power headquarters in Fort Mill which is where I was lucky enough to land a job. Although some companies seem to be shriveling up and closing shop, mine is continuing to grow and thrive.

More opportunities are out there just like this one. It takes some patience and soul searching... along with a lot of internet searching. I feel that the key to being successful right now is not to give up but to be adaptable and opportunistic. Jobs are available for those who put themselves out there and truly show what they are made of. I wish anyone finishing school the best of luck and I sincerely hope that you prove to anyone in disbelief just how much of a difference college graduates can make in the workforce.

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Letter to the editor:

UNNECESSARY ROAD BLOCK

Last Monday afternoon, I encountered a Pennsylvania State Police roadblock on Old Station Road, just west of Junker Center. All vehicles travelling this route were stopped for a "safety check" as we were told, and we were asked to show ID, (license and registration) before being allowed to proceed. Although the police officers were polite and courteous during the stop, I was still somewhat bothered by this encounter because of several unanswered questions:

1. Why was this roadblock set up on old Station road almost directly in front of Junker Center? The

roadblock could have easily been set up on the Bayfront Connector, which would have targeted a larger cross-section of the population. Instead, the location of the roadblock appears to have been a deliberate attempt to target Behrend students.

2. Why should I be required to present identification to police authorities when I was just on my way to class and hadn't done anything against the law? My reaction was that I felt violated by this police intrusion. The random "checking of papers" of citizens in this country smacks of creeping totalitarianism.

3. In light of the number of

violent crimes in this country, is setting up roadblocks to enforce seat-belt laws really the best use of police resources? I believe it would be wiser to deploy these officers in a more effective manner such as investigating and helping to solve violent crimes.

4. Finally, was this roadblock really a safety check? Or was this simply another case of using the police to generate more revenue for the state?

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Social welfare programs and the elimination of the minimum wage

SUBMISSION FROM PROFESSOR NESBIT'S PUBLIC ECONOMICS COURSE

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Every day more than 2,000 children are born into poverty and approximately one quarter of them die because of it. An astounding 22% of United States citizens under the age of 18 suffer from hunger every day, and families with children represent the fastest growing group of homeless citizens. All of this is still occurring, regardless of the fact that Lyndon B. Johnson declared a national war on poverty more than 40 years ago.

Johnson's war on poverty is what first introduced many social aid programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and food stamps. Initially, this plan was able to lower the poverty rate in the United States to its lowest level

yet, 11.1%. While the rate hasn't increased by much since then, it hasn't decreased either. Currently, the poverty rate is at 12.5%.

As of 2008, a single person had to make at least \$10,400, annually and before taxes, to be above the poverty level and a single mother with one child had to make \$14,000. Consider that the mother only works part-time and is relying on food stamps and other social welfare benefits to keep her above the poverty line. She is, therefore, receiving enough help from the government to survive, but at the expense of American taxpayers. Many full-time working Americans pay approximately 32% of their gross income to the government each year. Now, a scenario exists in which the mother is happy with just getting by, and many hard-working citizens are paying huge sums of money to the government

instead of using it to spend themselves. This woman now has no incentive to improve her skills, job options, or wage. This is one underlying reason that many economists support the reduction, and eventual elimination, of the minimum wage.

At the current minimum wage, the supply of labor is greater than the demand for labor, meaning that more people are willing to work at this rate than employers are willing to employ. When employers are forced to pay employees a higher wage, profits are decreased. Employers are then forced to cut costs in other areas, and many choose to eliminate certain jobs. This is one reason why the unemployment rate is as high as it is. Some people may argue that by having a higher minimum wage, one has a higher standard of living. This may be true, but according to the argument above, it is not efficient. A

minimum wage, in essence, eliminates a person's incentives to work harder and improve their skills, therefore forcing employers to pay employees for below-average work.

What would the case be if minimum wage were to be eliminated entirely? At first glance this statement is shocking to most Americans; however several economists agree that the increased competition among workers would increase productivity and overall real wages. Workers (most likely teenagers at this point) would start out very low in the company at first, making very little money. But as time passed, these employees would learn more about their job, therefore increasing their skills, and successfully negotiating a higher wage with their employer. This provides a great incentive for employees to increase their skills and their productivity lev-

els. This would also reduce shirking since employees now know that there are many other qualified people who could easily take over their job if they are not working up to standard.

Overall, if minimum wage laws were to be eliminated, productivity levels, and eventually income levels, would increase. People would not have to pay into social welfare programs, and the amount of taxes paid to the government could be decreased. This allows for each person to have more money in their wallets, and therefore they are more likely to spend and put it back into the economy. Also, the mother will have more incentive to provide for herself and her child, therefore making everyone better off.

In my opinion:

Every other day we get a taste of a full-fledged spring.

Your fleece lining in your coat comes out and you are able to wear sneakers.

Unfortunately we are still in that phase where it's spring one day and winter the next.

It's only a matter of time before that winter day never follows that perfect spring day.

All we have to do it suck it up for a few more weeks. Hang in there.

Beacon Thumbs Up



- Fudgsicles
- Stress balls
- "No"
- Answering text messages

Submission Guidelines:

Letters should be limited to 350 words and commentaries 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 it.

The Beacon does not publish anonymous letters. Please include your major, faculty or administration position, and semester standing. Deadline for any submission is 8 p.m. Wednesday afternoon for inclusion in the Friday issue.

The Behrend Beacon reserves the right to edit any submissions prior to publication.

Please keep complaints as specific as possible.

Email submissions to jdj5061@psu.edu or drop them off at the Beacon office.

Beacon Thumbs Down



- Rain
- Take-home exams
- "Yes"
- Scheduling