

Letters to the editor

Upset Lion

Recently *The Collegian* has received several letters criticizing the staff for its coverage of certain Penn State-Behrend events, and yes, here is another one.

The Lady Lion basketball team, at the time I wrote this letter, was 16-7, the second best record in the college's history, and yet the coverage by Hal Coffey in *The Collegian* has been consistently negative. After three straight losses the Lady Lions were "slumping," and we do not deny or resent this commentary. What we do resent, however, is that the following week, after three straight wins, Mr. Coffey's article was still highlighting our losses.

In the February 4 edition, Mr. Coffey wrote, "... perhaps the ladies can eek out an NCAA bid" and "The Lady Lions must run the court and work inside if this is to be a season to remember." First of all, we resent the term "eek". When fourteen women and their coaches bust their butts day in and day out, game after game, win or loss, "eek" is an insult. If we receive a post-season bid - NCAA or not - it will be the result of hard work, not a lucky "eek". Second, this will be a "season to remember" whether we receive a post-season bid or not. The second best season this school has ever seen is nothing to sneeze at, and for those of us who worked hard for whatever record we finish with, this will be a most memorable season - for reasons far beyond wins and losses.

Furthermore, in the February 11 edition, he wrote that since our 23-4 team last year did not receive an NCAA bid, "the hopes for this team are slim, but nonetheless possible." Well, thanks Hal. "This team" is a different team than last year's, as is the case with every other team in the nation. Therefore, the standings, the politics involved, the selection committee, and every other factor involved in the selection process is different. If we had not lost to Washington and Jefferson on Saturday, our chances for a bid this year would not be so much worse than last year that they would be "slim."

In conclusion, we do not disagree with all of Mr. Coffey's remarks, and we agree that it is his job to report our losses as well as our wins. We do ask, however, Hal, that in your continuing coverage of our season, you approach our efforts with more enthusiasm, more respect, and that you are better informed. It is our hope that next week you will be able to "eek" out a more positive article.

Anne Bonner
6th Semester
Communication Major
#23, Behrend Lady Lions

Get Real

Tarsha Proctor and Sadatu Usman make many good points in their articles which appeared in the February 11 issue of *The Collegian*. Racism exists here at Behrend as it does throughout American society and they are absolutely right that "education is the only way to combat the problem." We all must make a concerted effort to learn about other cultures because when we deny the ideas of those people different from ourselves we deny ourselves useful input with which to shape the future of American society. There is, however, one glaring error in the article. The error is Sadatu Usman's definition of racism.

Ms. Usman states that "black people cannot be racist... because black people do not control any institutions in this country." In Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, racism is defined as "belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race." This definition does not require the control of government institutions is only required if one wishes to carry out government policies based on racist ideas. Exactly which dictionary, one must wonder, is Ms. Usman using?

Ignorance, not the control of government institutions, is the prerequisite needed to be a racist. Furthermore, there is enough ignorance to go around so that no group is immune. Open YOUR eyes, better yet open a dictionary, and GET REAL!!

James D. Ruhlman
6th semester
Political Science

Math Head

Recently, I had the unfortunate experience of having to confront the head of the math department over how badly our math teacher is teaching us. We, my friends and I wrote a list of the things that were wrong with the class in hopes that it could be fixed!

But instead, we got yelled at on how we should be doing more. How can we do more if we don't get our assignments back in time to study for the test or even get help to see if we can learn to do better?

I know I can do better if the class is taught so that I understand what I am to do!

Math is tough, sure, but if we bring a complaint up against the teacher or professor, our complaint should be listened to. Not ridiculed at!

All that we asked was if the teacher could return our homework back on time so that if we have a problem we can get help before we all fail the test again!

If this is too much to ask for, then get us a teacher who will teach us so we understand it instead of bothering everyone in

sight!

I think it's pretty ridiculous when we have to get help after the test instead of before the test!

And, since when was algebra taught as a calculus class anyway?

Pamela Baccus
2nd semester
Business Liberal Arts

Satisfied Customer

Recently, I had the unfortunate experience of having somebody break into my car while it was parked on campus. Police and Safety notified me after observing the driver's window on my car had been shattered.

My first reaction was anger, and then frustration--frustration that I would have to deal with the infamous Behrend Police and Safety. We have all heard the horror stories about them, and now on top of getting my car repaired, I was going to have to face them too.

Fortunately, the officers from Police and Safety were very helpful and concerned with my needs. Officer Wayne Forcier discovered the crime, and met me at my car. He immediately collected fingerprints and other evidence. More snow was forecast, and my car was wide open without a driver's window, so Forcier offered me some clear plastic that he had to seal the opening. In fact, he even offered me advice on how to contact my insurance company concerning the incident.

Several days later I stopped by Police and Safety and found Officer John Harrington to be as helpful as his colleague. I had to be fingerprinted so that my prints could be separated from the thief's, and he made the whole process as easy as possible.

All in all, I found Police and Safety everything that they should be and more. Although I have heard others complain about Police and Safety, I find myself thanking them for being so sincere and helpful.

Pamela Kingsbury
5th semester
Marketing

Work Harder

"... The 'highly educated Negro Mind' tends to concern itself with trifles rather than with the great problems of life..."

Carter Godwin Woodson
The Seat of the Trouble

As Carter G. Woodson says, we (African-Americans) need to stop concerning ourselves with the small somewhat insignificant problems that we encounter and start concentrating on the greater problems that we face. It does not matter so much what the thing is called as what the thing is. The African-American would not cease to be what he is by calling himself something else,

however, if he will work hard and make something of himself and contribute to modern culture, and cease to be delinquent, the world will learn to look upon him as an American rather than as one of an undeveloped element of the population.

The terminology *Negro* or *Black* is used in referring to this particular element because most persons of native African descent approach this color. The term does not imply that Negroes are Black; and the word white does not imply that every white man is actually white. African-Americans may be colored, but there are many Caucasians who could be scientifically classified as colored. WE are not all Africans, moreover, because many of us were not born in Africa; and we are not all African-Americans because very few of us are natives of Africa transplanted to America.

There is nothing to be gained from running away from the name. The names of practically all races and nations at times have connoted insignificance and low social status at times. Angles and Saxons, once the slaves of Romans, experienced this; and even the name of the Greek for a while meant no more than this to these conquerors of the world. The people who bore these names, however, have made them grand and illustrious. The African-American, Afro-American, Black, Negro, and Colored, must do the same.

"...The differentness of races is no evidence of superiority or inferiority. This merely indicates that each race has certain gifts which others do not possess. It is by the development of these gifts that every race must justify its right to exist."

Carter Godwin Woodson

Sam Harris
2nd semester
Computer Science

Blacklisted

This letter is written in response to Matt Duddy's recent articles published in *The Collegian*. Please note: this letter is of my own opinions since I am the sole author of it. I am not questioning whether Matt is "racist" or whether he had any problems with who he called the "bureaucrats" on campus. In fact, all of us (black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Indian, etc.) at one point in our lives, are accused of or will be accused of being racist, or will have problems with some system's policies or rules.

What I wish to point out to Matt and to your readers is one particular statement from his article, "Minority radicals". In defense of the racist label he received, Matt responded, "The strange thing is that I should be

used to this sort of silly and childish attack." Well, I'd like to say that for once this semester I agree with him. I, one of the employees at the Penn State Behrend Bookstore, am also used to the silly, childish, and unresearched attacks on the bookstore by my fellow peers, including one of your *Collegian* columnists.

One more thing. Matt's first article, "Behrend offices charged with Student Abuse," was a complaint against Penn State policy and rules, and against how various offices handle their jobs. In his complaints against policy and rules, I had to wonder if he actually knows what these policies and rules are here at Penn State-Behrend. In questioning the offices on Matt's "hit list," I discovered that he did not interview any of them, nor did he take any of his complaints to the "bureaucrats" that he attacked. It makes me wonder what he actually did to be considered his "research" for this article. In fact, Cindy Pander, the Wintergarden Cafe Supervisor, was finally interviewed about the Gorge's back bag policy weeks after the fact (this was one of Matt's many complaints). And, if Matt had done his research (as he claimed) without interviewing the offices he attacked, he should have discovered that the very newspaper he writes for interviewed the bookstore manager within the last two years about the escalating price of books.

Matt, I'd like to discuss your sources someday, maybe in our mythology class? It seems to me that if you conduct proper research, you would not have only looked at student complaints, but also at the policies and rules in question before crying "oppression".

Susan Gale
7th semester
Psychology

The Collegian always appreciates our readers' opinions. If you have any thoughts about a story in The Collegian, a class or anything else please feel free to write a letter to the Editor. Just drop it off before noon on Tuesday, in The Collegian office.