

Letter to the editor

LACK OF SENSITIVITY

Ms. Hartman,

Your column in the Sept. 15, 1994 issue of the paper infuriated me.

You state in your article that "Elderly people are human beings and need compassion, sympathy, friendship, and love just like everyone else."

How dare you? Since when are these qualities to be given as a gift to someone who is old?

These qualities are human qualities and old people have the same rights as you do to receive "compassion, sympathy, friendship, and love."

Hopefully, your lack of sensitivity is just a phase you are going through. I know when I was your age, I thought the same way as you do now.

I bet the above sentences irritated you. Well you should be irritated. I am being just a patronizing to you as your article is to senior citizens.

You are patronizing because you spew out garbage about older people who can't see, can't walk, are poor, lonely, boring, and complaining. You are guilty of perpetuating a stereotype.

If you wrote the same thing about women and other minorities there would be an outcry all over campus. Because your subject is old people you don't get a whisper of opposition. Everyone agrees with what you say.

Well, you'd better prepare yourself for a shock -- you are growing old. You can't escape growing old and you shouldn't be afraid of age.

Someday you will gain weight, become forgetful, slow down, become boring, and complain about your aches and pains. You will be old.

If you stop and observe you will find that old age isn't as bad as you think. Although I am physically in "middle age" I find that each year that goes by is more rewarding and interesting.

Life is a wonderful advantage and although there are bad times, I'm old enough to know that these will pass. I have a wonderful feeling of peace and freedom that you won't experience until you are older.

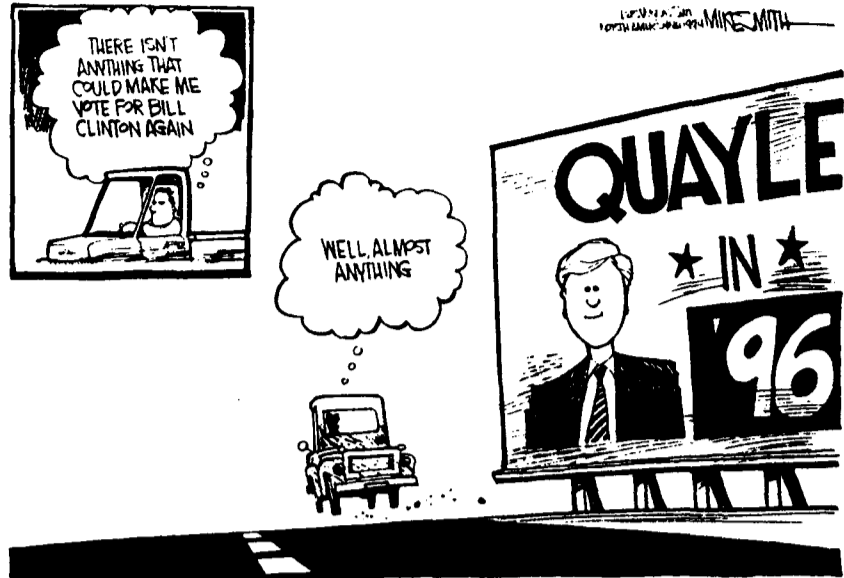
For every old person who feels and acts like the person you describe in your article, there are thousands who do not have a clue about what you are saying.

They live healthy, active, productive lives. Some people do not reach their creative or intellectual peaks until they reach middle age or older. I am at the midpoint between youth and old age, and on the whole, I wouldn't be young again if you paid me millions of dollars!

I do not want your "compassion, sympathy, friendship, and love" but I demand your respect. I deserve it. I am just as active and productive a member of society as you are. I don't want or need your pity. I want you to recognize me as a productive human being just like you.

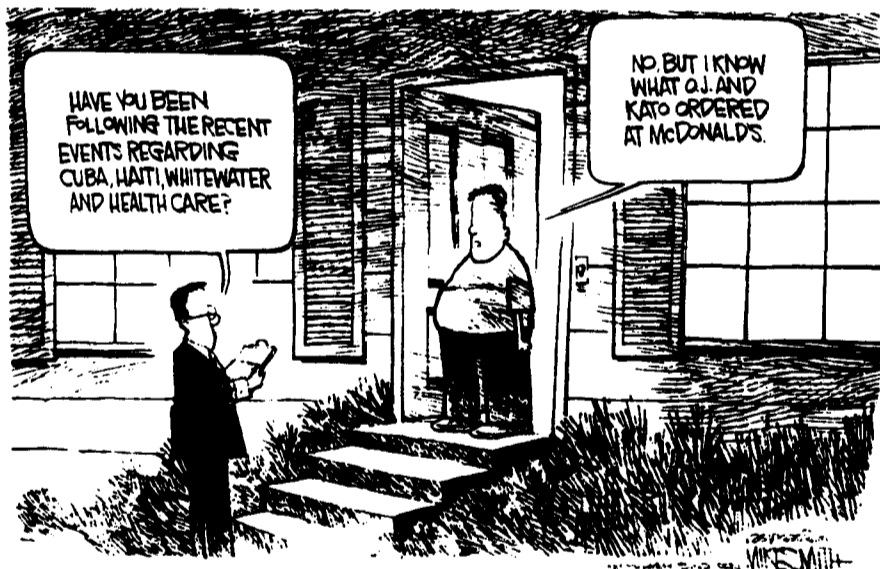
Colleen Fromknecht
3rd Semester
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Next week's column will be on gun control. We welcome letters to the editor on this or any topic.



EDITORIAL

CARTOONS



The Behrend College Collegian

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Letter Policy: The Collegian welcomes letters from our readers. Letters should be typed, double-spaced, and should be no more than two pages. Letters should be no longer than 400 words. Letters should include the sender's name and major of the writer. All letters should provide the address and phone number of the writer for verification of the letter. The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters for length and to reject others. Letters submitted to The Collegian become property of the Collegian. The Collegian is published weekly.