

Awareness Month

by Sharain Sasheir
Collegian Staff

It seems as though every month and some weeks have some special interest. In case you haven't heard, April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. These special weeks and months remind us that certain people and events are very important for many different reasons, just like you celebrate your birthday, your personal day of the year to be recognized.

There have been several programs in the Erie area that dealt with issues of Sexual Assault. If you have not had the chance to attend or knowledge of such programs, you still have a chance to participate and learn something around this topic, in fact, something powerful. The Take Back the Night '96 Rally and March will

be Thursday 25 at 7:00 p.m. starting at Perry Square.

This event started in England in 1977 as a women-only protest against the violence and fear women experienced walking the streets at night. In the following year the United States held a Take Back the Night rally. Now in 1996, people in cities all over the United States participate in this protest against violence.

This will be the fourth year that Take Back the Night has occurred in the Erie area. It started here at Behrend's campus, organized by Women Today. The next year Women Today held the march in the center of Erie. More and more people are getting involved in the organizing, as well as participating in the event. Hundreds of people are expected to attend this march.

The people who attend this march are

survivors and supporters. They are different sexes. Women and Men. They are different races and nationalities. They have different interests. They are sorority sisters and fraternity brothers. They are people who know that sexual assault occurs and that its effects are serious. They know that violence occurs to Women and Men and that we all must start taking an active role in protecting each other and healing together.

If you have never gone to a Take Back the Night rally this is a great opportunity. Go with a friend or several friends. What you will hear and see are the stories and pain real people experience. You will see anger. You will see love. You will see celebration. You will see courage. You might feel these emotions too.

Friends with benefits

by Nikki Gennuso
Collegian Staff

So your hanging out with your buddy, maybe watching TV, or playing a match of tennis, or doing something with your friend of the opposite sex, when it happens...out of nowhere you are kissing this person, and you're thinking, okay what the hell am I doing, or you're like, *wow this is shocking*, yet strangely cool; or the worst possibility, you're thinking, *oh god this is disgusting*. Now the problem is, what do you do?

There is the whole relationship thing, the whole "let's have casual relations thing", and then there is the whole "our friendship will never be the same thing." The relationship thing can work out, in fact there have been many successful marriages that have been based on people who were first friends before anything else happened. You want to definitely stay away from the casual relations thing. It might seem fun for a while, but then feelings start to get in the way of all of the fun. I personally feel that this will

ruin any kind of friendship that you might have had. The other possibility is that you decide that the kiss was a big mistake and that you just want to forget that it ever happened.

The cool thing though, is that if you were good enough friends to begin with, then nothing will change. You can forget that anything ever happened, and go back to the way you were before the meeting of



the lips actually occurred.

Now if you're are still trying to figure out what you want to do about this kiss, you might want to classify it into the three main categories for a kiss:

1. The good-night dad kiss. It felt like you were kissing one of your parents. Lips tightly closed, eyes shut and then opened quickly, no other appendages in contact -- this when you definitely know that you have made a mistake.---OOPS.

2. The friendly kiss. Lips aren't so tightly closed, maybe the arms are actually touching, holding hands? -- could turn into something else, could go either way.

3. The Hello! kiss. Lets just say that the lips aren't exactly close to being shut, and things other than arms are coming in contact. -- could definitely be a good thing.

After successfully classifying the kiss at hand, you can probably tell at this point

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Religions oppression

by John Rossomando
Collegian Staff

The recent actions on this campus with regards to prayer at graduation opens a new can of worms. The movement to prevent an invocation at graduation imposes an unconstitutional assault upon the rights of free exercise guaranteed by the United States and the Commonwealth Constitutions. The action sends a message that there is a tiny minority on this campus, whose goal is the extinguishing of all religious expression on this campus. The members of the First Congress stipulated in the First Amendment that Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion nor the free exercise thereof. In a public school religious free exercise is mitigated by the fact that those schools are in effect an arm of the government. Penn State is not owned and governed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, but it is only responsible to the Board of Trustees and the President. The decisions of the Supreme Court in the 1940's and later changed the latent intent of the framers of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. The annals of the First Congress show that the intent was to prevent the establishment of a nationally sponsored religion to the detriment of others. Prior to the American Revolution most of the colonies with the exception of Pennsylvania maintained taxpayer supported state Churches. All citizens of these colonies were required by law to attend religious services of a particular

religious denomination. Specifically Roman Catholics were targets of harsh laws that infringed upon their rights of free exercise.

The initial draft of the religion clause of the First Amendment read as follows, "The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief, nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience in any manner or pretext be infringed." The framers of the Amendment were faced with the dilemma of the overwhelming religious diversity of the new union. The government could not be allowed to infringe upon the rights of the Churches to freely assemble and freely worship. The right of religious dissent did not apply to the states until after the Palko decision applied to the states. New Hampshire maintained laws prohibiting Roman Catholics from voting or holding public office until 1876. The establishment clause never was intended to bar people of religious convictions from expressing their religious thoughts or beliefs in the public sphere. The drive by Left-Wing extremist to erase all aspect of religious thought from public life is in itself tantamount to the New Hampshire law that prevented Roman Catholics from holding office. The government may not infringe upon the rights of the people to freely worship.

Some on this campus I know are hostile to the very existence of both the Protestant and Catholic Campus Ministries because of their hatred for the

Christian religion. At every turn the Left jumps to infringe upon any sort of religious free exercise. Christmas carols and Christian or Jewish religious displays have been outlawed through the efforts of Liberal Extremists.

Those whom object to prayer at graduation should have their own ceremony because it is a violation on the Constitutional rights of those whom desire to have prayer at their graduation. The motives are inherently self-serving and cannot be taken as representative of the vast majority of Behrend's students. Our system is based upon the balance of majority rule with respect for minority rights. The freedom of the minority to be free from any sort of religion cannot be used to infringe the rights of the majority to freely express themselves. The appropriate balance of these rights would be to hold separate ceremonies for those who desire a prayer at graduation and those who do not. Prohibition of a prayer at graduation would result in an injustice just as great with respect to the majority. However those who are pushing to abolish prayer at graduation refuse to care about how other students would be adversely affected by the omission of a prayer at graduation. If you do not want prayer at graduation, then have your own ceremony so that you do not force yourselves upon those students who desire one. I am sure that you give lipservice to whatever freedoms that you agree with, and probably consider yourself "open-minded," but your actions prove otherwise.

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Photographers: Brian Charnock, Brian Fisher, Colleen Gritzen, Gina Leone, Bob Misulich, Chris Nelson, Eric Smith.

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