

Inferior texts inhibit the learning process

by Chad Clouse
Opinion editor

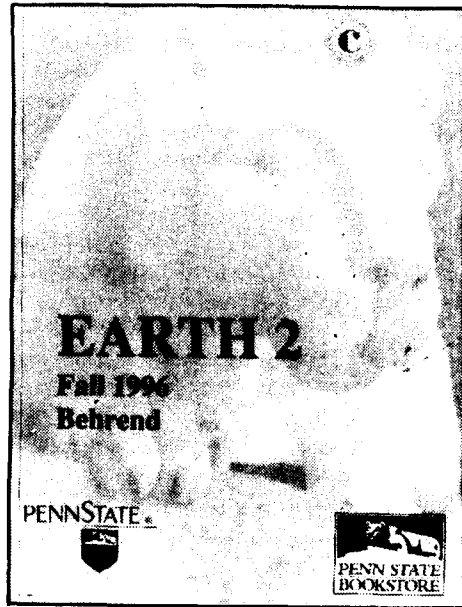
I find myself, because of my major, taking an Earth science class. The class is an involved discussion of earth systems and environmental issues. The discussion raises questions of what is good and bad for the earth, and essentially investigates our own existence and future as humans that effect this environment.

My problem is not with the class. I find it interesting at its best and mildly annoying at its worst. My problem is with the text book that we use. It is not really a text book at all, but a draft of a text book.

By a draft, I mean that it is a bunch of loose leaf pages I had to put in a binder myself; it has no consistent font or letter size between the different sections written by three different men in three very different styles.

To make things even more frustrating for the student, the text is missing half of the diagrams and figures. There is a simple N/A (not available) in the blank space where a diagram or photograph or graph is supposed to be.

I ask the question, how am I to understand this text and learn, when there is information missing in the one piece of



text we must hold as gospel on the subject?

The professor, when asked about the

text, admits that he is forced to use the text because it is written by three professors at University Park.

Then we must be the guinea pigs. Talk about a conflict of interest. The text is forced on the professor here at Behrend, and it benefits three professors at main campus that are already cashing their checks even though the text is in an unfinished state. At \$29.80, I might say that is a cheap price compared to my other texts, but I don't feel like I am getting the same quality as a published text.

A published text would at least be aesthetically pleasing. This text is a combination of unlike essays on different parts of the earth system. Not being written by the same person, the sections lack a cohesive nature important to the total understanding of the subject.

As students we need to let the administration know that we do not appreciate them taking liberties with our education by hindering our chances to succeed by supplying us with inferior texts because they are "in house."

I understand that this text is a new approach to the subject, and I appreciate

the attempt of the authors to provide something new for the student, but couldn't they have waited another year until the text was ready for publication?

If the authors want to experiment with the teachability of the text, then test it somewhere outside the Penn State system. As is, the experiment looks self serving in that the associate professor dare not voice his opinion of the text to the administration for fear of upsetting his own employment. I give him credit as a teacher to take on the task of teaching from this inferior text.

I hope that other texts like my Earth 02 text will not surface in the system. I pay for a text book and I expect a definitive stance on the subject covered in the text, and a fluent and understandable diction conducive to the learning process.

Let us tell the administration that we don't appreciate the pre-publication texts on the shelves of the book store. We would rather pay the publication price and have a high quality text that helps our understanding of the world around us than have our confusion complicated by inconsistent and inferior work in our texts.

Stop the insanity!

by Jason Simmons
Collegian Staff

My freshman year, the previous fall semester, enlightened my viewpoint of this planet.

I have tread a lonely path through the enchanted land of Penn State-Behrend. The infamous male to female ratio has inflicted its wounds upon my soul.

Last semester I met a few females who were to transform into good friends, but were previously endowed with boyfriends. It seemed that every girl I became friendly with had a boyfriend; that evil word "boyfriend" has disturbed my chi force.

The balance of nature has been upset, and I have suffered from the example Behrend has given me. Therefore, I must complain . . .

Before the ChanukaMass season last year, I became friendly with a girl of whom I might have developed a crush for. Upon first impression of her, I remained unimpressed for she was as shy as I was.

However, when I spoke to her she developed (listen to this, shy people possess these) a personality that conjured my fancy. This invocation desired me to call her. We began to speak regularly many times a week and eventually hung out a few times which included a meditation upon a cliff side.

I opened up her personality to me, I had to have gained a trust. My esteem grew quicker than a disease until the moment its

dormancy dissipated and infected my spirit.

The day I was going to ask her out I found out through my roommate that she possessed a boyfriend.

Little did I know of it, for his name was unmentioned when I had been previously speaking to her. We still kept our plans to go to the piano room.

I went with a glum spirit to be asked, "What's the matter?" in which I shrugged the question off by claiming a lack of sleep. The girl I had dearly liked I would not have the chance to be with.

In dedication to my sadness, I must continue to purge my negativity.

That last situation sealed my viewpoint of this campus. Cynical I became to the daily life of Behrend, venting my negativity through my piano music and tennis. I understood that the ratio was to blame for my misfortunes, but this last one put me on a cynical path of sarcasm and questing, searching for an answer like a lama meditating in the mountains.

However, Lhasa is far from here. So I decided to wait, wait till the next year for things to change.

After licking my wounds during the summer, I scaled the ladder of the seven-fold path of enlightenment. The new year was to come. There would be new people to meet, new hands to shake, more people to laugh at, and more people to laugh at me. Their would be new girls to meet, girls who will be unfamiliar with the way of college.

Girls that need to be molded, but who will mold them?

I have seen what happened to the freshman girls last year and discovered a flaw--they all have boyfriends and I was left standing alone as if I was stranded in an arctic waste.

Upon brushing the ice of love off my shoulders, I feared the culmination of this year's potential dating pool. The girls of Behrend have adopted the wrong teachers to enlighten them by the way of Behrend College. The way of Behrend has left me to stand alone.

I blame the non-freshman girls who proclaimed their pseudo-wisdom and showed the freshman girls down the wrong path.

The freshman girls of this year should follow the way of Behrend, for they will all obtain boyfriends, because men are like wild beasts forever locking horns for a mate.

Therefore, all of the freshmen girls of this year should not be deceived. Do not let the upperclass women teach you the way of this college. They should not set the precedents. I will teach you the ways of Behrend. I will be your lama of enlightenment to guide you through this phase of your Karma.

Follow me to the mountains in order to achieve the wisdom you desire to obtain. The upperclass women will conflict your spirits. You should not follow them, for they are wrong.

The Behrend College Collegian

published weekly by the students of Penn State Erie, The Behrend College

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Postal Information: The Collegian is published weekly by the students of Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, First Floor, The J. Elmer Reed Union Building, Station Road, Erie, PA 16563. The Collegian can be reached by calling (814) 898-8488 or (814) 898-8019 (fax). ISSN 1071-0288

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