

Dan returns to hell

by Daniel D. Ester
Collegian Staff

Welcome back, readers! For those of you who don't know me, my name is Dan. My major is Math (gasp!) and I am on the seven-year plan (this is my 10th or 11th semester; they are all a blur). For those of you who are much more demanding in your tendency to become offended, I will try not to let you down. I would like to begin by attempting to cater my column to readers' needs. It occurs to me there are four categories of people who might be reading this:

- 1) Returning Students. This category includes (but is not limited to) students who are definitely not new to the college scene. This would be current Behrend victims and those who were stupid enough to transfer here. You know you might be in this category if you can drink a six-pack and STILL fit an entire

semester's notes on a piece of paper the size of a square of toilet paper.

- 2) New Students. This category consists of incoming freshman and those who are still under the euphoric bliss of being able to STAY OUT PAST MIDNIGHT without reporting to their parental guard units. Indicators of this group would be students who don't mind shelling out \$3.45 for a grilled cheese sandwich that has a little stinkin' piece of ham on it, and those who walk around all day with an idiotic welded-on happy face.
- 3) Faculty and Staff. Duh, the perpetrators. These people are the ones who produce an evil grin every time they assign homework, or conspicuously snap greased rubber gloves onto their hands when they're about to take your money.
- 4) Parents (or legal guardians) of Behrend students. These poor saps are unfortunate enough to be

stuck with Behrend by association and will be horrified to read this column (heh, heh). Friends, please allow me to reveal a few helpful hints that will make your semester at Behrend a bit less dreadful. If your instructor has handed out a syllabus that is longer than two pages, drop the class immediately! I have a teacher who skipped merrily into class the first day and passed out an eight (yes, that's 8) page syllabus, BOTH SIDES. That was a very bad sign. I am required to take the class, so there's no hope for me, but you can still save yourselves! If you should get any kind of parking ticket (whether you were parked illegally or not), just pay it. There isn't a damn thing you can do so just accept it. Pretty soon Dean Lilly's new car will be paid off and there won't be as many tickets given out on

campus. The only reasonable alternative is to rig your car so it explodes whenever the windshield wiper is lifted. If the line at the Registrar's office is longer than the line at Space Mountain at Disney, don't be expecting happy staff to gleefully strap you into your seat when you get to the end. Don't get me wrong, you will most certainly be taken for a ride! When the bookstore says you have until the tenth day of the semester to return books (which blatantly ignores the current federal consumer law of 30 days from the date of the sale to return merchandise), they aren't kidding. Here are some other things to keep in mind: If the sign by the soup reads, "\$4.50 a bowl," it is not a typo. If your instructor looks like a dictator, it is not a coincidence. A hangover is most definitely a valid excuse to miss class! God is NOT a Penn State fan

(but Satan is). If you should die in a horrible burning car accident, it might not be a valid excuse to miss a test (check your syllabus). You will probably be excused if you notify your instructor ahead of time. Here are a few words for the faculty and staff: If the class is scheduled to end at 11:50, then that means THE CLASS ENDS AT 11:50! Not 11:52, not 11:55, NOT 11:57, BUT 11:50! AND NOT A MOMENT LONGER! We should not be made to suffer for your inability to plan your lecture. Computer Center People, it is not funny when students are lined up like cattle, waiting to use one of the two working machines. And please don't get irate when you are pulled away from your very important work of nerding around the Internet when someone needs assistance. Police and Safety, either your spouse shrunk your uniform in the

wash, or you've had quite a festive Holiday Season! (I am just kidding, of course. You are all very attractive with hot, sexy bodies. Please don't send me to Western Penitentiary for Written Assault). For the parents and guardians, please be informed: Your children WILL be out until dawn, drinking and having unprotected relations. Your kids WILL fail something, but they'll have a damn good time doing so! But you have nothing to fear since rehab clinics accept most major insurance. In closing, I wish you all luck, and I leave you with this word of wisdom: When you go to the business office to pay your bill, DO NOT bend over!

Please send comments or hate-mail to DannyBoy@erie.net

Please let us Smoke!

by John Amorose
Collegian Staff

"All apartments are non smoking." This note found at the bottom of apartment housing contracts finalizes what was just a horrible rumor last year. This policy of a completely non-smoking campus becomes law next semester; smoking will no longer be allowed in the dorms, suites, or all apartments, regardless of how the residents of these establishments feel. As good of an idea as this sounds, the problems caused will surely outweigh the problems solved. To start off with, our beautiful, and often publicized campus landscape will be littered with cigarette butts and empty cigarette packs. Not to mention

the droves of angry students, cigarettes in hand, huddled in front of every building because they have no other places to smoke. Which brings me to another point: In case you haven't noticed, it tends to get a little cold here in Erie. And with more people standing in the cold, you have more people sick, and not just cigarette smokers either. All those who come in contact with cigarette smokers could become sick also. Before you know it, we're under military quarantine like an *Outbreak*, and students are being shot by gun-wielding helicopter pilots. All right, maybe the ramifications won't be that drastic, but it's mighty hard to concentrate in class when there's a snuffle or a cough every second or two.

Finally, good, hardworking students who happen to smoke cigarettes could consequently lose their housing rights if caught smoking too many times. Is this the message the governing bodies want to send to those high school students interested in attending our fine institution of learning? It might sound crazy, but these new restrictions may also deter some students from living on campus, causing a loss of money to the University. I can see the University's reasoning behind these restrictions. There is damage caused by cigarettes in the student's rooms: carpet burns, ashes all over, that not too pleasant smell of smoke. But students are billed after each year for any and all damage that they

might cause, so that problem has already been solved. Another problem with allowing smoking is the obvious fire hazard. But in the four semesters that I have attended Behrend, there has not been any type of serious fire caused by cigarettes. The two biggest fires last year involved popcorn burning in a microwave and a clothes dryer fire in Perry Hall. After interviewing several students, both smokers and non-smokers, several points were agreed upon. The first is the proverbial, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" mentality. If all who are living in the room or apartment are in agreement that smoking cigarettes is allowed, which the present rule states, then there is no reason to force them not to

smoke. Another point commonly raised was the possibility of creating all smoking sections of housing (i.e. floors in dorms, wings in the suites, and quads of apartments where everyone chooses to smoke). This suggestion seems far-fetched, but when you consider the fact that the Life House exists for those who choose not to smoke, why not have residences for those who choose to smoke. But most importantly, college is supposed to teach young adults how to prepare to live in the "real world," to train them to be responsible and independent. But if such restrictions are being forced upon students year after year, like the non-smoking rule, the school is not doing its job. Students are not being trained to

live their lives, but being molded into living the lives Penn State thinks they should live, and that's a travesty. To any faculty member or person of authority that may be reading this article, I leave you with this plea: Please, from the bottom of our nicotine stained, tar and resin covered, cancer infested lungs, let us smoke in our homes (which is what our housing is eight months of the year!). For once, let us make our own decisions about how to live our lives. We've had parents and boyfriends/girlfriends making these decision for us long enough. Let us smoke.

Women At Work

by Tamara Jones

Questionable ethics. For years, we've heard the term applied to politicians, corporate executives, movie moguls, and even to members of the healing arts who may forget the first line of their sacred oath, "First do no harm." Now, the term is being applied to job seekers. Apparently, the downsizing syndrome currently infecting the policies of our major corporations has inspired many current and potential job hunters to inflate their resumes to make themselves look more valuable to future employers who, they hope, will take them on as full-time employees. James E. Challenger, president of Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc., an international outplacement firm, says, "Downsizing has had a tremendous psychological effect on the job market. Many people suffer a loss of confidence and self-esteem after being discharged, and believe the only way to impress an employer is to appear super-qualified..." Challenger notes that employers are taking more time to check resumes and call references. So, it's more likely that if you fibbed a little

or told some whoppers on your resume, you'll be found out. Challenger cites the four most common hyped resumes:

1. The "Wizard of Oz Resume," in which the person claims to be able to perform duties well, although she or he has little familiarity with them. If the person is hired, their incompetence could be revealed in short order, leading to dismissal;
2. The "Salary Including Tip" resume used to falsify one's salary history. To negotiate on a stronger basis, some job hunters give themselves a "tip," inflating their salary level;
3. The "Phantom College Degree," used to impress employers. This is an easily verified factor, and if the person has lied, it's more likely that she or he will not be hired; not because of a lack of a degree, but because of a lie about it.
4. The "I'm Not As Old As I Look" deception. Job searchers who misrepresent their age risk being fired if the truth comes out. If you have the skills and enthusiasm an employer is looking for, you'll have the edge in being hired regardless of age.

Diane Amantea's Commentary



My, my, how the hypocrites are howling! "Off with his head!" they cry, hoping against hope for the demise of the career of Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.), in light of his recent admission of misleading the Ethics Committee looking into his college course. Chief among the Speaker's foes is Rep. David Bonior (D-Mich.). His complaint is that someone in line for the presidency shouldn't be there if he's "lied to Congress." May I remind Rep. Bonior that his boss, none other than the guy who actually occupies the presidential seat of power, lies to Congress and the American people on a regular basis? There certainly is a delicious irony here! Let's get the facts straight. Gingrich is NOT accused by the Ethics Committee of lying. That's the Democrats' take on this. The charges are that his college course was, in fact, political in nature and that the contributions made to it were not tax-deductible BECAUSE the course was political. Without actually reviewing all the data, I have to go on record as saying this, why is it acceptable for college campuses across the country to violate the basics of education and teach everything with a biased liberal slant? Why do we accept that it's okay to teach that Christopher Columbus was an imperialist bent on genocide, but we can't mention God in the classroom? I'm drifting here, but the point I'm trying to make is, it's been perfectly okay as long as educational institutions taught from a liberal viewpoint. As soon as someone of Gingrich's stature gives a conservative spin on something, he's being "political" in the guise of education! As for the Democrats who are salivating at this, let me point out, the

Speaker has been the subject of 77 different ethics probes. Only one has turned up even any hint of impropriety. The other 76 came to naught. Compared to President Clinton, who is still mired in Whitewater, FBI Filegate, Travelgate, Indogate, Lip-pogate, Paula Jones-Gate, Newt Gingrich is a choir boy! It's not Newt Gingrich who accepted illegal foreign contributions and then had foreign trade policy tailored to suit those contributors. It's not Newt Gingrich who set up a legal defense fund and then accepted \$600,000 in ILLEGAL contributions. It's not Newt Gingrich who said (Michael Cardozo, lawyer for the Clinton Defense Fund did): "Just because we received thousands of dollars in interest from the illegal \$600,000 contribution doesn't serve as proof we accepted that contribution." Come again? You want to talk about lying? It isn't Newt Gingrich's cronies, a la Bernard Nussbaum, former White House counsel, facing perjury investigations. It isn't Newt Gingrich's wife who's facing possible indictments on the part of an independent counsel, a la Hillary Clinton. Trust me. If the Democrats want to take this particular lamb to the slaughter, they will have hell to pay. President Clinton, heretofore given a relatively easy ride, is going to be hounded to within an inch of his political life.

EDUCATION TODAY

by Teresa Thorne

By now, you've probably heard of the Oakland, Calif., school board's decision to declare Black English, or Ebonics, a second language. In doing so, the board intends to apply to the federal government for bilingual education funds. To that I say, good luck! Historically, the government has not recognized Ebonics as a second language, nor are black students who speak it considered bilingual. The government has contended, thus far, that Ebonics is merely a slangy form of English and thus doesn't qualify for bilingual education funds. What was the board thinking? Was this just a venal attempt to get some more money? Perhaps. However, the formal reason given is that black children in this district fare poorly when compared to whites. Apparently, the board feels it's because of the lack of understanding of mainstream English and the black students' use of their own "language." To back this up, there are some scholars who offer "proof" that Ebonics is, indeed, a language, citing its roots in Africa. However, let's face it. Its major component is still English, no matter how you look at it. In fact, some of the vocabulary of this so-called language is very new, giving credence to my belief that it's merely slang and not truly a language. Slang is simply something which evolves from the use of colloquialisms which become incorporated into our everyday use of language. Naturally, if you consider the black students' slang as a separate language and will recognize it in the classroom as technically correct, their grades are bound to improve.

However, let's face facts here. What's going on is, these students are not being brought UP to the level of current standards. Instead, the standards are being brought DOWN to their level. This is unacceptable in my view. Declaring Ebonics a language is doing these lower-achieving students a disservice. They will enter institutions of higher learning (if they're lucky) ill equipped and ill educated. When they go for a job interview, if they can't communicate in mainstream English and can't read a basic job application, they won't become employed, productive citizens. Whom do we blame then? The debate over Ebonics is sure to rage for some time to come. It's been all over the news and all sorts of people are weighing in about it. Let's just hope for the sake of those students directly affected by this decision, common sense prevails and other remedies are sought to help these students become better achievers. Declaring slang a language just isn't it! As someone who grew up in a truly bilingual household, I'm grateful that English was demanded of me in school. I could speak whatever I wanted at home. However, if I wanted to communicate with the rest of the population, English had to be it! Share your views with us. Send them to Education Today, King Features Weekly Service, 235 East 45th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017. Manuscripts must be no more than 520 words and will not be returned. There is no remuneration for this. We simply solicit your opinions. ©1997 by King Features Synd.

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) 898-6488 or (814) 898-8019 (fax). ISSN 1071-9256

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