Fantasy gaming

by Jason Simmons
Collegian Staff

Twinkle, twinkle. Rays of sunlight gleam upon the rustling leaves of a forest. Your view is diverted below the bright green canopy to view elves, fairies, centaurs, sprites, and humans dancing in merry reverie. The Fantasy Gamers' Club has been born. Not all was merry, however, for events in the near past have threatened the gamer who plays games requiring creativity and imagination.

Last week's SGA meeting recognized the Fantasy Gamers' Club as an official campus organization. However, at the previous week's meeting, questions were brought up in regard to the nature of fantasy gaming.

The ignorance concerning fantasy gaming became apparent when one Senator, to my surprise, acquired and passed out a series of articles that were taken from the Internet giving a negative bias to fantasy gaming. The articles, which frightened the gaming club members, claimed that fantasy gaming can lead those who play them to commit suicide and murder. Fantasy Gamers' Club president Mark Kunselman replied, "as far as I'm concerned, those articles are fictitious. They have no reliable sources; anyone could have written them."

Upon my inspection of the articles, I found they were stories that had no source to verify the truth of the allegations stated in the articles. There was no copyright date or any name which identified the source of the stories. The Senator did not present any articles from established news sources to back up these allegations.

The articles' main points were read aloud and passed around the table so SGA members could inspect them. As a result of the fear these articles induced, the Fantasy Gamers' Club was put in jeopardy regarding recognition as a legitimate student organization. Eight members of the Club appeared at the next SGA meeting to answer any questions the SGA members might have regarding the allegations. Chris Rizzo, in a response to this exhausting epic crisis, explained that since the pending club is in line with university policy, personal bias should not interfere with voting procedure. In the resulting vote, only one Senator dissented to the formation of the Club.

One must realize that fantasy gamers are not demonic Satan worshippers who sacrifice goats and kittens to honor their evil masters. I have yet to see how creative adventure and science fiction are equivelant to dancing around flaming pits. Ignorance was responsible for the threat to the possibility of creating a fantasy gameplayers' club. When questioned, the objecting Senator claimed to have no experience in role playing or card gaming. I spoke with the Senator for one half hour after the SGA meeting previous to the vote and the Senator is now reading a book on fantasy gaming to become more educated about the subject. It was too bad the Senator's initial judgment was negative. It would have been a shame if 20 gamers, who are all good people, were denied the opportunity to form a club due to ignorance and misinformation.

One point to make is that we have been taught to accept diversity; we turn a blind eye to skin color, ethnic background, and sexuality, but to prejudge a gamer is to deny this diversity to people whose interests are different from ours.

Fantasy gaming is based upon science and history. *Star Wars, The Hobbitt, StarTrek,* and even Disney movies like *Snow White* are all fantasies. Games such as *Dungeons and Dragons* and *Star Wars* roleplaying have been developed in order to let people use their imaginations and create their own ideas. Creativity and intellect are the greatest assets a gamer can possess, not evilness or destructiveness. Too much of that is done by people who are not fantasy game players. Kittens are meant to be adorable, not to become sacrifices. Think catnip instead of poison ivy. (Trust a Bio major who is studying to become a Veterinarian.)

If this article has not convinced you that your negative opinion is based on misinformation then attend a Fantasy Gamers' Club meeting and see what it is like. Join a *Dungeons and Dragons* adventure in order to form an educated opinion about fantasy gaming. The Club and the meetings are open to everyone. Oh, and congratulations to the Fantasy Gaming Club.

Letters to the Editor

No butts about it

To the Editor:

I was appalled by the article "Please let us Smoke!" on page 5 of the January 30, 1997 *Collegian*. For those people who are still living in the smoker's dream world, I suggest you wake up and smell something other than your cloud of cigarette smoke.

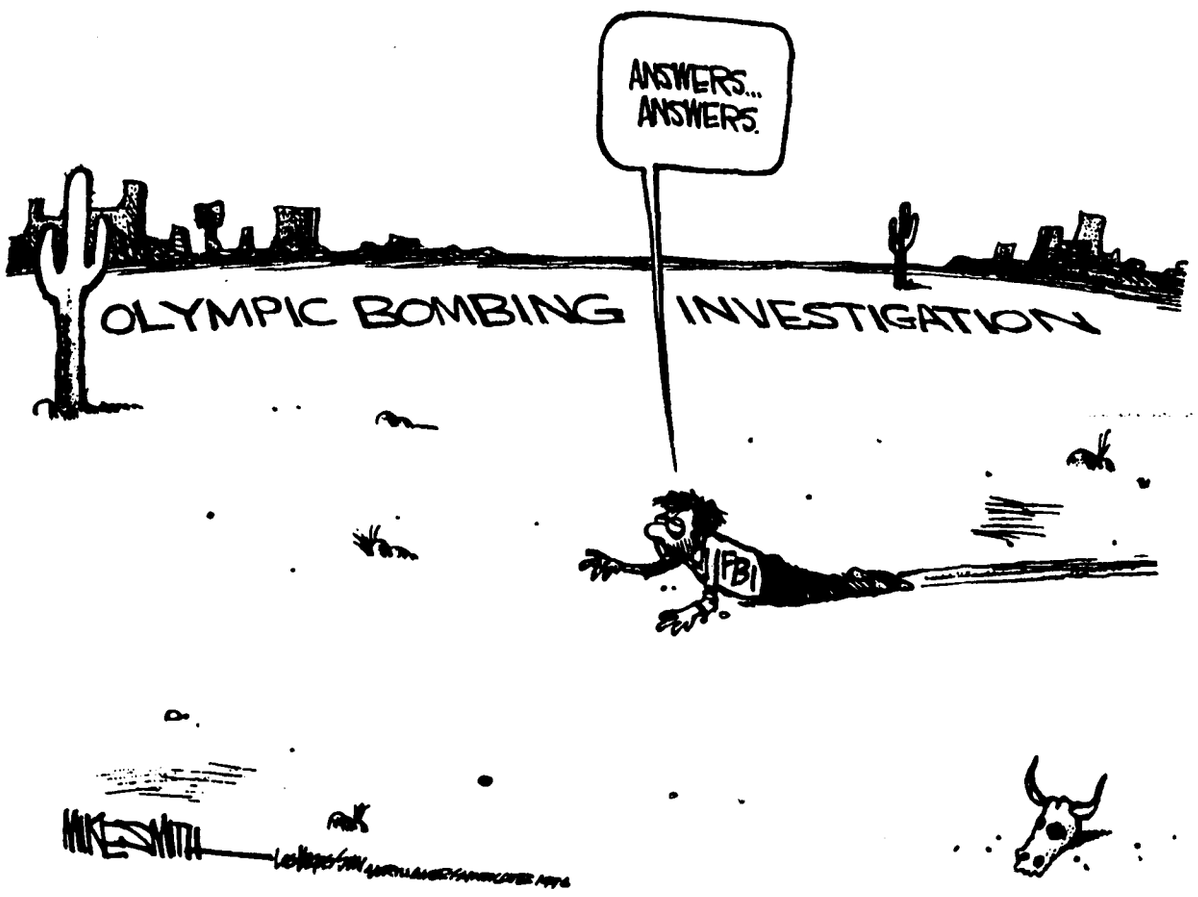
Why are you in college? It would be nice to say that you're here for the education, but in truth, most people attend college because it improves their chances of finding better-paying, growth-oriented jobs. When an employer considers a new hire, he or she also considers a number of factors along with their education and experience. What is their personal demeanor; are they clean, neat, pleasant? How will they spend their time at work; concentrating on the job at hand or watching the clock for their next break? And most important, because it may cost the employer money in the long run, how is their health?

People who smoke can be the cleanest people in the world, but for a non-smoker, they will always seem unclean because they smell of cigarette smoke. People who smoke are addicted to nicotine, so they must find some time in the course of their day to get another "hit," which takes 5-7 minutes. If an employee takes two cigarette breaks in the morning and two in the afternoon, that is 20-28 minutes of the employers' time that is wasted. (Sorry, very few jobs come with the traditional morning and afternoon "coffee break" any more.) And if an employee smokes, he/she and his/her family will be more susceptible to respiratory illnesses, resulting in time lost from work. Many employers consider hiring a middle-aged smoker a real risk, because that is the age when emphysema, heart disease, and lung cancer are likely to occur. When employees are chronically ill, it raises an employer's medical insurance costs and drains the vacation and sick time budgets.

I'm not going to say that smoking is bad for your health, although science has proven that it is. We were all born with the free will to do as we please, so if smokers choose to smoke in places that do not directly effect me, that's fine. But non-smoking employers-and they are the majority-also have the free will not to hire a smoker, no matter how many years of education and experience they have. They know that in the end they will pay more to employ than smoker than a non-smoker. The courts may even say that employers cannot ask if a person smokes, but the telltale odor is always there.

Penn State-Behrend works hard to make sure that its graduates find good jobs. You wonder why the college would like you not to smoke? One likely reason is because you are much harder to employ if you smoke. But it's your life, it's your career, and it's your future. Please give up your addiction now.

Loretta Brandon



EARN MONEY TUTORING!

The Penn State Educational Partnership Program needs tutors. They are seeking college students to tutor middle school and high school students any day of the week. Please call Kathy at 871-6689 for information! Don't wait!! Call now!!

Keep Hope Alive
Rev. Jesse L. Jackson
Reed Commons
7:30 p.m.
Come early for a seat!

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Penn State Erie's chapter of Amnesty International will meet on Thursday, Feb. 20 at 12:15 p.m. in Reed 3.
Now in its 36th year, Amnesty provides anyone the opportunity to become involved in protecting and defending human rights throughout the world.
Stop by or call Marie-Jeanne Goodenow at 898-6151.

The Behrend College Collegian wants YOU!

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LIBRARY OPEN WORKSHOP FOR STUDENTS

LIAS/THE CAT BASICS

COME AND LEARN HOW TO USE THE ONLINE CATALOG (THE CAT) AND THE LIAS SYSTEM

2-12-97 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
2-13-97 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM

PLACE: LIBRARY INSTRUCTION ROOM #107

LEARNING ASSISTANCE CENTER SERVICES
203 Library

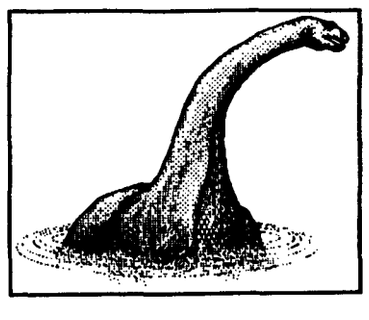
Monday	12 - 4
Tuesday	10 - 2, 6 - 8
Wednesday	12 - 4, 6 - 8
Thursday	10 - 1, 6 - 8
Sunday	4 - 7

**Math assistance also available in the LAC during the evening and Sunday hours and Tues & Thur 12 - 1.

6 - Thursday
Biology Club
12:15 Reed 112
Reality Check
6:30 pm Reed 112
ABC
We are the Dream
7:00 p.m.
Reed Commons
Newman
8:00 pm Reed 3

7 - Friday
IVCF
2:00 pm Reed 113

8 - Saturday
Martial Arts
10:00 am
Niagara Basement
IVCF Pancake Breakfast
$3 for all you can eat
9:00 - 1:00
Wesley Methodist Church
Call for a ride 898-6967



9 - Sunday
Catholic Mass
in honor of
Herb Lauffer
8:00 pm Reed Commons
Protestant Campus Ministry
8:00 pm

10 - Monday

11 - Tuesday
Personal Growth Group for Women
6:00 pm
Counseling Center

12 - Wednesday
Commuter Council
1:00 pm Reed 112
Study Skills Workshop
12:00 - 1:00 Reed 112
[redacted]