

# Letters to the editor Racism in America

By Joneatra Henry  
Collegian Staff

To the Editor:

Since the end of the semester is near, Student Evaluation Forms will soon appear in classrooms all over Penn State Erie. Before this rite takes place again, I would like to ask you, the students, to take the time for just a few considerations. First, I would suggest you take these evaluations very seriously because two important things depend on them: the quality of your education and the quality (if not the duration) of the instructor's academic life at Behrend.

The fact that your answers to the questionnaires will influence the two factors in ways which defy logic (at least the logic of this mathematician) brings me to my second point. I would like to ask you to familiarize yourselves with the forms and the use of the results they convey.

The top part of the form asks for data about you, possibly giving you the impression that the University will perform some sound statistical study correlating your grade and the reason why you are taking the course to your answers to the other questions. It is my (long) experience, this is not the case. The administrators at Behrend have stated that they consider of paramount importance only the two answers to the two questions regarding the "overall quality of the course" and the "overall quality of the teacher." As you might have noticed, the definition of the term "overall" is left to personal interpretation. You have the right to assess the "overall quality of the course/teacher" using a variety of factors, such as your expectations when you enrolled in the course, the amount of work you had to do, the quality of other courses/teachers, the amount of material you learned, the fact that you will get a good grade, and the fact that the teacher did not use nerdy jokes you were expected to find funny. Since no term of comparison is specified, any term of comparison is

allowed. All answers will be given the same weight, after being detached for the rest of the questionnaire. After you have labored to achieve two separate answers to two separate questions, you might like to know that in some academic units the two answers are averaged together to generate one "total" for each course. You just learned that it is possible to average apples and oranges!

Well, this is nothing compared to the nugget of knowledge found in the form that, by itself, must be worth it what you paid for at least one semester of College: the average between 1 and 7 is 4! Since you were already aware of this (I have never met a student who cannot average two numbers), you might think that the emphasis is on the 4 because this is the grade to use for a teacher who is doing an "average" job. Sorry, but this is not the case. We get "graded on a curve," at least by one academic unit. So, as an example, if in one academic unit the average is 3, a grade of 4 places that faculty member above average. If in another unit the average is 5, that faculty member is judged to be below average and might be on his/her way out.

What should you do? If a teacher does not perform well, be merciless. It is your time and money that he/she is throwing away. If a teacher is good, reward him/her. If a teacher is average, be very careful and think honestly about subtle distinctions, such as "above" or "below" average. Then use the 4 sparingly! Ask that the averages for all academic units be made public! An informed decision can be made only when enough information is available.

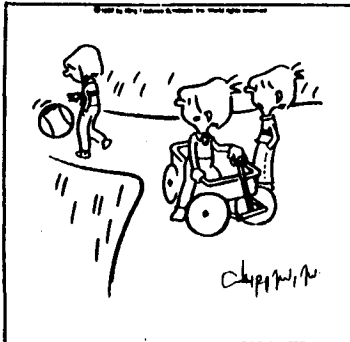
Are you, by any chance, wondering who looks at the other eight answers, which are useless for the administration? My hopeful answer would be: the teachers who care about your opinions. Thank you for taking the time to read about my opinion.

Antonella Cupillari  
Associate Professor of Mathematics

Letter to the Editor

I am writing to express my outrage at the recent approval of STRAIGHT--Students Reinforcing Adherence in General Heterosexual Tradition--by the Undergraduate Student Government Council Supreme Court at University Park. Perhaps a better name for this group is Homophobics Anonymous. The very existence of STRAIGHT, whose name is as ambiguous as the very notion of "heterosexual tradition," represents a hugely intolerant force and ought to be removed from among the University's chartered organizations. Among the organization's goals are the elimination of the University's nondiscrimination policy in regards to sexual orientation, and the opposition to any legislation which might permit the establishment of health-care and insurance benefits for same-sex partners. Do these goals not bear frightening resemblance to racial segregation and the denial of full citizenship (you remember, it began with something called the three-fifths compromise) for black Americans? I am lobbying for a revoke of STRAIGHT's charter, and I hope that anyone who supports the protection of gay, lesbian and bisexual rights will do the same. Contact Robin Clarke via email (rdcl19@psu.edu), if you are at all frightened by the prospect of a society which regresses further in its heterocentrism. Know that racism, sexism, and sexual discrimination are not problems existing irrelevant of one another.

Robin Clarke



"He was my best pal until I heard his mother call him Samantha."

This semester is coming to an end. For some of us it is our last semester here at Behrend. I have to admit I have enjoyed my four years here, but I am still happy I am leaving this place.

Behrend has strengthened my personal character and has truly prepared me for the real world. I have experienced events that I never could have imagined. Most of us come to college open minded and liberal, then after a few bad experiences the gates of our minds begin to close. Eventually there can be a single experience that may shut that gate and padlock it forever.

I built a brick wall making sure to keep white people out of my world. But just when I begin to tear down a couple of my concrete bricks, some white person helps me build it back up again.

I thought I did everything right, the way white America expected me to. I graduated at the top of my high school class. I left the ghetto to expand my horizon of education. I will now graduate May 17. But I'm not done. I will pursue a law degree at the University of Pittsburgh and try to become the best citizen possible. And still America is not happy.

Just when my life is going down the right path and I begin to believe that one day America will respect other races, CRASH, my dream is broken and I'm knocked back into reality.

I really never thought racism to be so close to home, I always thought it was in another place, somewhere in the South. But when I went home for Easter, I witnessed it first hand. Every night that I turned on the news, I was reminded that there is a group, a large group, across that United States of America that hates everything that I stand for. This group is the Klu Klux Klan who are allowed to exist due to the first Amendment.

I do not use their white sheet as an excuse for the sole oppression of my Black race, because the sheet is only a small part. There are some white people who want to understand Blacks and help us through our constant struggle. There are some who watch us struggle silently. Then there are some who believe that there is no struggle at all and that Blacks need to learn to accept consequences for our actions. How can we? There is organized hate against us throughout America. I used to think the KKK was a joke until they decided to march in Pittsburgh, the place where I want to continue my higher education.

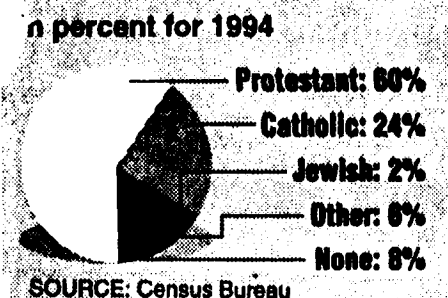
I'm finally learning that there is no place I can go to escape racism and maybe there is no solution. I've tried integration. I've tried reverse racism. I've tried to ignore the problem. But when racist individuals exist, I know I am not the problem. I am the victim. Racism should be a crime. God created us all as equal and if one truly believes in a selected religion there should be no room for hate. No, religion is not the only basis as to why we should not hate each other, but it helps.

I'll keep tearing down those bricks as long as I have to; sooner or later you'll get tired of putting them back up. My people will never get tired. We didn't get tired in 1865 and we sure won't be tired in 2065. There is no one way to fight racism, but my last solution will be education. And if education doesn't work, then I don't know what will.

So to all the KKK members here in Erie, Pittsburgh, Mississippi, and anywhere else you may exist, nothing will hold me down. I'm a strong, Black woman and I will succeed whether you like it or not!

## Religious affiliations in America

Although the population of the U.S. has increased, the percentage of Catholics in this country has barely budged from the 23.2% recorded in 1975.



# What public service expectations?

WPSE doesn't serve the students anymore

By Brian Gregory  
Collegian Staff

Recently there has been a big question on the Behrend campus as to whether or not AM 1450 WPSE, the Behrend College's own radio station, has become out of touch with the college and Behrend community.

WPSE is a 1,000 watt, 1 kilowatt, commercially licensed station that operates out of the Reed Building under the direct authority of the Federal Communications Commission. They broadcast the CBS News Network, CBS Sports Network, the Penn State Sports Network, and the Business Radio Network.

Until the latter part of this semester, WPSE was run by the students with the exception of one station manager and one advertising director. The station's chief goal was to promote learning.

I was involved with WPSE for three years here at Behrend. As a freshman I was a board operator, and as a sophomore and junior I was involved as assistant station manager of WPSE.

In fact I can honestly say that my beginnings at WPSE were what inspired me to change my major to Communication. In fact a lot of the things that we did at WPSE helped me to obtain the position of Field Photographer for WJET-TV.

My first three years at WPSE were great. With Fred Anzivino at the helm of the station we had over twenty five years of his broadcasting experience as an example to teach us. We learned through failure. During my first year, I learned how to edit a live show, run a radio board, do some production work on commercials, and how to properly run an AM radio station.

Fred made the learning fun for us, and I can honestly say it was one of the best years of my life. In one year, I had begun my journey toward where I saw myself in the future.

After that successful first year, I was rewarded by being named assistant station manager. At that time the station was

really connected to the Behrend College. Fred helped us with live call-in football shows, and we continued with a successful year of Behrend basketball. Parents and fans from the Erie area could listen in to Behrend basketball home and now away from their homes.

In the future, I hope to do some color commenting and I got my first step at WPSE.

One of the main things that I learned about the broadcast business at WPSE was

how important perfection was. I can't count the number of times that I had to recut a spot because I talked too fast or it was one second over in time. I still remember all the times that Fred came running over because I had aired the wrong thing or simulcasted two things at one time. These were big errors, but errors we could make at WPSE because we were learning how to broadcast the right way. These were things we would be expected to know upon obtaining a job at another radio station.

But as my career went on, WPSE approached more financial trouble. For the life of us, we couldn't keep a marketing executive because it was just too hard to sell BRN and WPSE. Then University Park decided (or threatened) to cut funding. Though this had always been there, it now looked like a promise.

Hating dearly to leave his students that he had taught, Fred had to move on to another job and the station was taken over by Ron Slomski.

Ron worked to get the station moving and kept it going through the summer. When I returned in the fall I was all set to become station manager, but in my first week I could see that things had changed. The new agenda of the station seemed to be money, not learning, maybe because it had to be.

When I would run the board, some commercials were too long, some were too short. When they were played the station seemed out of sync. Some music that was being used to cut spots was inappropriate. Students were being taught to sell ads not learn about broadcasting.

In a meeting with Ron I was told that the main objective was to get the students involved in the advertising aspect of the station. I said that that wasn't my interest since I was a Communications major. I was more interested in helping to teach the students about broadcasting. I was basically told this was not important or part of my job. As a result of this and other differences I had to resign from WPSE in late August.

Since then I have watched WPSE from the outside, but I have seen a lot that bothers me as the little people involved with the station were hurt. People that had once been the sole backbone of the station were pushed away and told they were not needed anymore.

WPSE was always supposed to be automated, but board operators were still supposed to be used during daytime hours. With the new system, it didn't take long for the board operators to get removed and a "mindless" computer to get put in their place.

Most exiting board operators received a note in the mail that said something along the lines of "Thanks for working at WPSE, but your services are no longer needed."

That was a cold way to end their service which had once been so strong and so important.

Don't get me wrong, automation can be great, but not sole automation. Froggy 94 has automation and JET Broadcasting does an excellent job with it. But they still have personalities to keep the listener's ear. Also Froggy 94 is right on cue. WPSE is not. The Business Radio Network is always off cue. So sometimes one of their anchors is talking and the WPSE computer plays a commercial because it was the right time cue. Dead air is a constant as the computer will not fill it with a station ID. I was listening the other night in the news truck to hear WJET news at 11, and there was 45

second of dead air before the news started. This leads to a choppy, boring program.

For those of you who are out there saying WPSE is not in touch with Behrend or the students, you, I'm sorry to say, are 100% correct. Gone are the days of student board operators, student call-in shows, and student broadcasts of Behrend

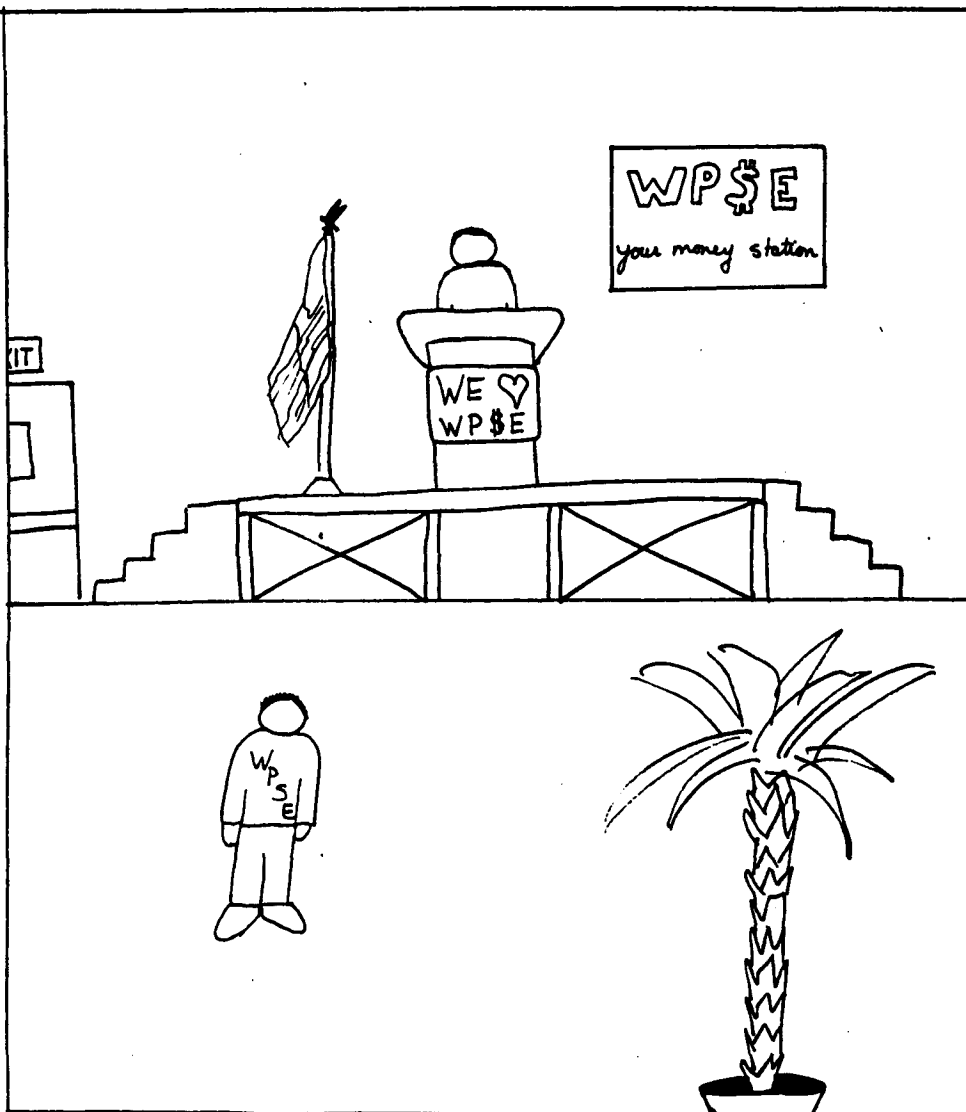
basketball. It would have been great to hear two Behrend students calling the action live as Behrend battled in the ECAC playoffs in Philadelphia, a trip none of us could make. Even now, gone are the days of students giving the weather report.

WPSE has but two students on a staff which has in the past produced talent that has gone on to ESPN, WJW-8 in Cleveland, KBL, WJET, and even ABC. The Behrend College has lost one of its most important student aspects in WPSE.

But today, when you walk by the radio station make sure you stop inside and talk....to the computer.

## Life at Behrend...

## Mike DeSantis



Dean Lilley was amazed at the turnout at his Student Support WPSE Rally. It was more than he expected.

## The Behrend College Collegian

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

Editors in Chief  
Jennifer V. Colvin  
Danielle M. Murphy

Business Manager  
Carley Gwin

News Editors  
Doreen Foutz  
Sara Prosser

Sports Editors  
Brian Gregory  
Matt Pilzga

Entertainment Editor  
Sheila Bickel  
Tim Holsopple, Assistant

Photography Editor  
Colleen Gritzen

Opinion Editor  
Colleen Fromknecht  
John Amorose, Assistant

Copy Editor  
Michael DeSantis

Advertising Manager  
Tom Keefe

Office Manager  
Crystal Dehart

Advisors:  
Dr. Ursula Davis & Dr. Rob Speel

**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) 898-6486 or (814) 898-6019 (fax). ISSN 1071-9288

**Letter Policy:** The Collegian encourages letters to the editor on news coverage, editorial content and University affairs. Letters should be typewritten, double spaced and signed. Letters should be no longer than 400 words. Letters should include the semester standing 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 letters. Letters submitted to The Collegian become the property of the newspaper. The Collegian is published every Thursday during the academic year on recycled paper.