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Stephanopoulos speaks about life after politics

by Ayodele Jones
Staff Writer

According to George Stephanopoulos, who spoke Tuesday night on the Behrend campus in the Reed Union Commons, the word "politics" comes from the Greek "poli," meaning many, and "tics" meaning blood-sucking insects.

Stephanopoulos spoke as part of Penn State Behrend's year long Speaker Series to a large audience. His speech was filled with humor, observations on life in the White House, and his personal views on various political issues facing the United States. His talk was frequently interrupted by audience laughter and applause.

Stephanopoulos was deputy campaign manager for the Clinton/Gore presidential campaign in 1992. After Clinton won the election, Stephanopoulos served as senior advisor for policy and strategy in the White House. He is currently a political correspondent for ABC-TV and can be seen on ABC's This Week on Sunday mornings with Sam Donaldson, Cokie Roberts, and George Will. He is also teaching a political science course this year at Columbia University. The title of his speech Tuesday night was "Politics: The Art of the Impossible."

During his lecture, Stephanopoulos was very candid with his audience. He began by acknowledging that when the Clinton Administration first took office in 1993 they made a lot of mistakes. "There was no training manual, nobody tells you exactly what to do, you just get there and show up." This led to a stumbling start for the Clinton administration's first six months.

Stephanopoulos unabashedly admits that these were not the most successful months of Clinton's administration. Stephanopoulos also stated his own personal failures and inadequacies that he felt at the beginning of the administration, an unusual admission for someone involved in politics. Despite bumpy beginnings, Mr.

Stephanopoulos is proud of what the Clinton administration was able to accomplish both for the country and for the party in its first four years. Stephanopoulos was proud to be a part of the first Democratic administration to be reelected since Franklin Roosevelt.

Stephanopoulos declared himself a liberal Democrat who tries to match idealism with pragmatism, "an optimist without allegiance," in the words of former President John F. Kennedy. Stephanopoulos said his political beliefs are rooted in his religious principles. From this background he comes away with a conviction that "creating a perfect society in a world with imperfect people is not possible because we all are created in God's image. We have a duty to love one another as we love ourselves, to care for ourselves and our community to the limits of our ability, and to never forget that we also have a responsibility to help care for those, who due to no fault of their own, are unable to care for themselves."

The definition of politics that Stephanopoulos prefers is that politics can't just be the art of the possible, it must also be the art of the impossible, trying to change people's lives for the better. He stated that politics can get nasty and being in politics for the past fifteen years he has been a perpetrator and also a victim. This ability to openly admit his faults and wrongdoings makes George Stephanopoulos not just another Washington politician. He still adamantly believes that Republicans, Democrats and independents alike fundamentally get involved in politics for the betterment of the public. Instead of arguing over their own self interests, Mr. Stephanopoulos urged politicians to get back to the fundamental principle of helping the public at large. He added that "in a democracy we can not survive and we can not thrive if we do not all take responsibility for our community."

As Clinton's former senior advisor, Stephanopoulos did not always agree with the president's policies. Stephanopoulos did not support the balanced budget act of 1997; he felt it took too much from the poor and gave too many tax cuts to the wealthy. He said he was not sure whether the act is going to make good on the promise to create surpluses over time. He does believe it was "an important symbolic statement that Washington could work and could overcome partisan differences, that they could agree on big issues like Medicare, education and the environment and work together for the good of the country."

The country is at a time of relative calm in Washington, Stephanopoulos said. The economy is prospering, and the average median income for the middle class has steadily increased.

So how will President Clinton spend the next three and a half years of his term, according to Stephanopoulos? Those years will be marked by "statesmanship, scandal, and the struggle for succession." Clinton's need to attend to foreign policy follows a familiar pattern of presidential leadership. His second term will be much like that of many second term presidents of the twentieth century. The constitutional role of the president as commander-in-chief will begin to consume much of Clinton's time. Being the only superpower in the world in both economic and military respects, the United States has a duty to be a force of peace, freedom and democracy, said Stephanopoulos.

Stephanopoulos feels that President Clinton should fight Paula Jones on her charges of sexual harassment instead of settling out of court. He perceives Jones as a woman who waited until the last day before the statute of limitations expired to press charges, and who signed a book and movie deal for monetary benefit. The Whitewater investigation has so far cost taxpayers more than 40 million dollars over a three year period and will in the end result in no indictments for the first family, said Stephanopoulos, but rather as a waste of public money and time.

Stephanopoulos also spoke of the most hotly debated issue today, campaign financing. He does not think that the President and Vice President did anything wrong by calling their contributors for money. The biggest scandal that affects our political system is the amount of money that controls it. He declared this practice as a "high class protection racket." By contributing large amounts of money to Congressmen and political action organizations, wealthy interests in return receive influence, access and protection. The interests of the poor are "ignored", because they do not have the financial power to get the same kind of access.

In regards to the election in the year 2000, Stephanopoulos considers Colin Powell as a serious contender for the position of president. Stephanopoulos believes



GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Addressed the Behrend student body last Tuesday where he spoke of his experiences with the Clinton campaign.

that Powell could capture the Republican nomination with ease if he decided to run. If Colin Powell does not decide to run, Newt Gingrich and Dan Quayle are the best bets the Republicans have in bridging the divide in their party and winning votes outside their party. Stephanopoulos also openly admitted that he was concerned that Powell could have beaten Clinton had Powell run last year, by providing voters with a "non-crazy" Ross Perot.

Stephanopoulos ended his speech with a single question once asked by Robert Kennedy: "some people see things as they are and ask why, others dream things that never were and ask why not?" We do ourselves an even greater injustice when we don't ask or answer this question, said Stephanopoulos. As a country of great financial, economic and military wealth we need not only understand the art of the possible

but rather the human art of the impossible.

Students had mixed reactions to the speech. Jason Gideymin, 01, Business, enjoyed the comments on financial issues concerning education. Chris Venanski, 07, English said that Stephanopoulos addressed a lot of issues, but did not talk about remedies to these problems. "It is very easy to discuss but it is just as easy not to empower people to address them," said Venanski.

Chris Caballos, 01, Agricultural Science, liked Stephanopoulos' views on human rights and stated that he was very clear on his views while being very popular with the audience. Mackenzie Baird, 01, Psychology, was very impressed with the speech and found Stephanopoulos entertaining.

Non-greeks banned from frat parties at UP

by John Groller
News Editor

On Friday, September 26, the State College Police Department issued 20 underage drinking citations and made two arrests for driving under the influence. Also, six people in State College are facing charges for serving alcohol to minors.

This was the climax of three weeks of police activity where as many as 49 people have been cited for underage drinking. This sparked a move which has banned non-greek students at University Park from attending parties where alcohol is served.

Presidents of University Park fraternities voted 31-4 in favor of the regulation.

"It's breaking a tradition, but whatever helps the fraternal system going should be done. The fraternity is more important than a party, so if it means keeping the system going, lose the party," said Behrend Delta Chi brother, George Leshnock, 03, Marketing.

Three national fraternities claim to be alcohol free, but Penn State-University Park is the only college where greeks have enacted a campuswide policy to take such a step in restricting guests at greek parties. Penn State has the largest greek system in the country. It is common for fraternity parties at University Park to swell to hundreds of guests. This makes monitoring difficult, and as a result, students would leave the parties with beer and cause trouble due to their drunkenness.

"I think by having those problems, pressure was put on them to make up the policy. After the incidents, a lot of pressure was put on the IFC [Interfraternity Council]," said Behrend Tau Kappa Epsilon brother, Mike Studd, 03, Pre-Law.

On a more social note, Behrend Zeta Beta Tau brother Clint Skillen, 03, Mechanical Engineering, feels that the prohibition of non-greek students at parties could cause a sort of

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Health Center's tips to a healthy cold season

by Ray Morelli
Staff Writer

"I get sick every fall," complains Dave Edwards, 01 DUS. He's not alone, because it's that time of year when the temperature drops and the number of coughs and sneezes heard skyrocket.

How can the average Behrend student avoid illness this fall? While it's impossible not to be exposed to viruses, Patty Pasky McMahon, director of the Health and Wellness Center, offers a few points of advice.

"Sleep," she says. While this sounds obvious, it's important not to overlook it. Many students stay up late studying or completing a paper, weakening their body's defenses. "After losing a night's sleep, the next day your body's immune system capabilities can be decreased by as much as fifty percent," McMahon says.

Another important thing students can do to protect themselves is keeping a healthy diet. Make sure to eat plenty of complex carbohydrates and proteins. Also, your body works best on several healthy snacks throughout the day, like fruits, vegetables, low-fat yogurt, and low-fat trail mix.

And what about those vitamins your parents were always telling you to take? With the exception of calcium for women and certain individuals with low iron, most people don't need any supplemental vitamins provided they maintain a reasonable diet. Your body works better by absorbing nutrients from

food rather than from vitamins. "Beware of using vitamins as a 'quick fix,'" says McMahon.

A lesser-known prevention method is drinking lots of water. This keeps all the body's essential functions working properly. Both men and women should have sixty-four ounces of water every day.

What happens if you do get that nasty fall cold? McMahon advises students to make an appointment with the Health and Wellness Center before they become really sick. They offer free examinations and medications at lower prices than most pharmacies and drug stores.

Make sure to eat plenty of complex carbohydrates and proteins.

Both resident students and commuters may take advantage of the Health Center, which can be reached at 898-6217.

How important is it to fight off the cold? "Your personal well-being has a tremendous impact on your academic performance. The better you feel, the more likely you are to succeed," says McMahon.



Photo by Jessica Trzeciakowski

HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER: Located next to the finance office in the Carriage House.