

The Behrend College Beacon

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

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Postal Information: The Beacon 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 Beacon can be reached by calling (814) 898-6488 or (814) 898-6019 (FAX). ISSN 1071-9288.

Letter Policy: The Beacon encourages letters to the editor. Letters should include the address, phone number, semester standing and major of the writer. Writers can mail their letters to behrcoll2@aol.com. Letters must be received no later than 5pm Tuesday for inclusion in that week's issue.

A view from the lighthouse

Behrend makes its mark

U.S. News and World Report has ranked Behrend in the top ten northern public universities. Also on the list from Pennsylvania was Millersville University (#4) and Shippensburg University (#5). This is the first time that Behrend has been ranked in the top ten public universities.

The factors that go into determining the rank of universities include: academic reputation, retention, faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources, value added, and alumni giving. Behrend faced several challenges in regard to these criteria. Behrend's retention rate is not as high as many other schools because of University Park. Many students are forced to go to University Park because of their majors. Despite this, Behrend's retention rate has been rising significantly, and this may have pushed Behrend's rank higher. Dean Lilley commented, "The high quality of education at Penn State Erie is a secret that is now coming to light nationally."

The anonymous gift of \$20 million will no doubt only further improve the educational opportunities for stu-

dents. U.S. News and World Report lists Business as the most popular major at Behrend. With the increase in funds for the School of Business, retention is likely to also increase. It is hoped that the U.S. News and World Report rankings will bring Behrend more national attention and recruit even more quality students.

The students, faculty, and staff of Behrend deserve congratulations on bringing Behrend to a new standard of quality. By being ranked in the top ten public universities, we are giving Behrend the opportunity to keep improving.



The Critic

Bad remakes of good films

JON STUBBS

The 1990's seems to be a decade of remakes. Artists these days remake songs, which can be enjoyable to a point as long as the listener maintains respect for the original. Another form of art that is very popular to remake is cinema. It is true that some films can improve slightly by a reproduction. However, this theory only hold true when the film was pretty bad to begin with (The Getaway 1976 vs. The Getaway 1994). Producers with a little more gall will make an attempt at remaking some of history's more notable films, with the only interest in mind being money (can there be a creative interest in mind?).

One made for television remake comes to mind, that being the remake of Stanley Kubrick classic The Shining. Watching the TV version was like watching a Leslie Nielsen spoof of the original. True, I've heard some of my friends giving it good reviews, but these were all people who had never seen the original. Had they seen the Kubrick production, their responses may have been different.

Imagine comparing two people's responses to each of the films after viewing them for the first time. After viewing the TV version, the response may be, "Yeah it was pretty scary." After viewing the Kubrick original, "I didn't sleep that night."

The reason I'm harping on the subject of remakes is that during the MTV Video Music Awards, my friends and I saw a commercial for the new Gus Van Sant picture, Psycho. After the advertisement, somebody said, "That looks pretty good." "Did you see the original?" I asked. Their answer was no.

Now I'm not attempting to appeal to the reader as a film expert, I'm just simply trying to state that those who have not seen the original Psycho may be intrigued by the new version because it is intriguing, just as it was some thirty years ago when the Alfred Hitchcock version was originally released. The producers depend on this. They expect people to associate a movie title with greatness, and have these people expect that the newer

version will be much more entertaining.

While interviewing Alfred Hitchcock in 1961, the great Francois Truffaut remarked, "It occurred to me that Psycho was oriented toward a new generation of filmgoers." Which is absolutely true. Hitchcock intended it to be that way. The film, in all of its black-and-whiteness, was incredibly revolutionary for the early 1960's. The classic look is what made the film so great then and so captivating today.

Trying to better a film that has been rated number 18 on the AFI's 100 Top Movies list requires either a huge ego or a huge need for money. Gus Van Sant, who is now soaking in the success of his latest project, Good Will Hunting most likely has no need for spare cash. So apparently, the Academy Award nominee feels he can take a piece of film history and make it his own.

The producer of the new Psycho, Brian Grazer, has less notable credits such as, Liar Liar, Sgt. Bilko, The

Nutty Professor (1996), Kindergarten Cop, Spies Like Us, and Splash. These were all great films in their own right, but how can one expect a producer of mostly comedy films to make a horror film successful? Because all of these films contained in Grazer's resume were directed toward mainstream audiences, as the new Psycho is intended to be. Hitchcock admitted that the original was an experimental film. It takes experimental filmmakers like Hitchcock to make a radical film, to show the moviegoers something new and different. But it takes conformational, financially-minded filmmakers to trick the audiences into thinking that they're something new.

I'm not advocating the boycott of this film. I will most likely see it myself. I invite the reader to do the same. But beforehand, see the original, definitive Psycho. And remember that Hitchcock's version was made from scratch, from pure imagination, not a prescribed model.

The lobster and the music to the dance of life

MIKE PERKINS

Clinton should stay President

A few days ago, I took the liberty to sit down at my computer to read. Yes, I logged onto the internet and downloaded Kenet Starr's report to congress on the president. A document 40 million dollars in the making.

It was simple to understand very descriptive and it read like cheap adult novel. In the end, the Independent Counsel summed up his research by declaring that the president is guilty of perjury, obstruction of justice and a host of other crimes. My reaction was

Normally I am a fan of justice and any people who break the law to be punished for it immediately. However, when it involves this president, and these crimes,

can't quite demand the same type of justice.

Legally, Clinton is hiding behind terminology and may be safe for a while, but did he lie? I would have to say he did. Does this however constitute a high crime for which impeachment is the only answer? Absolutely not.

I feel that impeaching President Clinton is the absolute worst thing congress can do. If he is impeached, Clinton would most likely resign, and a resignation would cause the same amount of turmoil that it caused when Nixon did it. On top of that, Clinton is doing too good of a job to remove him from office. Of all Presidents who served in my lifetime, and of most of those in the recent past, Clinton is one of

the best.

We have a robust economy, that with the exception of a few days last week, has staved off the global financial crisis. Clinton has also balanced the budget years ahead of schedule, and ended a year with a budget surplus. He has stood up to Saddam and to terrorists as a whole, declaring that America won't stand for terrorist actions any more.

As to the actual crime of lying before a Grand Jury. This is a serious crime, one that should be punished under normal circumstances. However, I can't attack the president, or any person for that matter, for lying about his sex life. I don't think that the Grand Jury even had the right to question some-

one on his sex life; no laws were broken. True he had an affair, true he is not a very moral person, but no crime was committed between Monica Lewinsky and him. It apparently was consensual, they were both of age, no laws broken here except possibly the high crime of illicit use of cigars.

I have never bought into the theories that the Republicans are trying to ruin the president's career, but the salacious extraneous details that Ken Starr included in the report and the total frivolity of the investigation may just change my mind. Clinton was a good president, is and will continue to be a good president. He made mistakes, but he's human and he's still doing a great job.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

We are writing to clarify several misleading statements made by Mark Greenbank in his article in the Beacon on computer resources. In the article Mr. Greenbank argues that it can be difficult for a student to find a computer on campus because computers in the labs are often in disrepair or being used for classes. While we sympathize with Mr. Greenbank and any student having difficulty finding a computer, we would like to take exception to his statements at the end of his article where he suggests that opening up the "special computer lab established in Lawrence Hall for the Psychology department" would solve, or even help, the problem. First Mr. Greenbank seems woefully uninformed about both the purpose and nature of the Psychology Lab.

Briefly, the Psychology Lab is not a special computer lab for psychology majors to type their class papers and "play games" it is a small research facility used by five faculty researchers, 15-20 independent study students, 40-50 students taking courses in the psychology research core, and an additional 30-60 students in 200 and 400 level laboratory courses each semester. We conduct experiments, have lab meetings, run lab classes, and train students in statistics and research methods.

A number of the computers that he speaks of are specialized research equipment, configured for a variety of experiments. For example they are used to collect brain waves (ERPs) for research on language and attention. Several are 386 and 486 DOS machines, completely useless for students interested in typing papers, surfing the web, or getting E-mail. One is a faculty's personal machine, and others were purchased with research grant money. Those that are WINNT machines are used primarily for data

crunching and project development. It is also important to point out that for most of the semester the lab is heavily used. In fact, an average of 350 students take part in experiments each semester. Psychology research students volunteer their time to keep the lab open and provide tech support and security. Based on availability, any student in a psychology class is welcome to use the lab during open hours. We should also point out that psychology classes often meet in the psych lab for lessons requiring computers, thereby freeing the Computer Center labs for other students.

We couldn't help but wonder why Mr. Greenbank did not suggest opening up the laboratories in engineering or science as extra student computer labs. We would like to invite Mr. Greenbank, or any other interested party to contact us for a guided tour of the psychology lab so that they learn more about our research and the training we provide. In the future, might we respectfully suggest that the reporters at the Beacon make at least a modest effort to get the facts before printing their articles.

Sincerely,

Dawn G. Blasko, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Experimental Psychology
Coordinator of the Psychology Laboratories

Carl A. Kallgren, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Social Psychology
In-Charge, Psychology

By Michael Dorman
Newsday

George Wallace: A bad ole guy

The one thing to know about George Wallace is that he was a supreme opportunist.

Some considered him a racist. He was not really.

Some considered him a segregationist. He was not really.

Some considered him a populist. He was not really.

But Wallace was a shrewd politician. He would espouse virtually any cause that he knew would win him votes. That trait was evident from the early days of his political career. As a young Alabama state legislator, he followed Gov. James Folsom; a populist and relative moderate on race issues.

But then, in 1958, he ran for governor against a crime-busting state attorney general, John Patterson. During a tough race, Patterson campaigned day after day on his promise to maintain segregation in Alabama. Wallace, the Folsom protege, was more restrained. And Patterson won the election.

Afterward, Wallace told associates: "Boys, I let John Patterson out-segg me. And I'm never gonna be out-segged again." It was one promise he kept.

Four years later, Wallace again ran for governor - promising to stand in every schoolhouse door in the state to prevent desegregation and won. He went on to three more terms as governor and to run four campaigns for president, all the while playing the race card.

Jim Folsom, sitting in the living room of his home at Cullman, Ala., once told me: "The difference between George and me is that he wants to keep people in slavery and I don't."

Wallace barely flinched at such criticism. Once, sitting beside him in a small state-owned jet from Montgomery to Mobile, I asked him about

widespread complaints that he ran the most corrupt administration in Alabama history. "Hell," he said. "That just reminds me of an old song: 'What's the Reason I Ain't Pleasin' You?'"

It is customary, I know, to refrain from speaking ill of the dead. I would think that would be particularly so in the case of a man who suffered terribly from bullet wounds inflicted by an intended assassin. And I am trying hard to think of something positive about Wallace. About the best I can do is to say he was instrumental in greatly improving Alabama's junior college system. Some undoubtedly will say that, in recent years, Wallace recanted his past views on segregation. But since I don't believe those were genuine views in the first place; merely cynical examples of vote bait

I can't give him much credit for that.

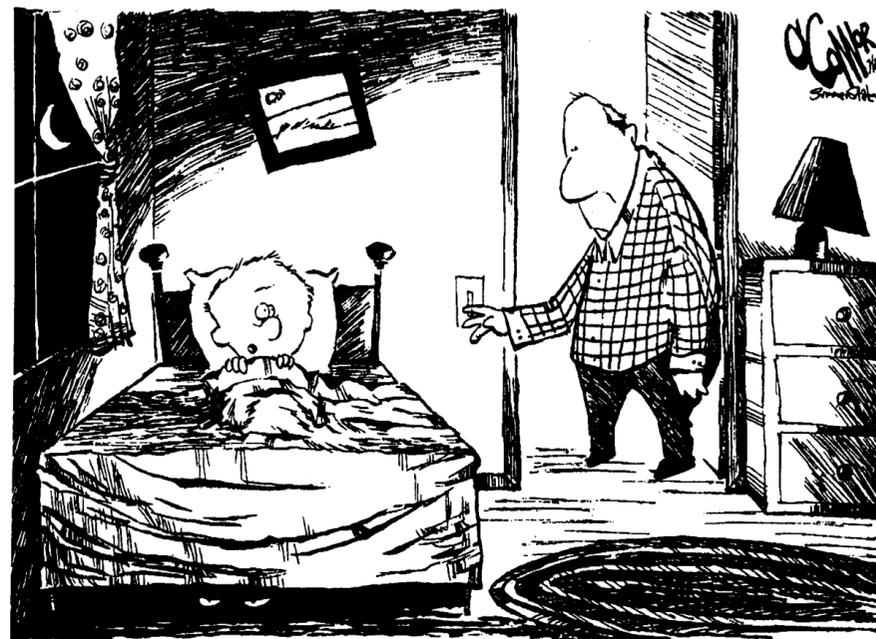
Perhaps it is unfair, but I recall only too vividly sweating in 95-degree heat and watching an adamant, clenched-jawed George Wallace stand in a University of Alabama doorway and bar admission to two black citizens of his state; simultaneously thumbing his nose at the president of the United States. That John F. Kennedy won the fight; upholding court orders requiring the students' admission; did not diminish the outrageousness of Wallace's act. He was standing in that doorway not to uphold any legal principle but to enhance his own political career.

And I recall watching Wallace's state troopers, many of them dedicated law-enforcement officers but following orders, bludgeoning the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s follow-

ers on the streets of Birmingham for daring to protest the governor's policies. This government-inspired violence, again, served no purpose other than Wallace's political aspirations.

Wallace was fond of poking fun at "pointy-headed" Washington bureaucrats. He claimed that all they had in their expensive attache cases were peanut-butter sandwiches. But Wallace had his own pointy-headed (or at least pointy-hooded) associates; the Ku Klux Klan members who supported his political campaigns and indeed held important positions in those campaigns.

I'm sorry. Try as I may, I cannot find many pleasant words to say about George Wallace.



"DADDY, CAN YOU CHECK UNDER MY BED FOR INDEPENDENT PROSECUTORS?"