

The Behrend College Beacon

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

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Letter Policy: The Beacon encourages letters to the editor. Letters should include the address, phone number, semester standing and major of the writer.

What You Talkin 'Bout Willis

WILL JORDAN

MP3s are great for college students

What's the deal with MP3s? For those that don't know, MP3 stands for Mpeg1 Layer3. An MP3 is a software program that enables people to play a song.

MP3s can be found at many sites throughout the world wide web. You can find virtually any song, from any artist, from any genre of music.

MP3s are a great thing for consum-

ers, especially college students trying to save a few dollars on CDs. You are able to download and listen to favorite things for nothing.

So, what's wrong with saving a few dollars and listening to your favorite songs? Well, by downloading MP3s and trading them over the internet, people are breaking copyright laws.

us, is wrong.

There are many sites that give a warning to whoever is downloading that if they do not delete the MP3 within 24 hours, they are breaking copyright laws.

Yes, breaking copyright laws is wrong. But it really doesn't seem like the companies who hold the copyrights can do much to stop the pi-

rating of songs over the internet. In time, the music industry will lose millions of dollars due to the fact that people are no longer buying CDs.

Will Jordan is the editor-in-chief of the Beacon. His column appears every four weeks.

The Behrend Review

CHARLES TESTRAKE

Should Matthew Hale be allowed to practice law?

In Illinois there is a twenty-seven year old guy named Matthew Hale who wants to be a lawyer. He has gone to and graduated from law school, and he has taken and passed the Illinois state bar examination.

So what is the problem? Any other person with these credentials would definitely be allowed to enter the legal profession. However, Matthew Hale isn't just any other person.

Due to his personal beliefs, should Matthew Hale be allowed to practice the law? No - according to an Illinois state panel which determines who should be granted a license to practice in the state of Illinois.

"free as the First Amendment allows, to incite as much racial hatred as he desires and to attempt to carry out his

life's mission of depriving those he dislikes of their legal rights. But, in our view, he cannot do this as an officer of the court."

It is my personal opinion that Hale is an idiot. He is basically a pathetic loser who finds it easier to blame others of an ethnic or racial background different from his own for his problems, rather than to blame himself.

"Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech." (First Amendment) "No State shall make or enforce any law

which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

The fact that we may not like what Hale has to say is irrelevant. Under our Constitution, he has the right to say it, just as we have the right not to listen.

In a perfect world we could just tell Matthew Hale to go to hell and that he will never be allowed to become a lawyer. However, we don't live in a perfect world.

Charles Testrake is a junior political science major. His column appears every four weeks in the Beacon.

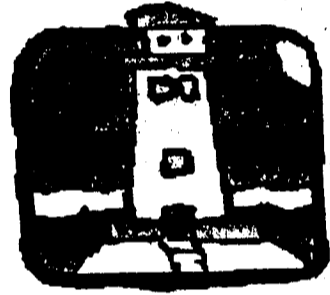
A view from the lighthouse

Career fair is full of opportunity

The Career Fair, which is being held on February 25th, is a great opportunity for students who are graduating soon, as well as for other undergraduate students.

Students who are uneasy or hesitant about talking to a high position employee. They are there to provide crucial information about their company and to refer a prospective student to someone at their company who does hire.

In all, the career fair has a lot to offer: a chance to ask questions to a knowledgeable group of people, a chance to explore their major and the possible jobs it has to offer, and a chance to find a potential full-time or part-time job.



A wide variety of employers, such as Old Navy, Mellon Bank, the Governor's office, the Erie Family Center for Development, and the Erie Art Museum, will all be attending the fair.

Letters to the editor: behrcoll2@aol.com



Face it Greeks, you've asked for ridicule

By Ryan Van Winkle, Orange Source, Syracuse University

First, a little background: A sorority girl wrote a letter to Syracuse University's Daily Orange, complaining about an editorial cartoon the paper ran that portrayed sorority bimbos in tight, black pants.

To the Vocal Greeks: Shut up. You ARE a target. Just like guys who drive Humvees are targets. People who join your society know full well what they are getting into.

I am sick of the Greeks telling us how smart they are and how hard they work. I am sick of people with letters acting like they were born that way, like they didn't choose to feed their poor self-images by joining a herd of really trendy people.

Greek system is like being in the SGA or the Chess Club or whatever - certain myths go along with it.

If any of us gave a shit about you or your REAL lives, we'd ask. Truth is, we don't care about your petty little world. Our made-up one is more fun.

We don't hate you; we just don't give that much of a damn. Listen, people are mocked by cartoons on a daily basis. And according to them, I am a drunk, OK? But I am not complaining because I don't have that big of an ego.

Most Greeks are content to blow off the student newspaper and its cartoons, because both are as meaningless as your little Barbie-and-Ken lifestyles. But there are some Greeks who have to get all pissed off and whine. Or, better yet, BLEAT like the lousy sheep they are.

PS: For the record, I, too, am pathetic for wasting my time writing this.

By Robert W. Tracinski, Knight-Ridder Newspapers

The gruesome killings last year of two men - a black man in Texas who was dragged along the ground while tied to a pickup truck, and a homosexual student in Wyoming who was bound to a fence and beaten - have inspired new cries for a "hate crimes" law.

This law would make crimes motivated by enmity toward blacks, gays or other protected groups into a special federal offense. The ostensible purpose of such a law is to protect minorities from persecution.

Criminal law exists to prohibit certain actions - to safeguard individuals against force or fraud. For this purpose, there is no shortage of existing statutes. The accused killers in Wyoming and Texas, for example, are fully punishable for murder.

What, then, will a "hate crimes" law add? Despite its name, it is not "hated" as such that the proposed law targets. After all, which crimes aren't motivated by hatred?

target is the criminal's ideas.

The proposed law declares that criminals motivated by a government-designated set of intolerable ideas - racism, sexism, religious sectarianism, anti-homosexuality - deserve special prosecution and additional punishment.

But to subject someone to trial and punishment on the basis of his ideas - regardless of how despicable those ideas might be - constitutes a politicization of criminal law. Why, for example, should a racist be prosecuted for the special crime of targeting blacks, while the Unabomber is not subject to special prosecution for his hatred of scientists and business executives?

A "hate crimes" law would expand the law's concern from criminal action to "criminal thought." It would institute the premise that the purpose of our legal system is not to defend the rights of the victim, but to punish socially unacceptable ideas.

In addition, if committing a crime based on bad ideas warrants greater punishment, then committing a crime based on "politically correct" ideas should warrant lesser punishment.

The judicial process would have to focus on the criminal's ideology, rather than on the objective violation of his victim's rights.

The beginnings of this politicization of crime are already in place. When anti-Vietnam War protesters, for example, forcibly occupied buildings and bombed laboratories in the '60s and '70s, they were heralded as "political dissenters."

Similarly, in recent years the left has (properly) campaigned for laws to prevent anti-abortion protesters from harassing doctors and halting access to abortion clinics. Yet its own protesters routinely use force - such as the occupation of timberland to prevent logging - with no fear of special government prosecution.

Nor is the attempt to politicize the criminal law limited to the left. Several years ago, a conservative judge suspended the sentences of two priests - arrested for physically blocking entry to an abortion clinic - because they were motivated by "sincere religious beliefs."

Under such a system, anything goes. The entire criminal justice apparatus can be used as a political tool by whatever faction happens to be in

power. Crimes can be whitewashed if done for the "correct" political motives, while extra punishment can be meted out to those with "incorrect" motives.

Where will this end? If a man convicted of an actual criminal act can be sentenced to additional years in prison simply for his ideas - then, illogic, why can't someone be punished solely for his ideas? Even if he has not committed a single action against another person, why can't he be tried simply for being a "purveyor of hate"?

The first official step on this deadly path - the creation of a special category of "hate crimes" - should be resoundingly rejected. It is an attempt to import into America's legal system a class of crimes formerly reserved only to dictatorships: political crimes. Instead, we should insist on the one principle that forms the foundation for the protection of all rights, i.e., that the purpose of law is to punish criminals for initiating force against others - not for holding bad ideas.

THE STATE OF THE UNION

STILL TRUST CLINTON TO DO THE WORK OF THE PEOPLE

SAY CLINTON HAS FORFEITED THE TRUST OF THE PEOPLE

TRUST CLINTON WITH THEIR 401(K) BUT NOT THEIR DAUGHTER

AGAINST OVERTURNING AN ELECTION

THINK THE PRESIDENT IS DOING A GREAT JOB

THINK THE PRESIDENT IS A LYING CREEP

THINK THE LYING CREEP IS DOING A GREAT JOB

AGAINST OVERTURNING AN ELECTION UNLESS IT'S NIXON

AGAINST OVERTURNING AN ELECTION IF IT MEANS AL GORE

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