

## The Critic Too late for blame

JON STUBBS

Once again, in the wake of another violent disturbance with many left dead, Americans are forced to try and explain to themselves just exactly how such a massacre could happen within the borders of the world's most prosperous nation. Gun control advocates point the blame toward the NRA; the NRA and its right wing allies point toward violence in popular culture, and popular culture gives Right Wing America the finger.

The truth must be that nobody really knows why Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold killed 13 of their classmates and wounded 24 others last Tuesday at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. The diary of one of the shooters revealed that they had planned this attack for a good bit of time before it was acted out. According to CNN, the diary also revealed that Har-

ris and Klebold hoped to kill at least 500 people during the attack, and then hijack a plane and crash it into New York City.

Some news agencies have reported that Klebold and Harris liked to play violent video games like Doom. A lot of people play Doom. Not a lot of people want to kill their peers. If popular culture such as violent video games and violent movies gave people the insatiable urge to kill, we would all be dead. I've read *The Catcher in the Rye* at least ten times in the past three years. Holden Caulfield never told me to kill anyone. In fact he probably never told anyone to kill anyone.

So popular culture is not to blame. How about the NRA? Guns don't kill people, people kill people. But when there's more guns than people in the

country, people kill people with guns. It is true that the United States has more deaths by gunfire than any other country. In 1994, 14,24 per 100,000 people died from a gunshot wound. So if the United States had stricter gun control laws, like the United Kingdom, for example, this may have never happened. It's hard to say.

What is interesting about the past few school shootings that have caught the attention of the media is that at least two of them have been the doing of more than one person. Perhaps the killers were examples of a psychological phenomenon called, "grouphink". Neither one of the killers believed that they had anyone else to trust except each other. They may have started bouncing ideas back and forth from one to the other and they

began sounding less and less crazy.

However one dissects it: whether guns, popular culture or psychology is to blame, nobody will ever really know. We have plenty of theories to make us all feel better; it's too bad that we can't find a clear-cut answer to this mystery. Maybe if someone had just asked Harris and Klebold why they were going to do this minutes before they had slaughtered 13 people, we would have all slept easier last Tuesday night. However, be it as it is, we've waited way too long to ask why.

*Jon Stubbs is the features editor of the Beacon. His column appeared every three weeks.*

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## A view from the lighthouse Media needs to recognize

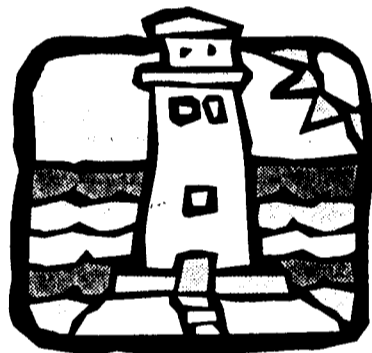
We, at the Beacon, would like to express our views on the shooting that occurred in Littleton, Colorado, two Tuesdays ago. We all feel that this was a great tragedy and proper steps should be taken to ensure a similar event from occurring in the future. Our hearts go out to the victims and their families during this hard time.

We also feel that the manner in which the media exploited the situation was immoral and inappropriate. It was not necessary to print detailed photographs of the injured students, and it was definitely not necessary to air the funeral of one of the victims on television. The funeral should be a personal event - it should only be attended by the victims' friends and family, not by a rude and ignorant media. Also, we feel that by exploiting this tragedy to such an extent as the media has will impact upon other youths attending high school in the nation. This will cause students to think that if they commit a similar act they will then be the

center of attention. This concept has been demonstrated through the various "copy cat crimes" committed after the Colorado shootings.

What's really contradictory is the fact that the media tries to print and talk about the personal aspects of the victims, such as "John Doe was just beginning to play the guitar", when they have really been dehumanizing the victims since the beginning.

The media needs a wake-up call. Haven't they realized how much of an impact they have upon society?



## Letter to the editor: Student fed up with Food and Housing

Dear Editor:  
I am writing in response to Angela Donahue's and Tom Henry's letter to the editor. In this letter, the two complained about Natalie Gagliano's column entitled "Waz up now, Housing?".

The two brown-nosing employees' first defense of Housing was that Bruno's and Dobbins are mass producing food services. Consequently, they say the food served at Bruno's and Dobbins loses some of its "home-cooked quality". True, but this doesn't explain why the food tastes like a@#!

Next, the two pointed out that it becomes monotonous eating the same thing all the time and that Dobbins avoids this monotony by rotating its menu on a four week cycle. Yeah, that's all nice and great, but hello - serving the same menu for four weeks straight is monotonous, especially when this menu includes half-cooked omelettes, nauseating pork fried rice, burgers and chicken that are as edible as rubber, and bread that's harder than cement. No wonder some of the students on this campus have such crooked teeth! Ya'll are feeding them rocks!

I'm sure hardly anybody continued reading their lame letter beyond that point, so I'll fill you in on the rest of the argument. Tom and Angela said that since Dobbins also has a taco bar, potato bar, soup and salad, and sometimes even cheese sticks, there is no reason whatsoever why every student shouldn't be able to find something they like to eat. Here's a reason for ya...all of these taste like s@#!

The letter then went on to com-

plain about how students are so incredibly immature for throwing food and making a mess. Now, of course I agree that these students are acting a little inappropriately. But you said yourself that you live in the apartments and make your meals there. So you really have no room to talk. If you had paid for a meal plan and were forced to choose between eating at Dobbins or starving to death, and so then ate the crap you guys serve up there, and got the runs all night long because of it, you'd be pissed too. Until you can understand why those students are fed up, and until your stomach hurts so bad from the roast beef and cheese sandwich you ate that you think you're having an appendicitis attack, you really need to shut up.

Finally, I think it's kind of funny how you never really addressed the point that Natalie brought up in "Waz up now, Housing?" about finding bugs in the food at Dobbins. I think it's hilarious that right next to their letter a cartoon was placed which pictured a cook serving roaches. How appropriate! But, I'm sure you'll bitch about that too. You need to realize that Natalie's article and that cartoon are not far-fetched at all.

I went to Dobbins with a friend last semester and upon leaving, she mentioned that she didn't feel so well. She then threw up all over the recycling bins behind Niagara. Still proud to work where you do?

Katy Poux  
02 Premed

Well, the year has finally come to an end. Finals are just around the corner. I don't know about you, but I feel like this year went by very fast. Now it's time to say our good-byes and go back home.

I guess it's my turn to explain the title of my column, *A Flower in the Garden of Life*. Metaphorically speaking, the flower is a person growing and becoming in this huge garden called "life". In our lives we experience hardships like prickly-bushes, that cause us much physical pain. There is the muddy muck that we sometimes step in—it happens. We encounter rotten vegetables that make the garden dismal. Of course, there is always that terrible gardener who seems to make the garden worse.

In spite of the hardships we deal with in life, we have rays of sunshine, like our families and friends (maybe even a professor), that inspire us flowers to grow. We also have the raindrops that nurture us and keep us healthy. It can come in the form of taking a break to relax or shelter and food, even if it

is chez Dobbins.

You truly can be any "flower" you want to be. I would much prefer to be a daisy. In life you can choose to be whatever you heart's desire and fulfill that dream. Of course when you are fulfilling your lofty dreams of being a "starving artist" don't forget your "roots". Where you grew up, your heritage, education, either schooling or "hard-knocks" all play an important role in your life. Those experiences, rays of sunshine of the good or the muddy muck of the bad, have had a hand in making you the person you are today.

I wanted my column to be about life in general, from my family life to how line-cutters are not my favorite people. Life is different for everyone, but from those experiences we can learn about some else's point of view and maybe even learn from their examples.

I don't have to tell you that life is not easy, but those flowers that have a good balance in the garden bloom just a bit fuller. I know that what has

been the many "rays of sunshine" I have received. Those rays from my family and my friends have kept me on the my goal-seeking path and of course have kept me from kicking my computer and throwing it out the window.

I want to thank those bright rays of sunshine, here at school, that have touched my life at one point or another. Melissa, I'll always remember your quote "Opinions are worthless because everyone has one". Mandy, you will always be my WalMart girl. I have learned if you can find two other good friends that are your height, like Hazel and Michelle, "three short people are stronger than one tall person". Beth, I am ready to go white water rafting whenever you are. Nancy, "let's do the time warp again!" Janelle and Mandy, one day I will be able to run faster than you!

Beth and Charity, thank you so much for the "applause". Karen, thank you for being my mentor. Andrew, no matter what you may think, I will

miss you. It's more fun to debate with you. Gretchen, I am very grateful that you wouldn't let me give up!

I can't list everyone that has touched my life at school this year, but I wish I could. Especially all of you at the Beacon, I have had so much fun this year. The friendships that I have made all mean very much to me. Friends are those rays of hope that inspire us flowers to grow and become. All of the memories and everything I have learned this year from my buds and then some, I will take with me and be a better person because of them.

Before the semester comes to an end, I urge you to let those friends know much you appreciate them! Life is not easy but with great friends, it's much more bearable! Thank you, guys!!

*Shannon Weber is the news editor of the Beacon. Her column appeared every three weeks.*



### IN HARM'S WAY

## Letter to the editor: Reaction to cartoon

For the second week in a row, I am writing to express my disgust with the school newspaper, but since I now realize how ignorant the staff is, this will be very short. Last week I wrote a letter to the editor defending Housing and Food Services. Since the Beacon has turned into a paper that is determined to bash Housing and Food on a weekly basis, I decided I would defend Housing for a change. I was notified early in the week that my article would appear in Thursday's edition. When I read Thursday's paper, I took note of the letter I previously had written. But to my surprise, the staff of the Beacon had rudely and very inappropriately placed a cartoon of a customer in a food service line being asked if they like their roaches fried or steamed. I,

and many other people, noticed the placement of this cartoon, and ALL have commented on how inconsiderate it was. The last time I checked I still had every right to voice my opinion without facing ridicule from the newspaper staff. This cartoon could have been placed anywhere inside the paper, but somehow showed up right next to my article defending Housing and Food. Where is the professionalism at this paper?? With a staff that conducts itself in such a manner, it is no wonder so many students on this campus think the Beacon is a joke.

Tom Henry  
08 BIOBD

## Have a scrumptious summer!!!!!!

