

THE BEHREND 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. Writers can mail letters to behrroll2@aol.com. Letters must be received no later than 5 p.m. Monday for inclusion in that week's issue.



The View From the Lighthouse

Do the wave, Dubya



First we whined when we couldn't find Dubya anywhere. On Sept. 11, we expected to see the President sipping mimosas in the Oval Office while watching "The Price is Right." But, when we learned he was not in Washington, D.C., and was instead secretly dashing around the country avoiding terrorists, everyone got all upset because he wasn't visibly at the helm of the ship.

Now, we've flopped things around on poor Dubya. He's getting flack because we do know where's he at. He decides to watch the Yankees in the World Series, and suddenly he's committed the social faux pas of the year. Public opinion is saying he's too visible. The poor guy just can't win.

We need to figure out what we want our nation's leaders to be doing. Do we want Dick Cheney mystique and invisibility? Or do we want good ole boy George sitting behind third base with his mitt? We really need to come to a consensus before the Prez gets even more confused. Bush isn't known for his acumen - the more mixed messages we send him, the more confused he's gonna get.

It seems that right now the best place for the President to be is right where he's at - in the public eye. Nobody's seen Cheney for awhile - for all we know he's checked into Johns Hopkins and is undergoing another bypass. Hey, maybe he's already passed and the government's been too busy to tell us. Have they seen Dick Cheney lately? Maybe we should be looking for him as well as Osama Bin Laden.

But having George hide out in the bottom of the Pentagon or the White House isn't going to help the American people. We need to see Dubya's face as much as possible. Even if what he says isn't always reassuring, his mere presence is a boost. By staying visible the President is sending the message that he isn't afraid. Terrorism isn't going to drive him under the covers, and it shouldn't

have us pulling the blankets over our heads either.

If the world isn't safe for the President, who is it safe for? If he's threatened by attending a baseball game, aren't the rest of us threatened as well? And let's be realistic: Is there any corner of the world that is 100 percent safe for Dubya to go?

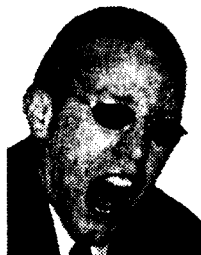
Anthrax can and has reached the nation's capital. So Washington, D.C., apparently isn't safe for Bush. And count out every place covered by the U.S. Postal Service. Oops, that's darn near everywhere, isn't it? Hell, we are probably more at risk right now from reading our own mail than Dubya is - he's got interns for that stuff! What about bomb threats? Couldn't Bush be the victim of a bomb in many places, even if he was hidden? He's always been at risk of assassination attempts, just like every other president. But presidents have been going to baseball games for as long as there's been baseball, despite the risks.

If the President is forced into hiding, won't the rest of us soon follow? If it isn't safe for him at a Yankees game, it probably isn't safe for the rest of us, either. And what happens when we all stop going to games? Doesn't that mean we've already lost whatever war we've entered? A war fought with terrorism has one main goal - to disrupt life by using terror. Once our lives are disrupted because we are too afraid to go outside, what's the point of fighting?

So go out there and have fun at the Yankees game, Dubya. Have a greasy corndog and a \$7 beer. Do the wave. Maintain as much normalcy as possible. We'll all be watching.



A less endearing version of Ralph Wiggum



Viva Las Vegas! Ben Kundman
Editorial Page Editor

Humor tends to offend someone, no matter what the intentions may be. In the interest of appeasing the higher-ups, I am going to make fun of myself this week so I won't offend anyone. (Hahaha! That was my first joke.)

First of all, I have really terrible style. Really terrible. I think the "skater" look might be in this year, but I'm not sure. I just wear khaki Dickies, skate shoes, and a t-shirt every single day. Do you have any "everyday clothes?" If you mistakenly thought I own five different pairs of khaki pants, you are an idiot. I own one pair, my everyday pants. Speaking of everyday pants, are you familiar with the "college wash?" Whenever your clothes start to smell so bad you can smell the odor while wearing them, open a window, and give them a few shakes. That usually gets the odor out for at least a couple of days.

I told my mom for four

consecutive summers that the "wrinkled" look was in because I was too lazy to iron my dress clothes for work.

The only name brands I buy are from Value City or Gabe's. I really don't know or care if they are this year, last year, or 1984 style.

My sense of style is so terrible, if I saw myself walking down the street, I'd punch myself in the face. I'd probably go running to P&S though, because I'm such a wuss I couldn't even kick my own butt.

Second of all, I have poor personal hygiene. This probably ties in with the "everyday" pants. I only shower when I have to (weddings, graduations.) Shaving night occurs once a week, usually coincident with bar night. I only wash my hair once every two weeks. The greasy-hippie hair look is worth it because every time it rains all of the water just runs right off. The last time I went to the dentist and the nurse flossed me; I bled so bad it looked like I lost a tooth. I drink so much coffee my teeth sport "perma-stain," a yellowish discoloring that will only go away when washed with bleach.

Third, I was voted "Least Likeable Person" in elementary school, middle

school, and high school. Every year. In elementary school, I was like a less endearing version of Ralph Wiggum. Middle school was slightly better, except I always got beat up by the sixth graders, even when I was in eighth grade. My nickname in high school was "Mr. Stinky-Pants," maybe you can guess why. I used to get kicked out of church before I even sat down because I smelled so bad.

The only friends I had in high school were the "Dungeons and Dragons" crew, and I think the only reason they hung out with me is because my dad had every "Star Trek" episode on tape and I always bought them pizza. On prom night, I played "Dungeons and Dragons." Alone. My friends went to play with the middle school "Dungeons and Dragons" club.

Fourth, none of my current friends like me. The only time they call me is when they need a ride to the bar, and then they borrow money off me all night. The only way I am included in conversations with my friends is if I refer to myself in the third person.

My friend Joey borrowed my Discover card off me two weeks ago and ever since then I've been getting

phone calls from a crediting agency saying "You can't charge anything on a card that's maxed out." I have no idea what they are talking about.

Fifth of all, I am a skateboarder. Chicks dig skateboarders. Unfortunately, all the chicks that dig skateboarders are 15 or 16. Everyone else looks at me like I just escaped a freak show whenever I skate across campus. Not that there's anything wrong with freak shows. Or freaks.

Finally, I am an engineering student. Mothers want to date me, but their daughters all hate me. High school and college is when women go for the "bad boys." Unfortunately, as bad as I get is using up too much bandwidth on my computer or the occasionally jaywalking incident. Women all talk about how nerdy engineers are while they are still in college. The same women who said engineers are too ugly to date while in college will later be praying to meet an engineer to save them from their life of burger-flipping hell.

Kundman's column appears every three weeks.