

Don't try to be brave in class!



Oh, you didn't know?
Karl Benacci
Features editor

We all have ideals and things that mean something to us, don't we? Some of us hold our religious beliefs as important, while others cherish certain people in our life. What about our opinions or ideas? Many of us feel strongly about certain things, right? They mean something because they're a part of us.

So why is it some people try to put down some of the things that mean something to you, the other guy or I? An example? I was given an assignment by my English teacher (I won't disclose your name, dude, don't worry!), and chose to write about question number four, which instructed, "Something cool, some theory or insight or repetitive pattern you have noticed. Some connection, interweaving image or idea? Take a risk, stay close to the text and blow our minds."

I chose to write about one of the book's themes, and the way it pertained to all of the characters because many of the characters were unhappy people who lived in dumps.

As the assignment proposed, I decided to go out on a limb on one example I gave in the story, contrasting a wealthy character and the narrator, a strange character (she steals the rich man's dog and it runs away from her and back to the rich man).

"I went out on a limb," as the story asks, and gave my idea- that the dog is happier with the man, blah blah, blah. What was marked on the paper when I got it back? The professor wrote, "This is just...stupid. I'm sorry. But this is dumb and I laughed and fell off my chair."

Well, I hate school and I hate all of you! The professor told me to go out on a limb and then he calls my ideas stupid and dumb? Something must be wrong with my thought process. The kind man even added (in other parts of the paper), "Why all this-who cares" and "Oh-brave boy!"

My gentle readers, this example shows how someone laughed at my opinion, thinking it was foolish. This occurs all around us, whether it's a professor belittling a student, society looking down a thought, group or belief, or an individual mocking someone else because they dress different.

The worst thing you can do when their beliefs or ideals are being judged is to conform or hide what's being scrutinized, for if one does that, they're not being themselves. One should just chuckle, and brush off the other party's opinion, for one shouldn't take everything one says to heart-especially if the origin of mockery comes from an uncaring source. What else can one do? Well, I already wrote an editorial dealing with that; it's titled, "Don't let a bastard ruin your day (my professor isn't a bastard, he's just silly.)"

People who judge others are usually unhappy in some aspect of their own lives and feel better about themselves when they put down other people and/or ideas.

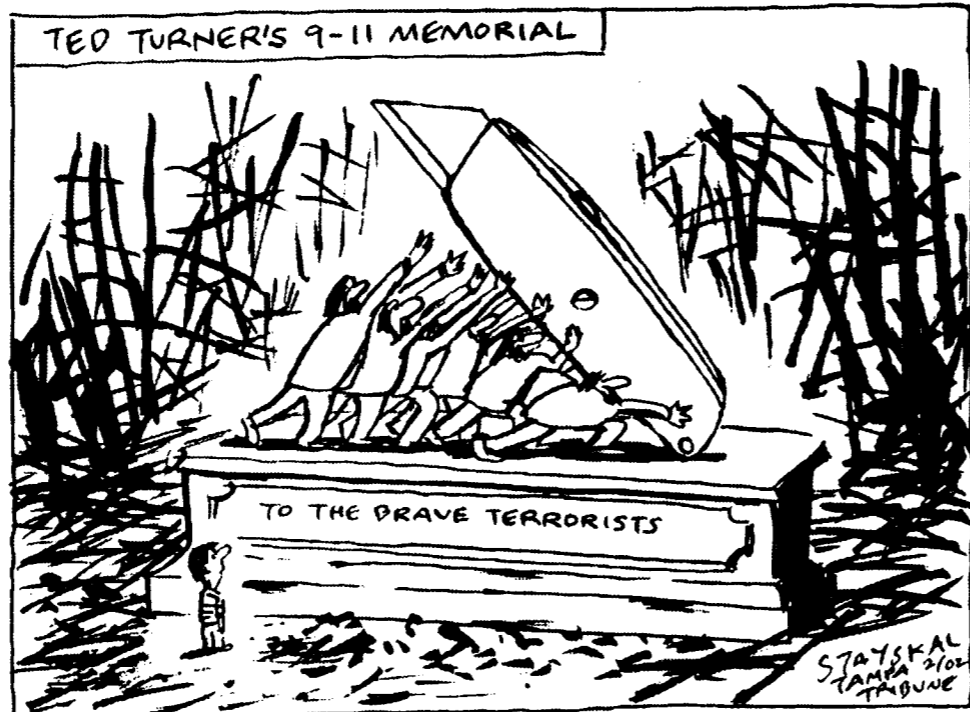
What is the outcome of my experience? Well, I won't be taking risks in my English 140 class!

I can think of many people in history who have been laughed at. A great example is Christopher Columbus, who was laughed at when he stated the world was round. People laughed and disagreed, didn't they? Look who was right...our buddy Chris!

Don't let anyone change anything about you. Just because someone dislikes you and/or your ideas doesn't mean there's something wrong with you. The problem might be there's something wrong with them!

As a closing note, I was so mad at my professor's comments that I emailed the author of the book we discussed and asked her if she agreed with my "stupid" observation about her story. She responded, stating, "About the dog, yes, you're right."

Benacci's column appears every three weeks.



Lifting the ban on liquor spots

Chicago Tribune/KRT Campus

If you tune in to the winter games, you may see a new Olympic sport: skeleton, in which an intrepid soul on a small sled slides head first down a frozen chute at speeds up to 85 mph. In between novel athletic events, you may see something else you haven't seen before: commercials for hard liquor.

NBC, which is broadcasting the Salt Lake City Games, is the first of the major networks to lift the longstanding ban on advertising for spirits. Anheuser-Busch plans lots of pitches for its Bacardi Silver, and Seagram's will be flogging Captain Morgan rum.

But some people think running commercials for liquor is about as sensible as doing a skeleton race without a helmet. Assorted groups, from the American Academy of Pediatrics to the Consumer Federation of America, have objected to such appeals. The Center for Science in the Public Interest complains, "The Olympics are a youth-oriented event. For the Olympic committee to make the connection between drinking and sports is irresponsible."

But anyone who watched the Super Bowl

knows that the connection between drinking and sports is not exactly unprecedented. Beer companies are among the chief sponsors of the most popular sports on the air, from the NFL to golf. The only difference is that the beverage commonly advertised in those venues is beer. The traditional network policy pretended that the alcohol in beer and wine is different from the alcohol in vodka and rum.

Actually, it's the same stuff, with the same effects. So it's hard to justify allowing ads for some alcoholic beverages and not others.

CSPI warns that liquor ads "for the first time will reach mass audiences, including millions of impressionable children and teenagers" and says these commercials "will only exacerbate the current annual toll of alcohol use in this country." But the proliferation of beer ads has coincided with a steady and substantial decline in beer consumption by teenagers as well as adults.

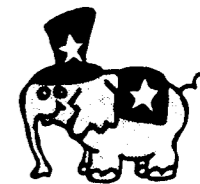
Contrary to myth, alcohol commercials don't stimulate more drinking in any age group. Studies here and abroad, looking at both youngsters and their elders, have repeatedly failed to find a connection between the volume of advertising and the amount of

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Need to get something off your chest?
Send letters, both positive and negative, to the editor!
Behrcoll2@aol.com

Social Security (or lack thereof)

The Elephant says...



As Social Security stands now, we realize that sometime around the year 2030, the social insurance program which so many have depended on for support will no longer be able to support itself. Solutions: Raise the amount that the government takes out of your paycheck (FICA: Federal Insurance Contributions Act) Raise the retirement age so you have to wait longer to collect your benefits. Or cut the benefits that the program provides in order to try and stretch the program a little further.

Any of those sound good to you? No, didn't think so. Let's look at a way of being able to forego all of that and actually get more back from what you put in.

Privatization: taking that money from FICA and being able to have that placed into an investment. This has been looked at in detail for quite some time now. Today's SS system for the majority pays out approximately two to three percent. Studies have shown that under a well-monitored and diverse Personal Security Account, the average return would be between six and eighteen percent. People today are concerned with the risks, but the government would put some watch on the new system to protect consumers. The other benefit of this would be the increased fund of capital being invested into the economy. The economy benefits, you benefit, and SS doesn't have to take a dive. Need proof, Chile has had success since it privatized in 1981. What are we waiting for?

-Ronald Ridgley

Every two weeks, a member of the College Republicans and/or College Democrats will debate a partisan topic. Send suggestions to: Behrcoll2@aol.com

So we went above and beyond the call of duty



Chew on this
Rob Wynne
editor-in-chief

I was skimming through Newsweek a few days ago when I came across an article about all of the donations made to the victims of Sept. 11. Surprisingly, much of the \$2 billion in relief was gladly used by organizations to help families and those who lost loved ones. What a lot of people don't realize, though, is that there is \$75 million worth of material items still sitting around in an old 747

airplane hangar. Things like radios, bottled water, and oddly enough, dog food, are all just sitting; no destination has been planned for them. Should we use these items to give to those who are less fortunate in the broadest sense, or should we reserve these gifts just for the families of 9-11?

Apparently, Americans are just too loving and caring for one another when it comes down to a time of crisis. We may seem too busy and too pushy for one another, but when all is said and finished, we can look back on a job well done. But, also as we are Americans, sometimes we just don't know what to do when a good thing hits us in the face. In a hangar somewhere rests everyday items (to you and I) that maybe someone else isn't fortunate enough to have. David France

pointed out in this article that sometime after Hurricane Andrew, the leftover donations were eventually burned and landfilled.

Now, that really irks me; destroying goods that can't be used for a particular purpose? That's like trying to donate a pair of Levi's to the Salvation Army and the employee saying "Oh, those are Levi's? We already have 500 pairs of those, do you have any GAP jeans?"

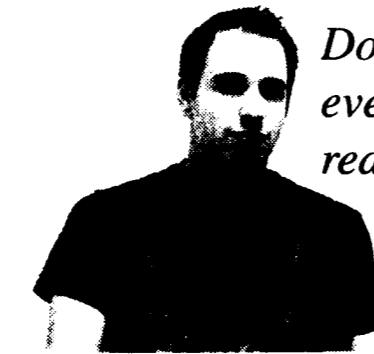
Let's not be picky now. The way I figure, the same people who donate material items are nice enough to do the good deed in the first place. I'm pretty sure no one would mind if the blanket they donated to the Sept. 11 fund ended up in a city mission somewhere other than New York City. People are people. There are always individuals who have basic needs to fulfill, and now we are able

to help provide these things. \$75 million, I'll remind you, is a pretty big hunk of pocket change.

But no, all of those dresses, shoes, radios and tons of dog food will just have to sit with no destination in sight, because giving it to a needy person outside of the Sept. 11 funds is not allowed, or so it appears. I just hope that I don't have to hear about all of the cold and hungry kids this year who won't receive Christmas presents, because as far as I'm concerned, this one's already in the bag - or in the hangar.

Wynne's column appears throughout the semester.

Sick with Britney fever



Don't believe everything you read
Kevin Fallon
Asst. News Editor

I like bimbos as much as the next guy, but the Britney Spears phenomenon has gotten out of hand. Britney fever has swept the nation. She hosted "Saturday Night Live." She took over the Super Bowl via Pepsi commercials. She is on every magazine and TV show in the nation. And if that is not enough, the teen queen has a new movie out.

I admit she is attractive, and if given half the chance, I would show Britney the best three minutes of her life. I know this is never going to happen, but hey, a guy can dream.

But enough is enough. I don't care how hot she is. I am sick of Britney.

Not only is Britney annoying, she is evil. Britney Spears is the Antichrist of pop culture. First, she represents America's bad taste in music. Let's face it; her music is garbage. Everyone knows the only reason she is popular is because of her looks. The only talent she has is the ability to shake her belly button ring in front of the country's face.

Yet, her albums are flying off the shelves. Using sex to sell music is nothing new. The Beatles used their charming good looks, Elvis

shook his pelvis, and Madonna, well everyone knows about Madonna. But they all had the talent to back it up. All Britney has is a nice rack. Is this what the country that invented rock'n'roll has come to?

What ever happened to the glory days of rock'n'roll when hot music could make an ugly person attractive? Today hot people make ugly music attractive. Just look at Mick Jagger. He looks like a shaved chimp, but the Rolling Stones transformed him into a sex symbol. He is an inspiration to ugly people everywhere.

I just don't understand why people pretend Britney is a good singer just because she's sexy. Would this work if Britney had chosen another profession?

JIM: I have to have surgery next week.

BOB: Well, do you have a good doctor?

JIM: Not really, but she has big, fake boobs. I hope to peek down her shirt when she bends down to cut me open.

Another thing wrong with Britney Spears is she's a phony. Everything about her is fake. Her music, her boobs, and her virginity are all about as real as Enron's profits. She doesn't write her own music and she lip-syncs half of her songs.

And what is the story with her virginity? She claims she is a virgin. The whole "I'm so innocent" act makes me want to puke. Does any one else see the hypocrisy in it? She is so pure yet she parades around on TV wearing nothing but a snake. I guess the tease is all part

of some sales tactic. And America is eating it up.

Yet, we wonder why young people have so many problems. Young girls are bombarded with an image conscious media, and Britney Spears is the poster girl. Young girls look up to Britney. Many girls believe they should look like Britney and become obsessed with physical appearances. However, it is almost impossible for the average person to look like Britney Spears. For many, this leads to eating disorders, low self-esteem and emotional problems.

Young boys have a hard enough time dealing with raging hormones to have to deal with looking at Britney half naked every time they turn on the TV. Britney is creating another generation of men who view women as body-parts. The message being sent to the youth of the nation is to be sexy, to be sexist, and to be an airhead.

I wish there were fewer "artists" like Britney Spears and more like India Arie. India has not achieved the level of mainstream attention or hype that Britney has, but India did receive a handful of Grammy nominations including Record of the Year, Album of the Year, Song of the Year, and Best New Artist.

India sings about self image in the song "Video" "I'm not the average girl from your video, and I ain't built like a supermodel. But I learned to love myself unconditionally...Don't need you silicone, I prefer my own What God gave me is just fine."

India Arie does not look like a Barbie doll like Britney, but she has an unconventional sexiness that is all her own, and yes, even talent.

India is someone young girls should be looking up to, not some valley-girl idiot.

I wish Britney would just go away. I can't wait to see the "Behind the Music" on her in a few years:

Britney was on top of the world when tragedy struck. Long time boyfriend and 'N Sync member, Justin Timberlake, left her and ran off with Jordan Knight from New Kids on the Block. Britney fell into a deep depression and turned to a diet of whiskey and Little Debbie snack cakes. Her weight ballooned and her popularity shrank.

Britney stayed quiet for a few years but did not give up. In 2006 she staged a comeback tour with Mariah Carey and Whitney Houston called "Washed Up Diva Tour." The opening night of the tour was a huge success. Things were looking up for Spears. But joy soon turned to sadness when the tour was cut short after only one performance. The trio got into Whitney's stash and forgot where they parked the tour bus.

Britney was overweight and out of money. Spears hit what she calls "rock bottom" when she appeared in the adult video "Oops, I Lost My Virginity."

Britney became fed up with show business. She sold her implants on EBay and moved back home. Today, Spears lives in a double-wide trailer with her 62 cats in her hometown of Kentwood, Louisiana.

Well, this probably won't happen. But a boy can dream.

Fallon's column appears every three weeks.