

The Behrend Beacon

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

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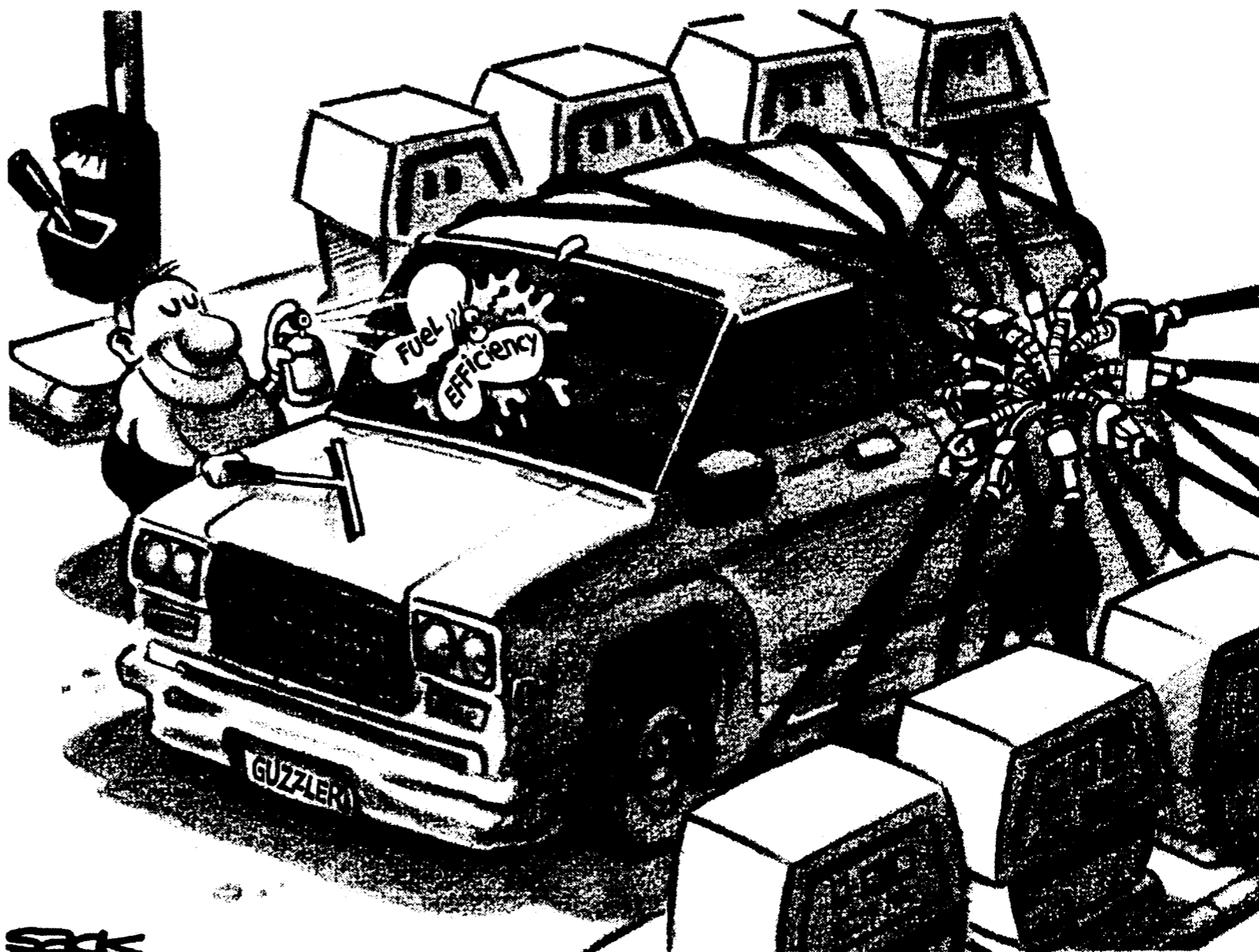
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"Professionalism
with a Personality"

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.

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 behrcoll2@aol.com. Letters must be received no later than 5 p.m. Monday for inclusion in that week's issue.



Please email letters, both positive and negative to the editor!
Behrcoll2@aol.com

The View From the Lighthouse

Let's show Catholic priests what it's like in the slammer with Big Bubba

Is the law written for everyone? Are policemen above the law? What about church officials? Apparently, certain clergy members of the Catholic Church think they need not abide by the law. Or maybe they think they have to answer to God and once they have repented, all is forgiven.

Well there is still a large debt to society that needs to be accounted for. Cardinal Bernard Law of the Boston archdiocese and Cardinal Edward Egan of New York are both being accused of not reporting serious sexual misconduct of priests in their diocese. The priests were not defrocked and some even continued to practice in the same parish.

Some of the priests are currently under official investigation and others are serving time. In Boston, defrocked priest John Geoghan will serve numerous life sentences for the sexual misconduct of 86 victims. Yes, 86 victims. He alone will cost the Boston archdiocese between twenty and thirty million dollars this time around. In 1994, fifteen million was given to a group that he molested.

Cardinal Law is accused of brushing this life-shattering crime aside. There are claims that he knew about this yet did nothing. Many supporters of the church are calling for his resignation (along with Cardinal Egan's.) Is a mother not guilty if she allows the father to molest her child? Why is this different, except for the fact that priests have taken vows to help others and are supposed to be of extremely high morality? Other than that, the Cardinal is as guilty as the mother is and perhaps as guilty as the molester. The Cardinal has more moral responsibility than a priest to ensure the safety of parishioners.

One of the vows a priest must take is one of secrecy. They are suppose to keep in confidence anything that could cause scandal or harm to the church. Well, look at the harm to the church now. If these incidents were not covered up for years, the church wouldn't face such a huge backlash. There are reports of molestation in Los Angeles, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, West Palm Beach and counties in Maine and Connecticut, among others. Maybe if a priest had been made an example out of instead of covered up, it would have sent the message that this is unacceptable.

The Cardinal had no right to decide what was a fitting punishment for tormenting children (especially when there were no repercussions!) The absolute least he could have done was turn the priest over to the authorities. How many children could have been saved? Who are Catholics suppose to look at for moral guidance? Obviously, some priests are out. Some Cardinals are obstructing justice. And as for the Pope he has not done enough to address this matter. A spokesperson told New York Times staff writer Melinda Henneberger "With all that is going on in the world, I'm just not sure it would be convenient for him to choose to speak on this." Maybe it just wasn't convenient to punish the guilty, either.



Swatting a gnat...

Before I address anything else, let me start with this disclaimer: I am not, in any way, shape or form, opposed to free speech. I firmly believe that every individual is entitled to his or her opinion, as well as the right to express that opinion. My opinion just happens to be that Mike Butala is an idiot. The fact that the Beacon actually prints his primitive, semi-coherent rants lowers my opinion of our campus newspaper and of journalism in general. If his articles are humor, then I never want to laugh again. They read like the crazed ravings of a psychotic Neanderthal who somehow managed to consume a metric ton of pure heroin and survive.

Women belong in the kitchen... nice title, Mike. If your cooking is half as bad as your writing, then I hope you can find a wife who agrees with you, or you're gonna starve to death. A lobotomized duck could bounce its ass up and down on a broken computer keyboard and produce a better article than you. Try writing a column when you're sober. That way, maybe someone other than you and the imaginary elves in your head can read it without having their brain cells die like hamsters getting sucked through a grain thresher.

However, I don't want to simply complain about something without

some kind of evidence to back it up; Mike does that well enough for all of us. So I'm going to look at just a few of the more painful examples of the manure-covered, month-old after-birth that is his "work."

First of all, there is his extensive use of the term "broad" to identify women. Now, I'm not going to rant about how tasteless and offensive it is; we are all well aware of that. He's not the first to use something shocking and offensive to try to get attention, but he may be the first to use something that went out of style in what was it, the 20s? Really Mike, if you want to offend us with something that ridiculously out-of-date, why don't you just put a swastika at the top of your article?

Moving on, he then declares that people who think Robin Williams should be dean can go to hell. His reasoning: it's "retarded." Great argument! It really convinced me! I wonder why more top politicians don't adopt this truly brilliant strategy.

President Bush: I want to declare war on New Zealand.

Congress: Why?

President Bush: I think that country's retarded.

Congress: Okay then, nuke away!

He then makes a valiant effort to

string a bunch of his random thoughts into a paragraph about the "homicidal goth kids outside Bruno's." Now, as one of those "kids" who sits outside Bruno's playing Magic on a regular basis, I can only assume that he was referring to my friends and me. That's just fine, as we're not the types who really care much about what people think of us. In fact, the majority of us reacted to Mike's article with little more than a disinterested chuckle. However, for the sake of clarity, I feel the need to point out that not all of us are goth, and none of us are homicidal...yet.

He next attempts to enlighten us with his musical tastes. Unfortunately, he digresses into a tangent about his ex-girlfriend that would have confused me less if it had been printed in Ancient Icelandic. I really don't see what your box turtle fetish and your intolerance of lockers has to do with music, Mike.

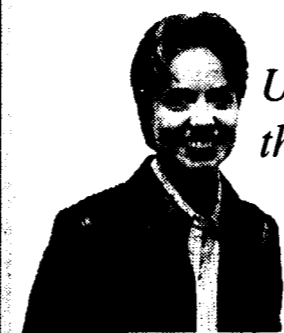
He also offers us advice on Internet dating services, benevolently pointing out that "all the hot ones are homicidal." Do you even know what "homicidal" means, Mike? You seem to throw that word around an awful lot. Maybe if you read more, you'd have a larger vocabulary. He also informs us, the truly privileged readers, that the women in STD commercials

can't possibly have STDs because "broads that are hot don't have the 'clap.'" If anyone is truly stupid enough to think that "banging supermodels" automatically constitutes safe sex, then I hope that person doesn't mind sharing his or her pants with crabs the size of polo ponies.

He goes on to fail to make many more points in his article, but by this point I had completely lost the will to read and was beginning to lose the will to live, so I'll just end my little analysis here. However, I was brought up to help find solutions to problems, not merely point them out and expect someone else to fix them. Therefore, in the spirit of good will, I would like to offer Mike some friendly advice on improving his articles. So here you are Mike, from one writer to another: They probably have medication for whatever the hell is wrong with you. Go get some. If an intolerant, ignorant lunatic making a spectacle of his psychoses were really humorous, Comedy Central would be running old newsreels of Hitler's speeches 24-7.

- Ed Gabrys
ELISH 08

In defense of Butala's dubious taste - sorry, ladies



Undressed from the neck up

Becky Weindorf

managing editor

Personally, I have nothing against Mike Butala, the infamous Beacon humor page columnist.

And I think that might surprise you, because a) I am a "broad," and b) I think what he writes is refreshingly out of touch with reality, giving way to a few good laughs. When you've got tests to take and papers to write and books to read all within one week's time, I think some dirty humor is just the way to relieve that tension. Come on, everyone needs some laid back reading once in a while instead of trying to read about photosynthesis or some crazy dictator in Latin America.

As you all know, there has been plenty of controversy over him because of his multiple references to women as "broads," Teflon pans,

persons that wear a lot of black clothing, and more references to women as "broads."

Um, this guy is writing for a humor page. True, I am biased. I work for this paper, too, and what goes into the paper is a result of several people's long, hard labor, and I appreciate that. But I don't see my name written all over his columns, or any other Behrend female's name in his columns when he is referring to a "broad;" for all we know, these females he refers to are general and coincidental. Usually, in the real world, we call this fiction.

I am an advocate of fiction. In fact, I write fiction all the time. I'm an English major, for pity's sake, I'm supposed to write fiction. Some stories I write are based on real experience, but most of the characters are created from some deep, dark cave in the back of my mind where even my closest friends have not seen.

Yet, how can we accuse Mike Butala of writing absolute fact in his

weekly columns about women, especially when they are on the humor page? Perhaps the binge drinking and the female stereotypes he writes about are based on a true experience he may have witnessed, but when it comes to writing about specific "broads" in his columns, again, he makes no specific references.

I am supportive of the feminist cause, even if some of its opinions are not my own. Yes, the female race, even though it IS the majority over men, is still suffering from an age-old mentality that has been passed down through a minority of chauvinist generations, right down to some guy that might sit next to you in English 15. It does exist; it could be anywhere. But let's figure out where all that feminist energy is being channeled. Is it true that, instead of targeting the real threat of discrimination, we are attacking a column that is only written in jest?

Let me put it this way: is this campus so sure that his column is one of the causes of female oppression? Even when what he writes *might* be form of fiction, a form of writing that he has the freedom to compose? Hell,

even I write about oppression in my stories. Some of my characters are just plain mean. Does that make me the root of the problem? No.

In defense of feminists everywhere, the cause they are fighting for is valid, legitimate, and worthy of attention. But I am embarrassed that the supporters of this cause are attacking a guy whose column is written for a few laughs that are not meant to be taken seriously (remember the disclaimer? Those really can't be disregarded.)

Look, he's trying to make people laugh. This is why stuff like this is put on the humor page. And if the word "broad" is used in jest, we can be equally flippant, too. There's no saying that, perhaps, a woman can't write for the humor page as well. Wink.

But for now, here's what I say: write on, Mike. At least one broad is laughing.

Weindorf's column appears every three weeks.