

The Behrend Beacon

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

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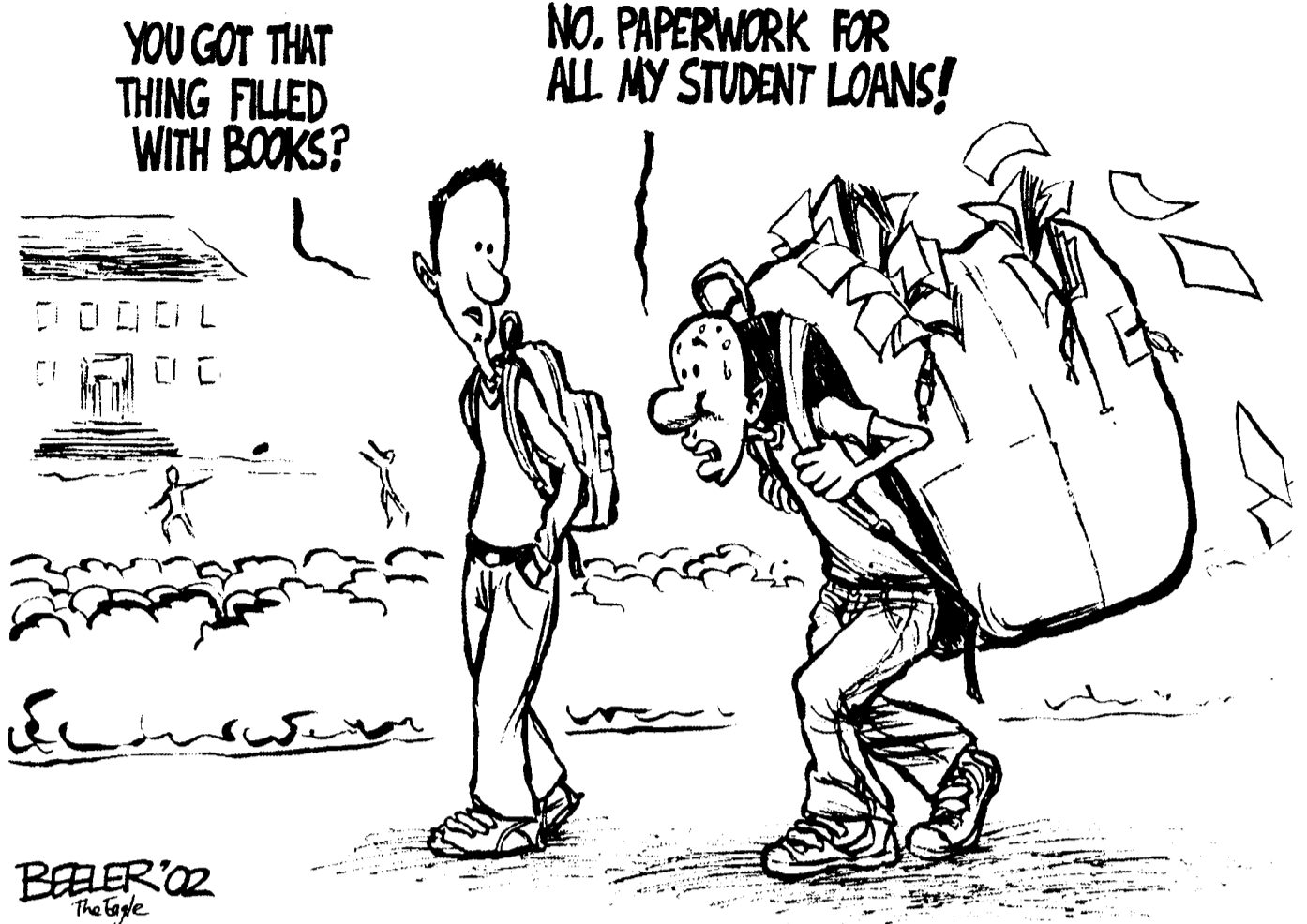
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"Professionalism
with a Personality"



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Speak up. Speak out. Send your letters to the editor to behrcoll2@aol.com Include your name, semester standing, and major.

Go into the dumpster and get it...

My editorial begins on a wonderful and sunny day. It was the month of Jul. The days were long and the city of Erie was alive with the sound of seagulls and bass from Honda Civics that encompassed systems worth more than the car itself.

I, however, was at home after a long day of work—sitting on my bed opening packs of basketball cards. Yes, you've learned of my favorite hobby—sports cards. Because I am single, I have money to burn, so why the hell not, right?

Anyway, I was sitting in my room, and my mother comes upstairs, calling my name. "Karl," she says, "where are you? I have two things to tell you..."

"Hello, mother," I said, politely. "What is your bidding, today?"

"Well, my most gracious son," she responded, "Kelly—your sister's friend, is cleaning some items out of the storage area for we let her put some things there a few months previous, and she has video games she is going to throw out..."

"The wretch!" I screamed. "I must stop her!" I threw down my pack of cards and ran for the door, pausing. "Mother, what is the other thing you need to tell me?"

"Oh yes," she replied, "A Miss Britney Spears called for you, earlier today. She asks if you can

come over for tea and a quick round of "hide the Muppet"... I know not what she means. Does it have something to do with Gonzo or Kermit?"

"Definitely Gonzo," I replied, laughing at the image of the grinning Gonzo.

All right, this is getting stupid. I'm truly sorry.

So I went down to the storage building and asked my sister's friend about the games. The young woman led me to a box, which I promptly took home upon thanking her.

Treasure! Inside the box was a Nintendo Entertainment System and such sweet games as Contra, Rampage, Mega Man (I forget which one), Donkey Kong Classics, etc. The system was shot so I threw it in a pile with my other NES systems.

Then it hit me. If it weren't for my mother telling me about Kelly's intentions, the games would have been thrown away. Such a waste...

Her story would have matched others I've heard, such as:

- The countless stories of fools throwing their old video games and systems out.
- The classic Mantle baseball card in the bicycle spokes story.
- The parents who threw out their kids' Garbage Pail Kids.

In fact, I even began noticing the cool things

people throw out: 1) I saw a house throwing out large pieces of window glass (they could be donated to elementary schools for art projects), 2) My neighbor threw out all these cool Tupperware containers (the big ones) along with these cool lawn chairs that float on water, 3) Someone threw wooden boards into a dumpster where I work. I know lots of campers who would have loved that wood.

I'm not saying one should dumpster dive. I'm adamantly suggesting one should give their cool things away instead of trashing them.

So, instead of throwing your cool things out, give them to someone who will cherish and put [Your "junk"] to good use.

Heck, if a girl hooked me up with some old video games I would take her to dinner and a movie—and if a guy gave me games I would buy him a pizza and in all likelihood, a bag of Troyer Farms chips.

So whatever you do—don't throw cool things out! Give them to someone who will enjoy them. After all, if you hook someone up with something that's cool, you'll probably get something nice in return.

Benacci's column appears every three weeks.



Karl Benacci



Becky Weindorf

managing editor

A validation for women everywhere

What does it mean to be a woman today? I'll give you a clue: it's not the 14 year olds who are going to doctors asking for tips on how to heighten their sexual pleasure with their newest partner.

Let's look at this realistically, people. Many girls these days are becoming older in their bodies and younger in their minds and don't even know what "popping the cherry" means. My 15-year-old sister watches girls her age do the pregnant waddle and complain about swollen ankles. I hear girls bragging about their first sexual encounter at 12 years of age.

I'll tell you what: Influential and rich women

are showing girls the how to's in relationships: show some cleavage, have flawless skin and guys will freak you. Look at Miss Jennifer Lopez. J. Lo drags more than 100 people with her when she goes on tour, including masseurs, hairdressers, and all that other stuff that she needs to look good. Please. I don't need to pay someone to validate my worth.

Unfortunately, this whole damn feminist argument has been beaten into the dust and the only thing that I can say that will get anyone's attention will offend others.

But for Behrend women, the women on this campus who can hold their own, read on. You know who they are when they walk in the hall. They are always standing straight no matter what they're wearing. They don't walk around the hallways of Reed sporting ultra miniskirts and cork wedge sandals and tan lines in winter. They aren't whispering and telling secrets during lunch. Actually, they're the ones who can be completely satisfied and confident eating lunch by themselves because they know they don't need anyone's help to validate their worth. They can do it on their own, "thankyouverymuch."

Well, slap a scrap of fabric on my ass and call me Christina! You all know what I'm talking about! These women aren't wannabes. Most women in the popular media are in the business because they have a body or a voice and want to be validated for it because they can't do it for themselves. Real role models earn respect, they don't buy it. Real role models can be ugly and fat.

So if you're STILL confused, I'll tell you what I'm doing: this is my validation for the women on

this campus that don't get trashed every weekend or give their bodies because they just want someone to love them. I don't feel pity for girls who think sex is a trap or a contract.

This is the validation for women who recognize the choices they have and decide for themselves: so what if you've got a degree and want to raise a family? They'll do it whether or not someone is spitting in their face and saying that they're perpetuating a male dominated culture. So what? Who are you to say that I have to get a career to validate who I am?

This is a validation for women with long distance relationships because they respect their other half for whatever reason that is separating them-- school, military service, a career. A woman doesn't need a companion to validate herself and show others how great they are. Girls need that. A woman has a companion because she already knows that she deserves respect from someone who's willing to give it.

Women know who they are. And women can give the example without anyone's help—so grow up, little girls on campus. I'm comparing you to the high school girls that my sister goes to school with. You are very obvious on this campus and you don't fool anyone. Grow up, get yourself out of that high school costume and act like your age. No one will respect you if you live to validate others instead of yourself first.

Weindorf's column appears every three weeks.

MTV show on sex-ed show is voter registration drive-really

by Jane Eisner
KRT Campus

On Thursday evening, MTV will depart from its usual fare of grinding music videos and shrieking, care-bellied teenagers to present a half-hour news special tackling the issue of sexual education in the schools.

The show will visit a conservative community in Lubbock, Texas, and hear from young people who support comprehensive sex ed, then zoom over to two star football players who will explain why they have made "virginity pledges."

It's a new kind of voter registration drive. Really. The cable television station that pioneered "Rock the Vote" to galvanize the nation's young in the 1992 presidential election has found that there's little benefit in sustaining a traditional voter registration drive in off-year elections. So MTV hit on another idea: Focus on an issue near and dear to the hearts of its viewers, and use that to drive these new voters to the polls.

And in all its surveys, MTV found that sexual health trumped education, terrorism, drugs, alcohol and even crime as a concern for young people.

So have you heard about this issue in the tightening governor's race in Pennsylvania? Only when queried did the key party nominees offer their answers: Democrat Ed Rendell says he favors abstinence-based education, including discussion of birth control and disease prevention. Republican Mike Fisher wants abstinence to be taught, but would leave the details to local school boards.

A debilitating cycle is at work in modern-day politics. Young people don't register and don't vote because they're alienated from the political world. But since they don't vote, candidates aren't inclined to spend precious time and advertising resources courting them.

Parents, teachers, coaches and employers also don't do nearly enough to encourage 18-year-olds to exercise their precious franchise. In a society that eagerly marks other rites of passage, the First Vote is greeted by a collective yawn.

This is not an immutable fact of life. It can be changed, one person, one television show, one campaign ad at a time.

First, if you turn 18 by Nov. 5 and have not yet registered, do it. Now. The deadline in Pennsylvania is next Monday. The deadline in New Jersey is Oct. 9. Pretend this is as important as registering for a driver's license. C'mon, just pretend.

Second, if you have a child or a student who is eligible to vote, be a grown-up, for goodness sake. All the research shows that parents are the great predictors of whether a new voter will actually vote, with teachers a close second. Engage them in the issues. Be a citizen yourself.

And if you're a candidate, pay attention! Young people are the nation's largest block of unclaimed voters— independent thinkers, concerned about the same issues that older voters care about, but not ones to be preached to or manipulated. Weaned on TV and the Internet, they know when they are being patronized. Or ignored.

These potential voters also identify strongly with volunteering and service. "Their hot button is community involvement. The more a candidate can make the case of being a community problem solver and a community volunteer, the better the chance of winning these voters," write David Skaggs and Adam Anthony, of the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the Council for Excellence in Government.

This experience with community service has a profound effect on many young people. They're used to grappling with local issues, to see the benefit of their civic activities first-hand. But too many don't take the next step and vote.

"If we talk about the importance of voting in and of itself, it falls flat. It has to touch their lives," says Stephen Friedman, MTV's vice president for strate-