

EDITORIAL

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The Behrend Beacon

The Behrend Beacon

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Beacon**

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Send all thoughts, complaints, comments, praises, protests, objections, compliments, critiques, and Letters to the Editor to Behrcoll2@aol.com. Include your name, major, and semester standing.

Ground control to pop music

In the movie "High Fidelity," John Cusack poses the question, "Do I listen to pop music because I'm miserable, or am I miserable because I listen to pop music?"

All I know is that I'm miserable.

Pop music always has cause to make me depressed, but I have even more reason these days. And that reason is punk wanna-be and Canadian singer Avril Lavigne.

On Jan. 7 the always annoying 18-year-old Lavigne mispronounced rock legend David Bowie's name while announcing the nominees for best male rock performer.

Now, I don't really expect Canadians to pronounce words correctly seeing as how they are from such a far away land and pronounce "about" as "a boot." But to not know who David Bowie is; that's unacceptable. I guess she never saw the movie "Labyrinth."

But I am a boot fed up with this so-called new generation of rock stars. It just goes to show that these stars know nothing about the roots of rock 'n' roll and are just prefabricated puppets of some old rich guy in a suit.

Some may argue that it doesn't matter if an artist knows the roots of the music they play. But it does. Artists are influenced by the work that came before them. Elvis was influenced by black blues musicians. And the Beatles were influenced by Elvis. The legends of rock, such as the Rolling Stones and the Clash, took from those who came before them, added to it in some way to make it relevant and original.

This is not to say that artists should just rip off someone else. There is a difference between having great influences and stealing a sound.

But that's what is being done in today's money-hungry commercialized pop-music world. Someone puts out a good record, (well usually it's not good, it just sells a lot) and record companies scramble up their own version of what ever garbage is selling so they can

cash in. That's how we end up with bands like O Town.

Anyhow, back to punk princess Avril. Her whole gimmick is that she is this rad bad-ass skater chick who is the anti-Britney. She accomplishes this by sticking her tongue out every time someone puts a camera in her face. Man, talk about a bad ass, don't mess with Avril.

That's more punk than having the Hell's Angels work security at your concerts.

Lavigne has said her main rock influences are the Goo Goo Dolls and Alanis Morissette. And here I am trying to say she doesn't know rock's roots. What was I thinking? The Goo Goo Dolls and Alanis are rock legends!

It's sad to live in a world where the Goo Goo Dolls are better known than the New York Dolls and Morissette out ranks Morrissey.

This is the problem with pop music. Every one is a Xerox of everyone else. The worst part is the band that everyone is copying from usually isn't that good in the first place. Really, who gets together and says, "Man, it would be awesome if we started a band that sounds just like Creed." I mean, if you are going to rip off a band, you might as well rip off someone good.

Actually, if someone ripped off David Bowie it would be probably be proclaimed as the most original thing in 10 years. "Wow, no one has ripped off Bowie before! How creative." That is how bad pop music is these days.

I guess nothing can really be done about this situation because people continue to buy bad music. As an elitist rock writer I will not be watching the Grammys, which will be held Feb. 23, because I am above all those losers (except the Boss). Instead, I will be watching the real talent of the music industry on "American Idol."



Kevin Fallon

Fallon's column appears every three weeks.

Your advisor doesn't know jack (or you).

Unfortunately, for many students on campus this is an accurate statement.

More than enough times I've heard my classmates saying "I don't know why I'm in this class, my advisor just stuck me in here."

From this, I see two major problems. One, students are apathetic about what it takes to get their degree from Behrend; and also, the fact that advisors don't really know what the hell they're doing.

The inadequate training of advisors explains why a friend

of mine, a second-semester-undecided student, ended up in my 400-level political science course at the beginning of the semester. For those who don't know, 400-level classes are considered junior/senior level courses geared for students who have decided his/her major. She explained that her advisor was the one who put her in the class. I explained to her that the class was going to be in-depth and wouldn't be of any value to her unless she eventually became a poli-sci major (or minor). Granted, she

might have learned a lot, but she would have been wasting those expensive tuition dollars.

And that's just one example among the plethora of stories that I've heard through my years at Behrend.

Of course, there are a few professors who do know what they're doing, but that's not enough. In essence, it's all about the money. Unlike high-school, where a teacher's sole duty is to "teach," colleges and universities focus more heavily on the research that a professor does.

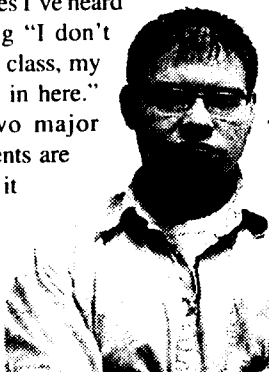
Next, come teaching and involvement on various committees or being an advisor of a student organization. So where does advising fit in? Exactly. Whenever he/she has a free moment from research, teaching, and other campus activities.

So, I challenge you to advise yourself. I've scheduled my own classes since I was a freshman; not because my advisor sucked (actually, she was probably one of the professors that knew what she was doing), but because I wanted to be master of my own college destiny. I didn't want an 8 a.m.

class, nor 9 a.m. or 9:30 a.m. 10 o'clock in the morning sounded fine to me. Also, since I am a commuter, I tried to minimize the number of days that I would have to drive out to school. The old adage holds truth, "If you want something done right, you have to do it yourself."

"But I don't know which classes I need to graduate, everything is so confusing when it comes to scheduling!" you might say. This is how easy it actually is: First, visit the office of the school where there is information on your major. For example, business, management, etc., would be located in the school of business in the Turnbull Barn. Communications, history, etc. can be found in the H&SS office on the upper floor of the Academic (Irvin Kochel) building. Next, pick-up a degree bulletin/checksheet that is specialized for your major. These sheets list all of the courses you need to take in order to graduate. These sheets will have blanks on them for you to write the classes in that you've already taken. In addition, there will be abbreviations next to each blank (GQ, GH, GS, DF, etc.). These letters signify general-education courses. For example, "GQ" mean General Quantification, which would be math classes.

If the checksheet says you need 9 credits



Rob Wynne

managing editor

Wynne's column appears every three weeks.

The 'misunderestimated' Bush

We are under subservient control by a man who can not speak. That's right, President Bush. Has anyone really ever stopped to listen to the man? Have you heard him speak? If not, let me illuminate you. During a CBS broadcast while he was running for President, Bush said this in reference to the racial policies of the Bob Jones University. "The Bob Jones policy on interracial dating. I mean I spoke out on interracial dating. I spoke out against that. I spoke out against interracial dating. I mean, I support inter-the policy of interracial dating." What? What the heck does that mean?

Here's another one, during a speech in La Crosse, Wis., Bush made the claim that- and I quote- "Families is where our nation finds hope, where wings take dream."

How about one more, the best yet? On Feb. 10, 2000, Bush said in the New York Times. "A reformer with results is a conservative who has had compassionate results in the state of Texas." Hmm, maybe you should read that one again to make sure you got that right. OK, now that you did, on to my point.

Here is a man in the most powerful position in the world, a man who is in control of one of the greatest people ever to exist, and he can't even make comprehensible sense when he opens his mouth. I don't know about anyone else, but it scares me just a little bit that Bush is trying to lead us in what could be the next big American war.

Now all being said and done, I would have voted for Bush in the election. At least at the time G. W. appeared to be more of a competent person that Al "I invented the Internet" Gore. But then again, that's saying something about our electoral possibilities. This is a tragic trend that I have noticed in recent elections. It seems that no longer are we as American citizens presented

with the best candidates possible to govern us- which is the intention behind National Conventions, and Primaries and so forth. Instead, we are forced to choose the lesser of two evils. And even then, when the American people

do make their desires known, the government decides they are going to suspend the popular vote and go "by the book." The constitution clearly states how the presidential elections are to be carried out, and the final result is to be decided by the representatives in the

Electoral College, because, at the time, governmental representatives were more knowledgeable in the art of politics.

Now it is 2003, and all I see in the art of politics is how to use connections, earn money, and gain power for personal growth-none of which have anything to do with running the United States. Something has to change, cause obviously the way our system works now; it is not fulfilling the needs of "the people." Why don't we have a black president? Why don't we have a female president? Why the hell does this moronic and disappointing representation of the American public think that he can lead a nation into a war that it doesn't want to fight? In all honesty, I do think there is some merit in what he wants to achieve, and I think he may or may not have the best intentions. Be it as it may, one thing is for sure- to quote our president one last time, "There is a lot of speculation and I guess there is going to continue to be a lot of speculation until the speculation ends."

Bledsoe's column appears every three weeks.

fulfill another degree requirement in some circumstances. Or, a gen-ed class might fulfill a requirement for your minor. In my case, I need Political Science 001 for my Poli-Sci minor, but it also counts as a "GS" in my gen-eds. Overlapping classes like that saves you money, as well as not taking extra classes.

Don't let your advisor just throw you into a class, figure out if you really need it. Do, however, check with your advisor for any updates on course requirements (e.g. computer classes for H&SS majors). So, I sleep when I want, work when I want, and I don't schedule 8 a.m. classes. See how you can have total control over your life by first having control over your college career? Go get 'em, tiger!

Wynne's column appears every three weeks.

of GQ, then you need to take three math classes. The next thing you'll want to pick-up is a paper copy of the Behrend scheduling guide (located at the RUB Desk), from which you will find classes. If you need one more math class for your gen eds., you would simply find classes that have the "GQ" abbreviation next to them. In essence, your degree checksheet and scheduling guide work hand-in-hand.

Beware, though, of special graduating requirements, like the "diversity-focused" (DF) and "other cultures" courses. All students must take a DF course throughout their career at Behrend, as well as a combination of GI and "other cultures" courses, which vary for each school. The advantage to advising yourself is that you could possibly "double-up" a class. That is, a class that is labeled DF/GI may also