

## Anti-war does not equal un-American



Kevin Fallon

You may have noticed a section on the front page where some Behrend students voiced their opinion on the war with Iraq. You would be surprised how hard it was to get people to talk.

Perhaps some were just too shy to have their picture in the newspaper. But, I believe it was more than that. When I asked people if they wanted to tell their opinion, the most popular response was a paranoid look over the shoulder, followed by a hesitant, "I better not."

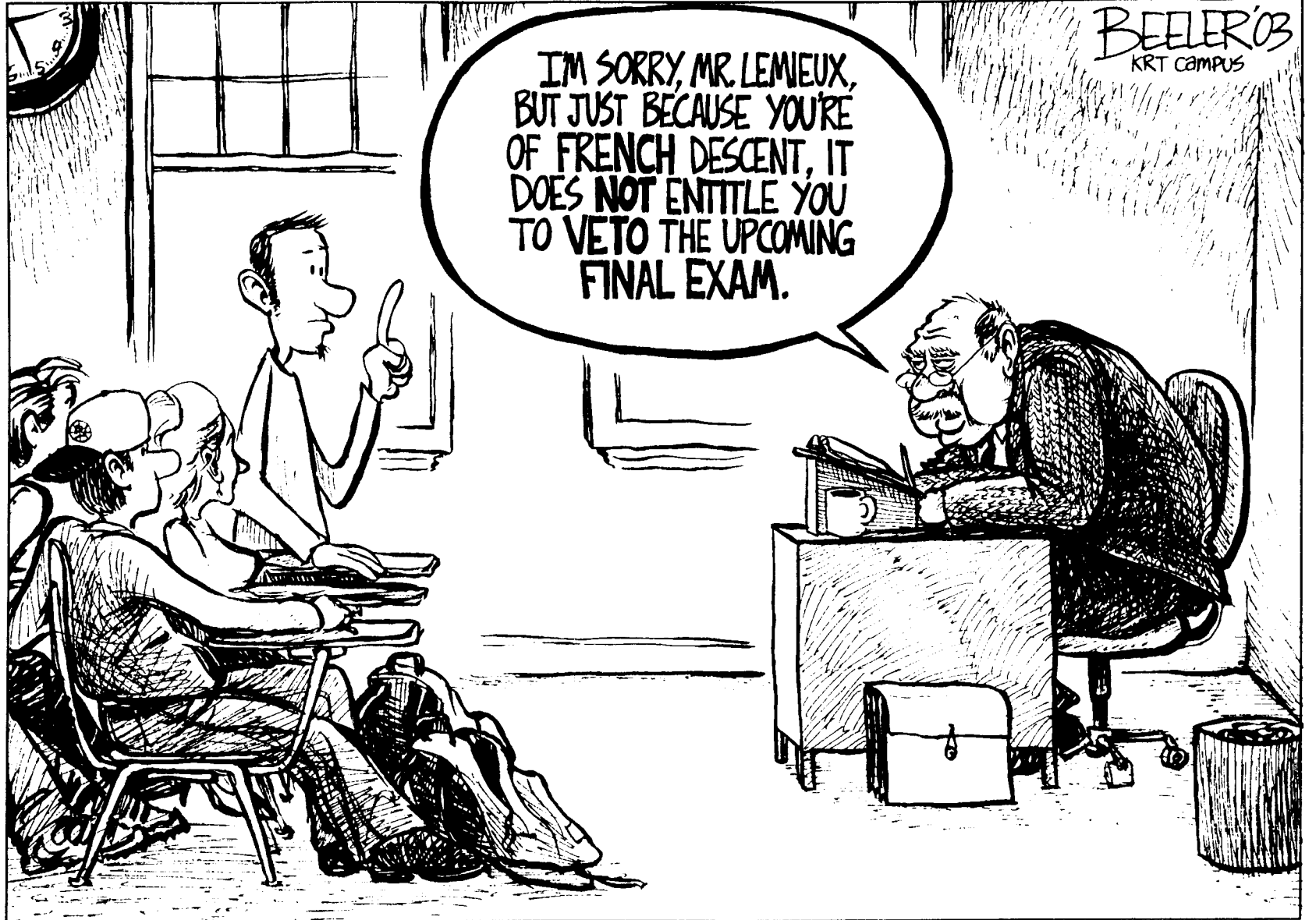
I have noticed reluctance in this campus, as well as nation, to speak out against Bush. Sure, there are those "radicals" who won't shut-up, but many are being guarded with their comments. They don't want to say the wrong thing. They don't want to rock the boat that's floating in an ocean of 50-foot waves.

Let's get one thing straight. Being against an American war is not un-American or unpatriotic. One can love America, but not agree with everything the government does.

Since when did living in America mean that everyone needs to agree? Somewhere along the line we have forgotten that we are allowed to debate issues. Issues are now painted in black and white. We are told, "If you are not with us, then you are against us." This is not true.

I, like many, have mixed feelings about this war. When I watch television coverage of the war, I am filled with many emotions. One is pride and support for American troops. Another is a hope that Saddam will be taken out. Another is mistrust of the Bush administration's rhetoric and motives. It is okay to feel love and hate at the same time. It is okay to disagree, even with yourself.

I also don't think preemptive, preventive war is the right way. I think Bush's motives have little to do with freeing the Iraqi people. I also think this war will do little to make the United States a safer place to live. In fact, I think it will make it less safe. I may be against this war, however, it has already started. I think it would be a bad idea to not finish what you start. The United States bombed Iraq, nothing can change that. Now the United States needs



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to make sure it gets rid of Hussein. These opinions of mine may be in conflict with each other. But we live in a far from perfect world. Under the circumstances, I am forced to support something I do not agree with.

Does this make me unpatriotic and un-American? No. The only un-American opinion is silence.

The United States is built upon the First Amendment. Free speech and open dialog are the foundations of freedom. The lack of speech, both for and against the war, is more upsetting to me than the war itself. When people decide to become silent, they give up their voice in a democracy. The democracy becomes a dictatorship.

Are people afraid of McCarthy era-like repercussions by those who speak out? There is no reason to be afraid. The only thing to be afraid of is losing everything that makes America beautiful.

I love America but I know it is capable of much more. I love America but hate this war. Allen Ginsburg once wrote, "America, when will you be angelic?"

I will keep waiting.

## DR. DIRTY JOHN VALBY

### Thursday March 27th

### 2 Great Shows 8pm & 10 pm

### Tickets \$ 10.00 in Advance

### So who is John Valby

John Valby wears a white tuxedo, the grin of an imp, a derby and a black bow tie. He sings a string of obscenities, complete with bathroom references to genitals and intercourse.

His audience loves him. They drink beer. They stand up and shout "sing f--ker sing" giving the whole performance the atmosphere and couth of a frat party.

It all started about 20 years ago when Valby was performing in a Buffalo bar. His act those days was a mix of rag-time piano tunes and renditions of pop standards, like the Beatles.

"Well, I did three dirty songs one night and pretty soon the power of dirt pushed most everthing out. I became a mirror for the audience and the audience turned out to be 17 times dirtier than me" he said. It used to bother him that he'd be on stage, singing something serious and exposing his soul, while the audience was shouting "sing some dirt."

His biggest audience is among college students who learn of Valby by word of mouth, an underground sort of publicity.

We could go on and on about John Valby, but there is only one way to find out who Valby truly is go see him perform.

**One hell of a beer drinking singing & shoutin good time!!!!!!**

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