

The 'Journalist' way of life: a senior Beaconian says her goodbyes

This is my farewell, and I feel as though I should make a damn good one. I've been writing editorials for this paper for more than three years (and I've been on the staff for all four of my college years), and to adopt the journalist way of life for so long will be hard to part from.

There will be three parts to this: my evolution as an editorialist, a bit of advice that I'd like to pass on, and my thank you list. (So if you just want to see if your name made it into my editorial, I'll put it in the words of Prince Humperdinck: "Skip to the end.")

For my diehard followers, let's begin with Becky's Editorial Evolution.

My first editorial was about my first day of school, and I remember writing down every little detail about waking up to my alarm, taking a shower, packing my books, making the drive, and being late for my very first college class. (Thank God Dr. Baldwin doesn't remember that!) In other words, a very dry piece of journalistic writing.

Then, once I had a couple years of college experience on my side, I started writing about my engagement, the upcoming wedding and, a couple bitchy editorials about freshmen girls who dress up way too damn much for a 8 a.m. class. There was my infamous 'Girls Going Commando' editorial, in which I wrote about my utter dismay about girls that don't wear bras while in broad daylight.

I let my fellow editorialists take over the war, Sept. 11, and all those other controversial topics in their discussions - no sense in letting my words beat their points into the dust. They probably said it better than I could, so I stuck to whatever I observed on campus.

And who could forget my personal fa-

vorite, 'In defense of Butala's dubious taste?' It's not my favorite because he offended others, but because the Behrend campus has to understand that someone will eventually offend them. No matter what someone writes, there will be someone who's annoyed by the writer's claims. I'm not saying you can defend your own beliefs when someone challenges them, but when that defense includes any kind of insult to the staff of this paper, it's a cheap shot. Criticisms are always welcome here, but not in a personal way.

Moving on: my bits of advice. These might be a little different from what your professors might tell you:

1.) You will be offended in this lifetime more than once.

Get off your high seat and do something about it if you don't like it. People who are silent deserve what they are made to endure.

2.) College is a way of life that is a prerequisite for what you're about to do for the rest of your years on this planet. Life changed when you left high school, and it will change again once you receive your diploma. If you spent your years ONLY wallowing in Bacardi 151 or any other kind of alcohol, consider yourself screwed.

3.) Give blood. Watch the needle go into your arm and watch your body help pump out some of that life-giving fluid. Watch yourself save a life.

4.) Don't be selfish. Carry pocket change to help other organizations that do fundraisers on the campus. (I KNOW all you people on campus can afford it, too, because you have a crapload of money left on your meal plans at the end of the year. If you can afford a hefty meal plan, con-

sider those at the soup kitchen who cannot.)

5.) Get a part-time job while in school and start pulling yourself off your parents' bank accounts. Remember TLC's "Scrub" who was still a mama's boy? Don't drain Mom and Dad's retirement savings past your college years. You went to college to get away on your own. Now stick to your word and do it.

6.) Everyone has a vocation to do something. (Another one of my fave sayings - if you don't know what the word means, go look it up. I'll be waiting here when you get back). If your vocation is the Peace Corps, or to get married and have kids, or to enter the seminary, or travel all over the world with the Armed Forces, good for you. No matter what it is, don't leave it for someone else to get joy out of it.

7.) Apathy is for losers. Apathy is pathetic. Get real. Be passionate in no matter what you do: worship, sports, politics, writing.

There are probably a billion other things I could tell you, but this is a pretty good start. The last one is most important because it's the one thing that is holding Behrend back from improving even more. So...oh, what the hell. Clichés are for the sake of simplicity: please, get involved. Then you won't be some loser CEO who attempts to fabricate a resume.

Finally, I want to recognize a few people here before my sappy final paragraph. There are several professors on this campus that would probably permanently alter your experience here. Guess the professor! Ask an English major help you solve these riddles:

-Don't let the 'Anxiety of Influence' hold you back.

-Want to see someone speak Middle English live? Try this professor out.

-Forget bending like a pretzel and learn how to move and breathe in her yoga classes.

-The lectures were the fastest, most intriguing 50-minute speeches I've ever experienced, and I EARNED my B in that class. Not recommended for skittish freshmen.

-Dustin Hoffman as "The Graduate" was HOT when he was young!

Now I'll start my thank you list. I want to thank all my brothers in APO for their hard work and support, and all the good times we had at our midnight Perkins run, and the support you gave me especially when I was president, you will never know how much you made me feel comfortable and in service to you all. The entire English staff, Baldwin and Morris and 'Brotha George' and his wacky writing theory classes, Melissa Fraterrigo (for her inspiration in my nonfiction writing), Dr. Ann Pancake (for her inspiration in my fiction writing), Dr. Colleen Kelly for being the third reader on my thesis committee, Dr. Archie Loss's sense of humor and support, and Dr. Mester's quiet but hilarious common sense; Lani Weissbach for her wonderful wisdom and inspiration (keep in touch!), Maria Madigan, Lynn Oborski, (oh, and what the hell, my brother Tim too).

And finally, a message to my thesis director, Brad Comann: Your intelligence and incredible helpfulness guided me through the senior thesis, and your flexible office hours have allowed me to keep my cool throughout my senior year. Your creativity and insight will remain an inspiration to me even after college. Thank you!

So this is it. After 120 issues with my own influence, the Beacon is about to move on without me. Actually, this whole campus is moving on without me, but I remember when Katie Galley said the same thing a couple years ago and I didn't understand why she was so upset to finally get her degree and move on. And I want to thank the entire staff (you knew it was coming:)

Rob and Kev, as the only female on the executive board, you made me laugh at

your constant dirty jokes. Rob: Thanks for sticking it out on the Beacon with me til the end! Your Mac knowledge is indispensable...

Erin McCarty, as one of my English major partners in crime, we had to put up with a lot! You are an awesome friend. Keep in touch.

Paige, you're also one of the Beacon old school members, and I hope you bring back your editorial skills next semester. I will come and visit. I promise!

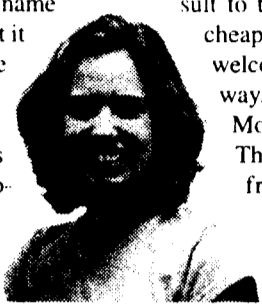
KoolKarl, my other English major compadre. Hell, you are one crazy guy. Don't lose that awesome sense of humor.

'JenandScott,' Lauren, Dan, Erinn, Heather, Jeff, and all the newbies: you're a promising group of editors and I only see improvement for the Beacon in the future. You all will do an awesome job and I'm sure make even more improvements for the paper in the future.

For those Beaconians who left before me, and who are crazy enough to read these post-mortem issues...Mikey, Jay, Katie, Diz, Melissa, Jeffy, AnnMarie, you all know who you are! You made us into a crazy pack of Thursday night layout "beyotches!" I'm going to miss my pizza and waxing duties. (And Jeff, get your ass back from that god-forsaken desert safe and sound! We miss you!)

And to you, Behrend, I know I've bitched a lot, but the campus is the reason why I've got a damn good resume. Rochester will never know what hit them, just like this campus didn't know what hit them when I sat down to write my first commuting editorial. And on my way out, Behrend, don't forget to lock the door behind me because I might try to come back someday! Probably not, eh? (Canadian Anxiety of Influence.)

So farewell, in the Alpha Phi Omega spirit of Leadership, Friendship, and Service--and a sprinkle of controversy--good night, Behrend!



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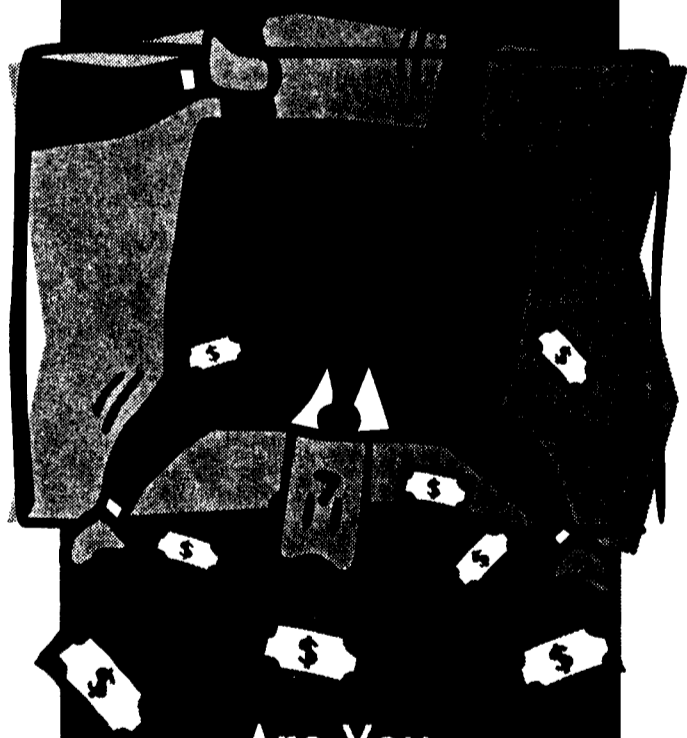
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