

# EDITORIAL

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The Behrend Beacon

## The Behrend Beacon

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

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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](mailto:behrcoll2@aol.com). Letters must be received no later than 5 p.m. Monday for inclusion in that week's issue. The Beacon reserves the right to edit letters for length, content, libel, spelling, and grammar.

## Patriot Act assaults my freedoms

This past week Al Gore gave a speech in which he accused the Bush administration of taking advantage of Americans' fear of terrorism and using it for political gain. President Bush has proven over and over again that he will stop at nothing for his own political gain.

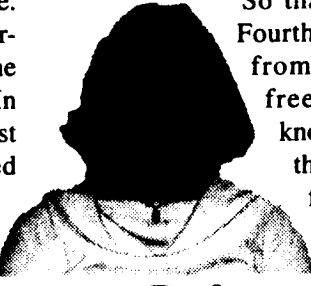
Take the war with Iraq for example. He exploited Americans' fears of terrorism in much the same way for the war as he did for the Patriot Act. In both situations, American citizens lost a great amount, while Bush gained ground politically.

Shortly after the attacks on the twin towers, the U.S. pushed a 342 page Patriot Act through Congress on Oct. 26, 2001. The Bush administration bullied its way into having the act passed. Now I, along with every other citizen of America, am going to pay the consequences for a panicked government and hastily reached decision by members of Congress, who barely had time to read the bill, let alone debate the bill before it was passed into law.

The Patriot Act is made of many sections. A very important section 215 serves to expand the ability of law enforcement to even greater powers than before. The FBI can tap into highly personal medical and mental health records, library records, conduct secret searches, conduct wire taps, obtain fi-

nancial statements, and can even probe into student records (yes, the very records that Penn State holds on all of us) without probable cause or a search warrant. All law enforcement officials have to say is that it is for intelligence purposes and bingo, they are in.

So that strikes the Fourth Amendment from my list of freedoms. You know, it's the one that protects us from unreasonable searches and seizures.



Lauren Packer  
editor-in-chief

The government can't conduct a search without showing probable cause to believe the person has committed a crime.

But hey, what's one amendment anyway, right? Wrong. In total, there are at least six amendments that are being threatened by the Patriot Act.

Gag orders can be issued to prevent those who were ordered to disclose information from telling others about the order. So we can now strike the First Amendment, the one that guarantees us the freedom of religion, speech, assembly and press, from our list.

And go ahead and cross off the

Fifth, Sixth, Eighth and Fourteenth amendments from your list of rights. Those all are being threatened by the Patriot Act. Perhaps our government is right..

Why our government feels that we shouldn't be afforded rights such as free speech, freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures, due process of the law, a right to a speedy trial, a right to be informed of the facts of an accusation and have the assistance of counsel, the right to be free from unreasonable bail or unusual punishments, or that all people in our country, citizens and non-citizens, should be entitled to due process and equal protection of our rights, is beyond me.

To top things off, our government, in an effort to be like Hollywood, is providing us with a sequel. The Patriot Act 2 will soon hit theatres, er, real life, if we don't do something about this.

The Bush administration and the supporters of the Patriot Act seem to think that we would be safer without a checks and balance system, or at least that is they are implying with the passage of the Patriot Act and its sequel.

It's too bad that our government feels that in order to be safer from terrorists we have to give up our own personal freedoms. In the end, isn't that what the terrorists want?

## Counting down to the beginning ISO member on cross-culturalism

by Amy Wilczynski  
calendar page editor

Six months until I graduate from college and the fear of the unknown is really beginning to set in. For the past 17 years, the main thing in my life has been school. I have always had school in my future. It was always, "well after school" or "after I finish college."

So now what? The next step of my life will no longer involve homework, group projects and research papers. Not that it's a bad thing, but reality is looming around me and every other graduating college student. It's scary. Who's afraid of the real world? I am!

Who wants to be part of the real world where lenders are sending bills to finally start paying off all those hard years of college? Who wants to get a "real job"? Who wants to work Monday through Friday, 9 to 5?

As I see it, we have it easy as college students, other than all the school work that is involved. Who else can close the local bars every week during quarter drafts and still be able to function the next morning with a hangover at 8 a.m.? Only a college student can do such a thing.

Within the next six months of my college career, I will need to find a job and figure out what to do with myself after I graduate. Will I stay in Erie? Will I move away? Will I even be able to find a job in the struggling

economy? Will I get married? Will I have kids now or wait a few years?

I hear many stories about people who go to college and never use their education. Some people may work in an opposite career than what they majored in, while others become stay at home moms.

After spending mega bucks on college, I will definitely be using my education. I just wish I had the slightest idea as to what I will be doing.

There are a lot of good things about graduating, too. No more group projects! We all know what a pain it is getting everyone together at the same time. No more all-nighters, either! I might actually get my required eight hours of sleep a night.

With the good inevitably comes the bad, the sad and the disappointments. No more going to class in our pajama pants because we woke up too late to shower and make ourselves look presentable. It'll be business suits and uncomfortable shoes for the rest of our lives! Ahhh! On the other hand, those "costumes" we will have to wear each day will earn us a salary.

I am really going to miss all my college buddies. They may be the friends we got drunk with for the first time in our lives, or the friends that helped us study our Spanish vocabulary so we wouldn't have to spend another grueling semester trying to learn the language.

Before we know it, we will be liv-

ing on opposite sides of the country, desperately trying to survive without the comfort of knowing your best friend lives right down the hall. We will go to work in an office all day, come home, cook dinner, watch the local news, and go to bed. How boring that sounds!

It's time for us to move on with our lives. Some will go to graduate school and become lawyers and doctors. Others will move to a big city and fight their way into crowded elevators to get to their job on the 27<sup>th</sup> floor of a skyscraper.

Others will stay right here in the small town of Erie and work for a department store for the rest of their lives. Wherever we end up in the future, we will all be proud to say we are graduates from Penn State Erie-the Behrend College.

As for me, I have no idea where my future will take me. I want to get married, buy a house, start a family and do all those other "grown up" things. But for now, I still have a good six months of being a Penn State college student.

At least I am prepared for all the uncertainty of the future. I don't have an exact plan, but after I graduate I will pack my bags, move where I have to for work, and actually grow up. I can't say I am ready to face reality yet, and in six months I doubt that will change. But I have to be strong, get up and move on with my life. And that's what I am going to do, I'm moving on...

My name is Kevin Gillespie, and I was born into a cross-cultural family. My American father worked for the U.S. Government in Germany, and was lucky enough to meet my German mother during this time. Having a German mother and an American father, I truly feel I was raised cross-culturally. Cross-Culturalism in my opinion is whenever we learn and possibly adopt certain cultural values and traditions from a given culture. This can be as simple as respecting others' cultural differences. I was raised speaking two languages; however, I speak both with a slight accent. I can easily adapt to the environment around me; yet, I am either too German or too American somehow. I carry two passports, and get weird looks from airport security at times.

Personally, I feel that international students tend to take on many things such as language, slang, traditions etc. Perhaps nationals can be more sensitive to them, see what cultural awareness can add into their lives, and become part of the foreigners'

culturalization. This would be ideal as opposed to the weird stares and mocking that international students must often endure.

When I first came to the Behrend campus this year I was glad to have found my niche within the International Student Organization. This club is for everyone. They accepted me with open arms, and the members are revealing their cultural ideals to me as I am to them. We really hope to have more American friends soon, so don't hesitate to stop on by.

Before ending, I would like to speak of culture shock. That's when entering a new country, you arrive, and say to yourself "oh my gosh, what is wrong with these people" but eventually you meet nice people who help calm your woes, and allow you to partake in their culture. Do British people drive on the wrong side of the road? Or do they merely drive on the other side of the road? The days of mono-cultural ignorance are dying.

Kevin Gillespie  
BLASC 03

## All she wants is to tell the truth ... for a price

It must be hard to be Jessica Lynch these days. Forced into the public eye by the military's propaganda ... er ... public relations arm, Lynch and her woman-warrior tale is exactly what the Army needed to make the War in Iraq more digestible, despite Lynch's objections.

Of course, most people who don't want the publicity won't take a \$1 million book deal.

Lynch has taken every opportunity to contest the military's hyperbolic rescue story, getting more network face time than Martha Stewart on a bad day for the Dow. But Lynch's story just isn't engaging the American public like the military wanted and she supposedly didn't.

The sales of her biography, "I Am a Solider, Too," haven't been anything to celebrate, with Variety reporting little interest from the major metropolitan retail booksellers. And even "The Andy Griffith Reunion" managed to bring in nearly 6 million more viewers than Lynch's Tuesday interview with Diane Sawyer on ABC.

The saddest point in her post rescue grasp at celebrity, still remains the "unauthorized" telefilm, "Saving Jessica Lynch," which dramatizes the events surrounding her rescue from the perspective of the Iraqi doctor-savior. It did well in the ratings, but not well enough to beat the Elizabeth Smart's harrowing tale of kidnap and rescue.

Selling your kidnapping story for cash so that other people can be entertained by your suffering is sleazy, but remem-

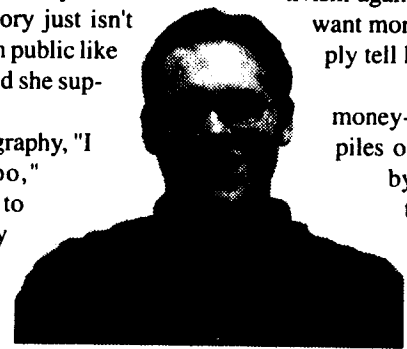
ber, no one else died in the 14-year-old Salt Lake City girl's rescue. Lynch had a responsibility to the 12 members of 507th Maintenance Company who died in their ambush and their living families to tactfully turn down interviews, at least for a few years before profiting off a national tragedy.

Instead, Pvt. Lynch is out getting her picture taken with Britney Spears for Glamour Magazine's Women of the Year celebration. It's impossible to believe a woman making a profit off her quasi-activism against military lies doesn't want more than a chance to simply tell her side of the story.

Lynch's take-the-money-and-run reaction to the piles of cash thrown her way by greedier media executives isn't only an slap to the families of her fallen comrades, but an insult to the POWs who fought for this country and paid a price with only a medal in return.

And now Lynch is crying because topless photos of her before the Iraq incident have surfaced. If her porno moment is published, it's only her fault. Hey, if you want your face on the cover of Time, then there's no reason you shouldn't expect it on the cover of Hustler.

I don't want to call an "American hero" a media-whore, but she is. When the circus around her story dies down, Lynch won't be done. Nobody who can take \$1 million in blood money ever is. It's only a matter of time before Miss America ends up on an installment of "Celebrity Survivor," or better yet, poses in Penthouse.



Daniel J. Stasiewski  
A&E editor

## Our View: The Filibuster The black eye of politics

Filibusters are the epitome of partisan politics and need to stop. The elimination of this practice would be a great step towards cleaning up two of the dirty words about politicians: partisanism and corruption.

For those of you unfamiliar with the filibuster, it is a political tool found in the United States Senate. Filibusters extend debate for an unlimited period of time and were intended to facilitate better conversation on issues.

Instead, it has been perverted to be a means to not allow voting on sensitive issues. Instead of voting on the issue, Senators discuss borderline irrelevant is-

sues until the issue is taken from the table and killed.

Almost always the filibusters are used by the party not in power (the minority) to stop the party in power (the majority) from passing legislation. This is partisanism in its ugliest form. Both parties are very guilty of doing this, and so they are both wrong. Democrats are filibustering President Bush's ideas just as Republicans when in the minority have filibustered Democratic president's and senators ideas.

Whatever party is in power has received a mandate from the people of this nation, and the people's wishes are si-

lenced by this practice. When politicians are ignoring this voice, it shows the corruption that is perceived as rampant throughout politics.

Ignoring what is best for the nation for the sake of your party or your own personal interests is wrong and gives the Senate a black eye. This clearly illustrates where the average person can get the impression that politicians are corrupt and weasel-like.

The abolition of filibusters would be a great step for democracy, and an image shift for politicians everywhere.

The Beacon's Editorial View is decided by majority view of the editorial staff.

disagree? disagree? disagree? disagree? disagree? disagree?

write your opinion to **The Beacon**

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