

The Behrend Beacon

Friday, February 6, 2004

# Glover spreads message of activism

by Daniel J. Stasiewski  
managing editor

Danny Glover's message to Penn State Erie was loud and clear. Democracy doesn't work if the citizens don't get involved.

Glover, on Thursday, lectured students and community members on community activism as part of the Speaker Series. The actor and activist, who has recently come under attack for his opposition

to the war in Iraq, maintained his stance against the war and also criticized his critics.

"We are bludgeoned with the idea we must wave the flag," said Glover to an estimated audience of 1,000.

Earlier in the day Glover echoed his comments at a press conference and went added, "If (patriotism) is a pride to dominate and oppress, I'll condemn it every moment I can."

Glover used the war in Iraq and the recent ap-

proval by Congress of the \$400 billion Medicare prescription drug benefit as examples of apathy on the part of the American electorate. He said people need to make the effort to fully learn about these important issues facing our nation and only then can this "Democratic experiment" truly succeed.

In addition to espousing his own political viewpoints, Glover read poems by Langston Hughes and discuss the work French philosopher Alexis De Tocqueville's "Democracy in America."

De Tocqueville, a French aristocrat who visited the new American democratic state in 1831, believed that American democracy was the "end of privileges preserved for one class."

"America demonstrated the possibility of a government ruled by citizens," said Glover, but the actor emphasized that citizenship doesn't just mean living somewhere.

"Civic involvement and engagement is not just one of the options, it is a basic requirement for citizenship," said Glover.

Glover, who calls himself a "child of the civil rights movement," also spoke about his grandparents saying, "My grandparents were not born with the idea of the American Dream." He described his grandparents as poor farmers, but also as visionaries.

"If they were here today, my grandparents would be surprised by the unbridled greed contained in our country," said Glover.

Glover, a strong supporter of Democratic presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich, also said that the country cannot be beaten by the "if you're not with us, your'e against us mentality."

In addition to speaking on community activism, Glover mentioned his work with the TransAfrica Forum, a nonprofit group that is dedicated to educating the public on U.S. Foreign policy concerning Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America.

Glover said he became interested in policy concerning Africa in his 20s and has read works of African writers describing the post-colonial concerns of the continent.

While the politically weighted commentary may not have reached everyone, one student certainly believes Glover's message was relevant to today's society.

Andrew Chernauskas, EET 02, specifically referenced Glover's story from last month's Sundance Film Festival. Glover said the film "Brother to Brother," which follows the story of a black writer who befriends a gay teenager in a homeless shelter, is an admirable work that won't make it in the mainstream film world because "even the idea of storytelling is not democratized."

Chernauskas believed Glover's comments on the film were especially provoking.

"Just considering the homophobic nature of a lot of people now and how that is sort of a new form of racism, (the film) kind of made me think of that a little differently," said Chernauskas.

Films like "Brother to Brother" and other art forms, according to Glover, are the perfect vehicle for voicing opinion, but whether it's through art or any other form of community activism Glover reminded the crowd that when it comes to democracy, "Neutrality is not an option."

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## DATE AUCTION

FROM PAGE ONE

and your chance to unmask your love you can try again in the fall when the sisters are at it again with their next date auction.

"I had a great time at the date auction this year," said participant Justin Curry GAS 06, "This was my first date auction and I think it's an excellent fundraiser to help a great cause. You can really see

all of the hard work that the sisters put into the event, and it definitely pays off for them in the end.

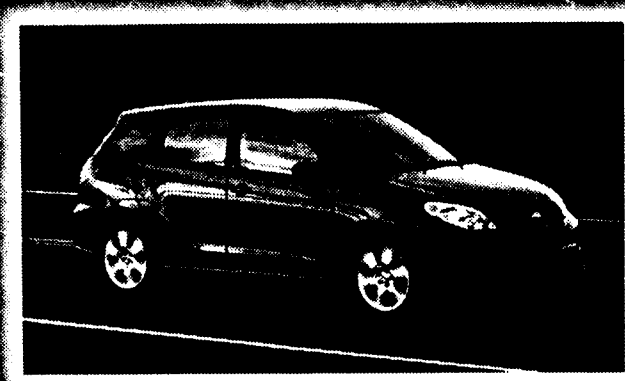
"I'd like to thank everyone who came out and participated this year, it would be great to have more people come out and help with the auction next year," said Tatum Cohen, ASA date auction chair, CAS 04.

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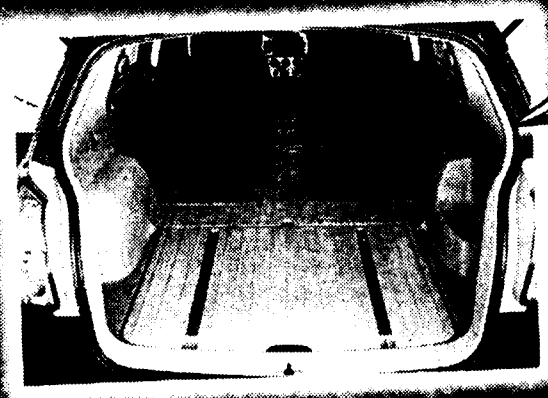
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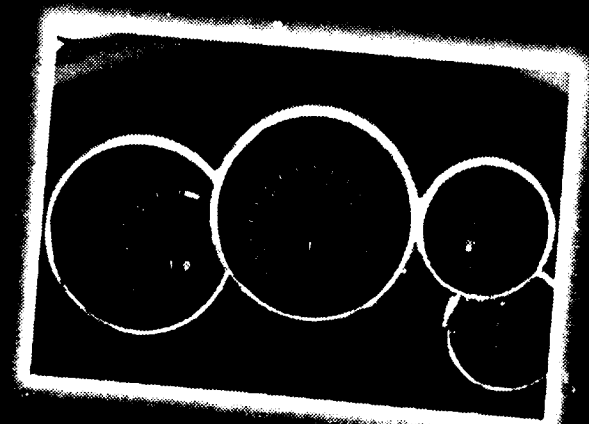
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