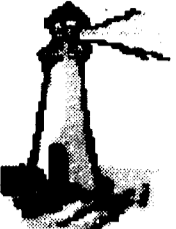


OPINION

The Behrend Beacon

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**THE BEHREND
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"Professionalism
with a personality"

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Mean girls don't cry

I believe my roommate said it best when she said "I just don't understand why do people do the things they do." Why do people make the decisions they do? Is it to better their social standing, make someone else feel less than they are or out of sheer laziness and selfishness. The world may never know.

I've seen so many of my friends get hurt by others they care about and by complete strangers, I'm sure we all have but it's almost funny in a way when it happens to you.

One could say there are many reasons to do the things they do. Take for instance the presidential election.

For months, campaigns ran commercials which held only one purpose: to bash and diminish the other candidate's credibility and image. Now, I realize that there was some strategy behind it. Make the other person look bad or worse than you at least and you'll probably get more votes which in return will win you the presidency. But is it right?

In what grade or stage in our life did we learn that making other people look bad for personal gain is the right thing to do? I can only imagine if this thinking was taught in every school's curriculum across the nation or even worse the world.

There would be complete pandemonium and distrust. America would look like the Jerry Springer stage, hopefully without the nudity. There are just some things in this world that no one should have to see. But, if this bashing and diminishing was in a lesson plan I'm pretty sure I was sick that day.

It's fascinating to see how people treat each other. I've seen at least six people today who should be receiving coal in their stockings for Christmas, but will they? More than likely not.

The fact is we're raised in hopes that one day we'll be able to make our own decisions. Which is a good thing, but are we raised to treat each other nicely and to make the right decisions? One



Amy Frizzell
managing editor

could only hope.

This summer I worked as a counselor at a summer camp with children no older than ten years of age. Out of about fifty kids, I think five of them had some sense of the right way to treat others. Some readers may defend them saying that they're only ten.

Let me just say this, if these girls are old enough to wear deodorant and shave their legs, they should know how to treat other people.

The sad thing is, it only gets worse as you get older. Think about it. You get away with it for so long that it becomes second nature, there's no guilt involved just personal satisfaction and it's almost repulsive.

In no way am I claiming that I'm perfect. I've made my fair share of mistakes and hurt plenty of feelings, too many in fact. I have often felt that sickening feeling in my stomach telling me that what I did was wrong. I believe that feeling is called guilt.

Fortunately, I was blessed with parents who in no way accepted my wrongful actions and forced me to learn the hard way about taking responsibility for my own actions. Trust me it's a hard road to take but it's one we should all follow.

Letter to the editor

Marisic Attacks!

I am going to write a letter not about politics, I am going to write about the gross incompetence of a member of the Beacon staff for blatant disinformation. The target: Sarah Weber, copy editor's opinion article "Gaymarriage, abortions are not the enemy."

This article would be more appropriately titled "Democratic Propaganda." Where shall I start? Morality appears to be a good place. America has proven homosexuality is disapproved of by all races and genders; as Sarah herself said "voters in 11 states decided Tuesday to outlaw gay marriage."

The gay population makes up 3 percent of America. America has grown to be about tolerance, but tolerance does not mean acceptance. I tolerate gay people, just like I tolerate your article. You have a right to say what you did even though you are entirely unsound. That's the difference between tolerance and acceptance.

Next on the list: the Roe vs. Wade court decision. You mistakenly target that as the deciding case for legalizing abortion. Once again you are wrong. Roe vs. Wade upheld

the doctor-patient privacy clause and it did not say any where in the decision that "abortion is now legal."

Following that will be your false claim that "this is a nation founded on the separation of church and state." Where in your education was this procured from the annals of time? I'd be quite amazed to witness a history teacher endorse your contention, because you are entirely wrong.

The United States was established on Christianity; the basis of our whole justice system is directly from moral right as found in the Bible. It wasn't for many decades that a Democrat whined so much that an amendment "separating church from state" was drafted. It's still quite clear, our nation is Christian and so is our government.

Sincerely,
Chris Marisic,
SEBD 05

We're only as moral as our pop music

I often have odd conversations at work. From the value of canned-tuna currency in a post-fossil fuel age America to loony predictions for local politics, the exchanges with co-workers are often as forgettable as they are absurd. After President Bush's re-election, exit polls showed morality as the main issue for Bush backers. One now unforgettable discussion with a rather naive coworker (from now on called Penny) represents the ass-backwards logic of the red states and right-wingers in the national morality-versus-personal-freedoms debate.

It had to do with strippers. A customer of ours (and I say ours because, in a pharmacy, we still have some personal connection with the people who pay for their overpriced prescriptions) wasn't dressed "respectably." Complete with fingernail Freddy Kruger would envy, whorish makeup and a leather outfit, Penny called the woman a derogatory name. She said the woman looked like a stripper and scoffed at the existence of the profession.

Long fingernails, whorish makeup and leather pants aside, the person couldn't be identified as a stripper or a prostitute. She could have been a transvestite for all we know. Or just a mom. Still, stripper is the word that came up.

To cut to the chase, I said strippers (and pornography for that matter) are necessary for the stability of society as we know it. Penny disagreed using college-level words such as "sick" and "disgusting" in justifying her case.

Penny didn't vote. In casual conversation, however, she did mention she would have voted for Bush.

For such a conservative, I found it odd that Penny was able to lambaste stripping and in the same week come bobbing into the stockroom with R. Kelly's "Ignition Remix" playing in the background. That makes Penny a conservative that listens to a song that blatantly references sexuality like this: "Girl I'm feelin' whatchu feelin'/No more hopin' and wishin'/I'm about to take my key 'n'/Stick it in da ignition."

Santa: breaking and entering charges pending

Yesterday, I was strolling through the mall, celebrating Armistice Day, better known as Veterans Day, by partaking in the joys of commercialism and capitalism. Since Thanksgiving is only two weeks away, I expected to see storefront displays catered toward this grand holiday which so joyously brought together the industrious pilgrims and those lovable scamps known as Native Americans.

Instead, I see that it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

It's been beginning to look a lot like Christmas ever since before Halloween. Halloween is on Oct. 31, Christmas is on Dec. 25, and last I checked that's two months folks. You want to know where I was on Halloween night last year?

I was at the mall nearly 20 feet up in a boom lift hanging brightly colored Christmas balls from the ceiling. Don't ask. Whilst ghouls and goblins ran about in the streets demanding sugar saturated food products, I was busy making sure that gaudy garlands made of fake pine needles were lined up properly.

As I watched a guy who was working with me try to steal quarters from the wishing fountains, I had a societal rev-



Daniel J. Stasiewski
editor in chief

Oddly pornographic, I thought. Penny disagreed, of course, because that would make her a hypocrite. We all know right-wingers aren't hypocrites. I decided to give Penny a quick lesson on the word pornography according to the Webster's New World Dictionary. According to Webster, pornography is, "writing, pictures, etc. intended primarily to arouse sexual desire."

Granted being able to stick a key in the ignition is one step passed desire, diving head first in to hardcore sex, but Penny wouldn't buy it. Unless it involved a visual money shot, a graphic reference to promiscuous sex doesn't count. Okay, okay, how about this then, Penny.

Some scholars use the term "explicit" in their discussion of pornography. For example, Destiny's Child's current Top 40 hit "Lose My Breath" asks an inept lover "Can you keep up?" The group goes on to sing lines like, "All them lies like you could satisfy me/Now I see where believing you got me/Gave you the wheel, but you can't drive me."

Other than the odd coincidence that both songs have car references (though nary a mention of a stick shift), these pop songs have in common the fact that they were heard by millions of Americans over MTV, Top 40 Radio and even iTunes. They aren't sent to 10 p.m., rot-

ting next to Dennis Franz's bare ass. They are songs that are sold by and purchased to Americans who are supposed to be in the middle of a conservative revolution.

I don't buy it. George W. Bush and his theo-con cohorts can pretend to be Jesus' homeboys, but none of them are stupid enough, economically speaking, to ban strippers, porn or the equally explicit pop music.

Besides, consuming pop music that goes way passed innuendo doesn't strike me as a right thing to do in these times of morality. In the current America's Top 40 Chart there are at least four songs that graphically describe sex, and many others that make reference to sex, promiscuous or otherwise.

While I doubt the tide is turning for American's to take a mature look at sexuality, there is a large market for music that has no better purpose be played while drinking, dancing and screwing. County music is catching up with the hit song "Save a Horse, Ride a Cowboy."

To Penny's credit, she does think Britney Spears is a "slut." But that doesn't explain why she and many other white college age conservatives have latched onto contemporary hip-hop for carnal excitement on the dance floor. It's all about titillation and Ludicrous howling at women to bend over and touch their toes is no different than watching a topless stripper do a pole dance. It's not even a matter of degrees.

If anyone has read my editorials in the past, they know I'm not calling for a moratorium on bad music with sexual references. I just can't imagine that the talk of morality is as black and white, or rather red and blue, as the media has made it out to be. Of course, I could be wrong, but the red state Nevada is the only state with legalized prostitution. The rest of the country, Penny and I will just have to settle for strippers, pop music and a whole lot of purple.



Andy McNeil
opinion editor

elation.

I'm sure you don't want to hear another tyrannically socialist rant about the commercialization of Christmas by the American commerce community, so I'll attack on a different front.

It has become apparent to me that we, Americans, have no tolerance for delayed gratification. Why wait for dinner when we can grab a Snickers? This underlining marketing philosophy has become a way of life for us. Everything we've ever

wanted is just five minutes from our fingertips, except for those pesky intangible concepts we cannot buy such as love and satisfaction. I'm confident that Donald Trump will find a way to market love within a few years though.

So why wait when we can have Christmas everyday? I mean what the hell! We've got Christmas in July haven't we. When I worked at McDonald's in high school (I shutter in shame as I type this) our managers, pompous tools of a corporation trying to kill us faster than tobacco companies, forced us to buy gifts to celebrate Christmas in July. If that wasn't bad enough they blared Christmas jingles nonstop as I was forced to stand over a scolding hot grill and fryer all day long.

Why I am opposed to the spreading cheer and goodwill to the American shopping public you ask? Basically, it comes down to this. I can only endure hearing "Jingle Bells" so many times before I snap and am forced to binge drink myself to sleep. So on behalf of livers everywhere, please people, let's move Christmas back to December where it belongs.

Counterattack: Disagree but don't deny

By Sarah Weber
copy editor

First of all I would like to thank Chris Marisic for reading the Beacon and taking the time to respond my "Gay marriage, abortions are not the enemy" editorial.

I would also like to set the record straight on a few of Marisic's points. I agree that Roe v. Wade upheld a patient's right to privacy. However, like I stated in my previous editorial, the case also protected a woman's right to choose.

To be certain, I looked the case up in my Government in America (Edwards, Wattenberg, Lineberry; 2004) text book glossary. I found the following: "Roe v. Wade - The 1973 Supreme Court decision holding that a state ban on all abortions was unconstitutional."

Secondly, while our country was indeed founded by Christians, our forefathers had the foresight to allow the American people to practice, or not practice, religion as they so choose. If the first amendment "Congress shall make no law respecting an es-

tablishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." is not evidence enough, Thomas Jefferson further reiterated the point in a letter to the Danbury Baptist Association in 1802.

"Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between man and his god ... that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, thus building a wall of separation between church and state. Adhering to this expression of the supreme will of the nation in behalf of the rights of conscience, I shall see with sincere satisfaction the progress of those sentiments which tend to restore to man all his natural rights..."

Having read and understood this passage, what else can be concluded except our forefather's intentions were to found a nation where religious beliefs are kept separate from governmental affairs?

Finally, your argument that while gays and lesbians can be tolerated but not accepted is irrelevant to my original editorial. I stated quite clearly that people have a right to disagree with gay marriage. Tolerate them, accept them, despise them, I could care less. However, the government has no right to tell gays and lesbians that they can't have the same rights to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness that straight people enjoy. And using the government as a mechanism to enforce your personal or religious beliefs goes directly against our founder's intentions.

I'm certain that no matter how legitimate my argument, my opposition will still try to find ways to justify forcing their beliefs on the country via the government. But history has proven that in time, people do tend to see the light, for example the cases of women's suffrage and civil rights.

One day, gays and straights alike will be able to enjoy the benefits of marriage, I promise you that.

Have an opinion you think others would give a \$#!% about? beaconletters@aol.com. 300 word limit. The Beacon reserves the right to edit letters for length, grammar, brevity and libel