

OPINION

The Behrend Beacon

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THE BEHREND
Beacon

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Abortion goes too far!

If you are anyone who knows me at all, you would know that I am not afraid to express my opinions. Some have even gone as far as to call me feisty and stubborn. Though that can be true (just make me mad and find out) I think it's just the fact that I know what I think.

I think the overemphasis on looks in society today is basically a load of bull. Though I wouldn't categorize myself as a full out tomboy I wouldn't call myself a girly girl either. I've never believed in spending hours on my looks, perfecting my hair and make up only to wash it off at the end of the day. Looks don't last. I prefer to appreciate natural beauty in life and oppose the obsessiveness of the perfect face and body, especially when it leads to death.

Recently two doctors in England were acquitted of charges against them after they approved an abortion. The abortion in question was of a fetus that was terminated after the mother's 24th week of pregnancy. Reason being, the fetus was known to have a cleft lip and palate, which is a deformity of the mouth.

This only crystallizes the over emphasis on superficial beauty in today's world. Through a simple plastic surgery the cleft lip and palate can be corrected. The mother took unnecessary drastic action to prevent her baby from being born with a deformity. Terminating a life over something so small and insignificant in terms of the big picture of life is absolutely unacceptable and disturbing.

The doctors claimed that they approved the abortion in good faith stating that they had good reason to believe that the child would be seriously handicapped. The 1967 Abortion Act allows for later abortion when it is believed that the child will be seriously handicapped. Problems do arise due to clefting but nothing that will seriously hinder the ability to live a normal life.



Amy Frizzell
managing editor

The child will have a harder time feeding but by purchasing a specially designed nipple for baby bottles that problem can be solved. The child will also be more susceptible to ear infections, but this can also be repaired by inserting a tube into the ear to better drain fluid build up caused by the cleft during the first reconstructive surgery.

I am pro-choice with the belief that a mother should have the responsibility and sense to handle a delicate life. I do not believe that it's a mother's right to choose termination because she cannot handle the fact that her child will be different in such a small way. I also believe that doctors have responsibility to make a mature decision when approving an abortion. This decision in no way was made with a mature understanding of the situation.

The fact that no action was taken and there was no punishment dealt gives me a sense of severe disappointment in today's society. How can someone consider this decision to be acceptable? What happened to morals and ethics? What happened to love and acceptance? If decisions like this continue to go unpunished and ignored the world should go straight to crap.

Headline goes too far?

I don't usually come to the defense of a zealous editorial columnist, but Chris Hvizdak's column "George Bush is worse than Hitler" does need justification. The language in the headline was harsh, much like Hvizdak's style. The comparison with Hitler was exactly the kind of rhetoric I discouraged in my Jan. 28 column.

The response to Hvizdak's language, however, was like the dogmatic, overzealous reaction to a barely exposed breast on a Superbowl half-time show.

George Bush is not, as an individual, worse than Hitler, but our nation does have to take responsibility for the state of the world since the fall of the Berlin Wall. As the world's only economic and military superpower, the United States has invested its time creating unnecessary conflict and ignoring worthwhile endeavors for the sake of defense contractors and war profiteers.

Current statistics have the death toll from the war in Iraq at more than 18,000 civilians. A small number compared to the more than 20 million deaths at the hands of Nazi Germany. Even an extremist can recognize that. What the United States does have is an ugly use and abuse of power, both at home and around the world, while American politicians, business people and military leaders call it a beacon of hope.

America has a legal system still deeply rooted in racism. The death penalty is disproportionately used against black Americans, with black inmates making up 43 percent of death row. While 50 percent of murder victims are black, 83 percent of death row cases are for white victims. If you take into the account the fact that crack (a drug predominately used by lower-class blacks) is prosecuted more vigorously than cocaine (the rich white person preference), there is an undeniable comparison to ethnic cleansing.



Daniel Stasiewski
editor in chief

Speaking of racism, under Clinton, America stood on the sidelines while 800,000 Rwandans were slaughtered. Bush is currently killing Iraqis, while the Sudanese government estimates a 250,000 death toll in its Darfur region. Darfur's death toll, which includes violent acts and malnutrition, is likely to rise without real intervention.

The United States and NATO allies did stop a dictator in Europe who was in power while 2,500 people were killed, but it was only a real genocide because of the color of their skin.

America's problems with skin color have also resulted in most people believing that all Muslims are terrorists and Iraq was responsible for 9/11. When you have a group of people that most white Americans would say "look alike," it's easy to understand why no one cared when we went to war. A second time.

The first Gulf War, under Bush, Sr., resulted in 110,000 civilian deaths. But the sole superpower was merely defending an oil ally (Yes, oil does make the world go round). Following American military action, thousands of Iraqis were killed for an uprising encouraged by America.

The failed revolution was a far

greater failure than the Bay of Pigs, so I can understand why some Iraqis don't want America there—12 years too late. The U.S. sanctions on Iraq in the nineties, which resulted in an estimated 500,000 deaths, justify even greater reluctance.

Add in the 3,000 plus Afghani people killed under the Taliban while American corporations were negotiating the construction of an oil pipeline with the high ranking Taliban officials and the 3,700 civilians killed in the first months of military action after 9/11 and the Muslim world has contempt for a form of intolerance that is considered nationalistic pride.

How about a timelier example of abuse of power? The U.S. Military "accidentally" killed an Italian intelligence officer at an Iraqi checkpoint. The military said the man was speeding toward them, but witnesses and the Italians refute this account. Maybe it was an accident. Or maybe the United States was trying to kill the Italian journalist who was saved from militants only because Italy paid a hefty ransom. Even sovereign allies can't step out of line with American policy without facing the consequences.

No, George Bush isn't worse than Hitler, but the United States has more power, and a far greater responsibility than Nazi Germany ever did. In 2005, the U.S. citizens are doing nothing, not voting because it doesn't matter, not watching the news because it makes them feel bad, and not caring about another nation's sovereignty because of gas prices. It's apathy that could easily result in the rise of the next Hitler.

Call me a blame America first liberal, but I'd say that America is the only one to blame. Citizens shouldn't be afraid of making comparisons to Hitler's nationalist regime. We should instead worry that one day the stars and stripes may be seen as a symbol of evil equal to that of the swastika.

Letters to the editor

Rally a success

Dear Editor,

In response to my editorial a few weeks ago, regarding the Rally at the Rotunda, I would like to congratulate the Governmental Affairs Committee of SGA. On Tuesday, the Governmental Affairs Committee, under the leadership of Deepti Soni and Maulin Gandhi, was able to bring 25 students, including myself, to Harrisburg in order to aid in the fight to raise state appropriations for Penn State.

While in Harrisburg, students were able to hear a handful of representatives speak, including Representatives Lynn Herman and John Yudichak who together are chairing an effort to bring more funding to the state system of higher education. In addition, some students were able to meet with Erie County Representatives Linda Bebeko-Jones and Curtis Sonney. Overall, the day was a great success in the battle against rising tuition and I only can hope that next year even more students will take the time to participate in what was both a fun and worthwhile event.

Sincerely,

Alexander Henderson
Student Government Association Chair Pro-tempore

Officers should earn stipend

Dear editor,

An article titled "SGA officers receive hefty stipends" was published in the March 4 edition of the Behrend Beacon. I wanted to write a quick note to add to that article. The big thing I'd like to emphasize is that the stipends were approved, a few years ago, by the senators of the SGA. The senators today still have the power to remove those stipends if they wished. However, because the stipends were approved, "an amount that varies from year to year" should also be approved year to year. Those who benefit from the stipend should benefit not from the positions they're in, but by the work they do. If the members of SGA who benefit from these stipends are not doing their job and earning their cut in tuition, the students of Behrend have the power to approach the SGA and say so. The members of the SGA are there to serve the student body, that's it.

Sincerely,

Zachary D. Mentz

SGA Senator
Lawrence Hall Council President
IAS Treasurer/MCC Representative

Defending the hardworking members of SGA

Dear Editor,

This letter is in response to the Question of the Week in the March 4, 2005 issue and also the article entitled "SGA officers receive hefty stipends." I read the Beacon every week and I was very upset when I was reading the issue and came across page 3.

First of all, I would like to clue LaCresha Huckabee in on what Scott, Justin and Dee have done around here to deserve it. I have watched Scott (SGA president) and Justin (SGA vice-president) on a Tuesday night attend meeting after meeting after meeting. They are not members of the groups that were holding the meetings, but they attended anyway to offer their advice and/or support. Both Scott and Justin have come to many Panhellenic

meetings and advised us on Robert's Rules of Order and helped us make important decisions.

Dee (SGA Treasurer) is always at the RUB Desk when I need her help. It seems that she is at the RUB Desk more than she is anywhere else. Whenever a club has a financial question, Dee goes out of her way to help them.

Now I ask you, how are the three of them supposed to perform these duties and work? They can't. The tasks that they are performing are extremely time consuming and they would be overwhelmed if they tried to have a job.

Also I would like to clue Amanda Charney in on what makes them special. What makes them special is the fact that they can handle a full course load and perform their duties. Scott, Justin and Dee put their hearts into

everything they do. They are the main reason that SGA makes changes on campus. They make me glad that I am a member of SGA because I know that my hard work is for a good cause.

I am glad that Scott, Justin and Dee receive stipends. Instead of writing mean articles about them in the Beacon, we should be patting them on the back for all their dedication and hard work.

If you don't feel that SGA is a benefit on campus why don't you check out one of their meetings? They hold them every Wednesday at 5:20 in Reed. Many of other students have brought their problems to SGA so if you are ignorant to the fact of what SGA does it is your own fault.

Sincerely,
Courtney Straub



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