

OPINION

The Behrend Beacon

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THE BEHREND
Beacon

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Blogs: message boards or online dating service?

By **Christina Hakel**
contributing writer

Blogs are a growing trend among everyone these days, especially teens and college-aged kids. I think that the idea of a blog, in general, is stupid. The fact that anyone can write about anything and publish it on the internet is not very reassuring. Considering millions of high school kids rely on the internet to do all of their school assignments and research, they may become dependant on blogs, using people's unprofessional opinions as fact.

Anyone can make up some sort of professional title for themselves on the internet, or become a "specialist" in any field. Then, when they create a blog to voice their opinions on issues, those statements can be misinterpreted or believed to be true.

I'm not going to lie; I am addicted to reading some blogs. I don't enjoy political or professional blogs; I like mine trashy and full of useless entertainment.

Blogs are hyped up as freedom of

speech and a chance to voice your opinion on important issues, and even interact with people concerning academics. This is true in some respects, but most blogs I've encountered consist of high school kids bitching about their parents being horrible or their lives being so tough causing them a severe case of depression.

Blogs to me are just websites for kids to follow up on the trends. You can be whoever you want to on the Internet, so why not make up rants and raves about issues that seem to be important to you and everyone else? Blogs are more of a way to network with people you could possibly never meet.

One blog that I can't get enough of is MySpace (www.myspace.com). Originally, I signed up for MySpace to look at other people's blogs for a good laugh. Turns out, I know a lot of people who are signed up for this blog and I could sit at my computer forever reading comments. You can rant and rave about whatever you want on this blog site and even post pictures of yourself or whatever.

Rarely are there important issues being blogged about. From what I've noticed, it's more of an internet dating service, with people posting comments on each other's blog about how cute they look in their new haircut, or how their pictures are "sooo emo."

When kids do blog on important issues, it's usually an artsy-fartsy poem about the war and the exchange of blood for oil. Half the poems aren't too bad, but they all just say the same things. And in response to the poems, you'd think there would be a political discussion. Nope. More comments on how cute the person is for being creative enough to write a poem. Or comments like "Wow, sooo deep. Great thoughts. P.S. I really like your new bangs. You have good bone structure for bangs."

Don't get me wrong, I'm an Internet geek and I can sit and read blogs for hours. I just don't think that they are being used for the purpose they were intended for. But whatever, Americans get a kick out of things like this.

It's time for new rules, everyone

By **Kristen Comstock**
editorial columnist

New Rule: Only push groceries in shopping carts. If you have the spare time and the mentality to be running around campus charging at people with a shopping cart, maybe you should be working at a store that gives them to their customers to use, not enrolled in college.

New Rule: Don't scream your dislike of Behrend to a campus tour. If they wanted your opinion they would ask for it. So unless you are getting paid to give the tour, keep it to yourself.

New Rule: Don't walk into class a half hour late. If you have already missed half the lecture, maybe you should think about skipping the duration of class. Not to mention you definitely should get an absence. If the rest of your classmates had to listen to the first part of the boring lecture, you should too.

New Rule: Party clothes are just that; they are made for the intention of going to parties and dancing. Don't wear your skanky clothes to classes. If it is not 90 degrees outside, there is no need for us to see you in a tube top. And while we are on the subject...

New Rule: Don't wear clothes that don't fit and don't complement your body shape. It is wonderful that you are confident enough with your body, but the rest of the campus should not have to be a privy to your butt crack and tummy pouch.

New Rule: Recycle. That is not a new rule, but it needs to be reminded to all the lazy SOB's who cannot take the extra two steps to put their bottles in the plastic bins all around campus. You are the ones who deserve to live on this ruined and tarnished earth.

New Rule: The mirrors in the weight room are not to be used for checking yourself out. Boys, there is a time and a place to lift up your shirt and check to see if you have developed a six-pack yet. The gym is not that place. Stop adver-

tising your vainness to the entire Junker Center.

New Rule: If you are going to sing at the top of your lungs, find out first if you can sing. People are cringing when they hear you sing off key. Either sing well, or don't sing at all; and this includes drunken karaoke.

New Rule: When people do not tell you about a party, there is probably a reason. You are not invited!

New Rule: Fix your squeaky bed. If you are aware that your bed squeaks, but you still need to do "activities" in it, oil it or something (I mean the bedsprings, pervert). Your neighbors do not want to be woken up at night to a rhythmic squeak.

New Rule: You may be lucky enough to have a significant other in your life, but do not proclaim your love for that person in your AIM profile. The person you care about knows about this love and no one else wants to read. So delete all the mushy crap, because it is a complete waste of profile space.

New Rule: A single person should not declare how desperate they are in their AIM profile or anywhere else. That is very unattractive. You want to know a reason why you are single? There could be many reasons, but that is definitely one.

New Rule: Pull your own weight for a group project. No one likes group assignments, but worse, no one wants to do your work for you. If you are inept, get the hell out of college or drop of the class at the least.

New Rule: Don't come to the library with headphones on. It is ludicrous! The library is a quiet place for a reason, and listening to music completely negates that atmosphere for you.

New Rule: Stop complaining that you have so much work. This is college, everyone has work to do and everyone is busy. We all can't be the busiest, so stop complaining and suck it up.

New Rule: Don't just talk, act. As Gandhi said, "Be the change you want to see in the world."

Video games as art

Video game playing should be considered an art. It takes practice, study and a certain level of skill to be a successful gamer. Depending on the game, different styles are employed, individual roles filled, unique techniques mastered. Video games used to get a bad rap from parents and the government, but now gaming is very much part of our American culture.

In the 90s, video gamers were ridiculed or labeled as social introverts: those who have few friends and enjoy wearing flannels or plaid. But today, anyone can partake in gaming and escape the label of "nerd."

A negative opinion towards video games still exists but is mainly housed in the generations previous to ours. They see games as a waste of time, but games have advanced far past the days of a small ball bouncing between two paddles.

The government likes to criticize violent video games—*We must protect the children!*—but then they endorse a war, taking real killing to the doorsteps of others.

I'm not saying that the war in Iraq was the wrong choice to make, Saddam is a bad man—not much we can do about it now—it just seems amusing that the US promotes violence as long as it's not our streets that are invaded, our homes and shops being blown up.

Gaming isn't a waste of time. On top of being considered an art form, gam-



Brad Stewart
news editor

ing should be used to solve all sorts of problems. Countries shouldn't go to war; presidents should face off in a round of head-to-head Halo2 or a Doom3 deathmatch. The result: a lot less dead people in the real world; money saved; and happy people (video games are fun!).

Video games have also been blamed as a catalyst to those children who go into schools shooting. I guess it's easy to blame the game: why blame the parents or ask how they manage to get the guns?

The gaming industry continues to grow. With more kids playing them and increasingly advanced systems available—a video game consol has become a normal household staple, right next to bread and milk.



Who needs sleep when there's coffee?

By **Ammie Pogson**
editorial columnist

As the spring semester draws to a close, I feel myself compelled to thank all of the people who helped me to survive yet another year at Behrend. Above all, I would like to thank the workers at Nescafé, the company that makes my coffee. Without these people, I would be nothing. I would be a lifeless slump, collapsed on my bed, unable to get up in the morning, unable to function. I would not make it to school. I would not make it to my classes. And I would never, ever get any homework done.

Okay, so maybe this is an exaggeration. I probably would make it out of bed in the morning without coffee, but I probably wouldn't get much farther. I would be forced to sit in my living room, on the couch, staring at the walls until my sleepiness subsided and I could think clearly. This could take hours.

During this period of adjustment, I would probably miss most of my morning classes, which means I would also have to miss my afternoon classes. It's a long drive from my house to Behrend (about a half an hour to forty minutes away) and gas is expensive. If I'm going to skip some classes, then I should definitely miss them all. This is not necessarily a bad thing.

Yet, I pay tuition and I try to be a responsible young adult, both of which entail making a reasonable effort to attend my classes. And the only way I

know to ensure that this attempt takes place is to drink coffee. Coffee gives me the energy, the jump start I need to at least begin my morning.

Coffee also gives me the energy I need to begin my afternoon. And my evening. And my late night. I drink coffee all of the time. I drink coffee in the place of sleeping, cross my fingers and hope for the best. Maybe I really will be okay if I only sleep for four hours. One can only wonder. What else is there to do when there are books to read, papers to write and finals to study for?

I have a feeling that I am not the only student who does this. As I look around this computer lab where I sit typing, I have a feeling that I am surrounded by many coffee addicts, many slaves to the bean. I don't look down on them. I know that they need coffee to function, the way that I do.

Coffee drinking is a form of desperation. It is an outlet for people who have many responsibilities and not enough time and energy to face them. When all else fails, when it is the night before that final paper is due and all you have are a few bleak notes and a textbook to work with, something inside you snaps. Suddenly everything matters and nothing matters. You will have that paper done against all odds even if it takes you all night and half of the next day and you won't care if it is the craziest, most meandering paper anyone has ever seen; it will be there, in your professor's hands at the moment it is due. This is your mission. Coffee is your weapon. It will help to push you

through the impossible feats of intellect that your professors have chosen for you in these last few weeks of school.

Yet coffee can be a dangerous weapon and should be used wisely. I once drank three shots of espresso and then tried to eat a cupcake. I say tried because I could barely hold my hands steady enough to lift the cupcake to my mouth. Let this be a warning: you can't type papers if you can't hold your hands firmly over the keyboard.

I would also advise against trying to flavor your coffee with vanilla or peppermint extract. While coffee can be boring at times, full flavored extract, the kind that bakers use, is not a good way of kicking your coffee up a notch. I learned this the hard way, especially with the peppermint. It burns. It burns a lot. As a general rule, if you put something in your coffee that makes it fizz so much that you can barely take a sip, then chances are you probably shouldn't drink it.

Other than that, drink away. And remember, summer break is almost here. You won't need coffee anymore. You will be free. You will be independent. You will be able to do that thing that you covet the most, that thing that you daydream about constantly; you will be able to sleep. Now that is something worth working towards.

The Party's Over
Year-In-Review
Next Issue