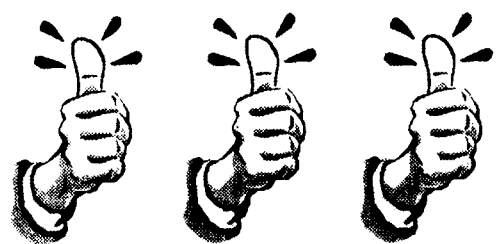


# OPINION

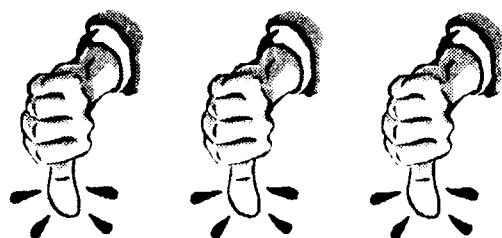
Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. - The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

## Beacon Thumbs Up



- Greeeeeat weather
- February is a short Month
- Spring break's getting close
- Music at Noon series
- Cinnamon mouthwash

## Beacon Thumbs Down



- Mailbox buddies who don't pick up their mail.
- Roomates' guests leaving the toilet seat up
- Leaky Brunos cups
- Teachers all testing in the same week
- Bruno's being a half hour late with CIAO's pizza

## The Behrend Beacon

Published Weekly by the students of Penn State Erie



Beacon

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# The State of the Union

By Patrick Webster  
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A long time ago, the State of the Union wasn't even an address. The President was just constitutionally required to inform the Congress at least once a year as to the state of the American Union. This could be done in the form of a letter, a report or, if he wanted to, in person. Not until Woodrow Wilson did the practice of personally addressing the collected senators and representatives in congress did it become customary.

However, somewhere along the way, the President's duty of delivering an address to Congress regarding the State of the Union became nothing more important or practical than a mid-term campaign speech and a media circus.

The Union is strong. Now let me talk about how great I am and what a great job I'm doing for the next hour.

Sadly, the address given by President Bush on Tuesday was no better.

Everything he said, from the honoring of a great American and wife of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Coretta Scott King, to the vow to increase research in ethanol in order to reduce dependence on foreign oil, which has been made by every president since the Nixon administration, was scripted for the sole purpose of bettering public relations with the White House.

No honest discourse on the problems in our Union. No straight talk or accountability for mistakes made in the past year or new issues to be dealt with. No, first and foremost, this was a PR

event. This wasn't a speech about the State of our Union. This was a speech about I'm-only-polling-at-39%-so-I'd-better-remind-everyone-how-awesome-I-am-and-let-them-know-how-dangerous-the-world-would-be-without-me. He even chided Congress for not passing his Social Security privatization plan that didn't have the support he needed from his own party, let alone the Democrats.

The obviousness of it all sickened me. Even Laura Bush, who would undoubtedly be the focus of several camera zooms and photo opportunities, made sure she was sitting beside two very important people: an Iraqi woman and an African-American man. Undoubtedly this would reflect well on the president! What a champion of diversity!

At the same time, the assembled congress-people did their best to marginalize themselves from their constituents. The Republicans on one side stood and applauded on cue to everything the president said with both the dependability and emotion of a room full of robots, devoid of free will. The Democrats, on the other hand, did their best to convince the world that they had all the maturity of kindergartners, as Hillary Clinton contributed by giving a sarcastic and sickening smirk after every statement the president made.

Even the Capitol police got in on the act, making sure to arrest now-famous, but of questionable capacity for independent thought, anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan before the glorified campaign

speech could commence, along with the wife of the senator she was invited by. Of course, they released her the next day, after realizing that she hadn't actually, if you wanted to be technical about things, broken any laws, and they issued an embarrassing apology. Oops. That's just what we need, guys. Another little seed of doubt to cause people to wonder if it's now illegal to hold political views that are opposite of those of the party in power.

Not that you care. None of this political stuff affects you. Try not to think about the Republicans in Congress voting along party lines this week to make the biggest slash in federal student aid and college loans in history. Don't worry. It doesn't concern you. Go back to sleep.

## Submission Guidelines

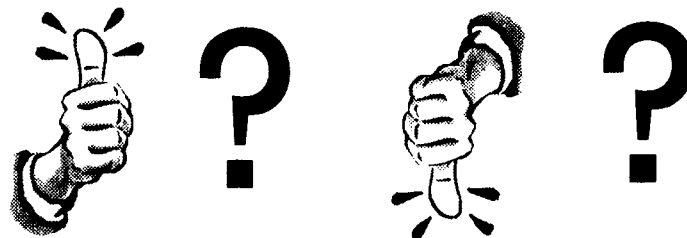
The Beacon welcomes readers to share their views on this page. Letters and commentary pieces can be submitted by email to [opinion@psu.edu](mailto:opinion@psu.edu) or directly to the Beacon office, located in the Reed Building.

Letters should be limited to 350 words and commentaries should be limited to 700 words. The more concise the submission, the less we will be forced to edit it for space concerns and the more likely we are to run the submission.

All submissions must include the writer's year in school, major and name as The Beacon does not publish anonymous letters. Deadline for any submission is 5 p.m. Tuesday afternoon for inclusion in the Friday issue. All submissions are considered, but because of space limitations, some may not be published.

All submissions must include consent to be edited before they can be edited for publication.

Have a "Thumbs Up" or "Thumbs Down" ?



Send Suggestions to [opinion@psu.edu](mailto:opinion@psu.edu)

## Stop Global Warming

By Michelle Vera Surovic  
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The errors of mankind which stem from the decisions leading to World War II are starting to come into full effect. Back in the day, there was a good reason to fight other countries. Now, wars are started when one particular political family decides to spice up their Risk board game by using real pawns.

World War II in particular created a shortage of good men. There's still a shortage, but not even sending all the first-born sons to charm school will ever fix that. After the end of the war, women were so lonely that they decided to not be picky, and thus the Baby Boomer generation was born.

The Baby Boomers created a goldmine to marketers. They promoted crazy nick-nacks and the parents of the toddlers snatched up diapers, refrigerators, houses, and other silly wastes of money. Everything ran smoothly in history for a while, and the bumps were minimal. Sure, a few guys got shot for no particular reason, and the ladies opted for funny hair and shoulder pads but history was devoid of major self-inflicted catastrophes. Now, present day, when science has failed us in a cure for aging, or the development of moon colonies that would have fueled the investments in crater-front properties, we face a new

problem.

The Baby Boomers did their best to make the world a better place. They did the things good Americans do. They created families of their own, accumulated massive credit card debt, and had gambling and/or drinking problems. What happened because of their existence would have been impossible to predict, but it's time to take action. As they aged, the men suffered mid-life crises which ended as soon as a shiny red car was purchased, but the women suffered an even crueler fate, the curse of a long life. The physiological makeup of a female allows her to live longer (not including when she murders her inferior mate) but it also allows women to overheat.

Once a woman's potential is used up and she starts to become useless to the world, she develops a condition called menopause. To some it may be a natural event of nature, but to others it is a threat to the stability of the world. One of the symptoms is a phenomenon called "hot flashes." These short periods of heightened heat are more dangerous to the planet than aerosol hairspray, oil spills, and broken beach glass combined. The intense energy generated from hot flashes is the sole cause of global warming. Thus, the only way to stop the glaciers from melting is to destroy all women in menopause. Either they go, or California does.

## Quote of the Week

"The accomplished scholar is not a utensil."

~Confucious



Jerry Pohl