

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

The Behrend Beacon

Published weekly by the students of Penn State Behrend

THE BEHREND
Beacon

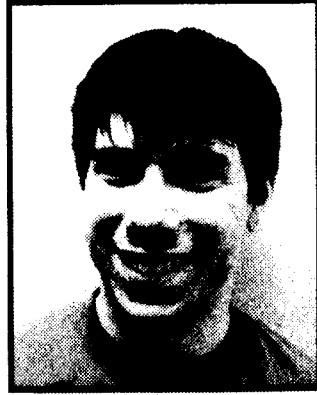
Christopher LaFuria, **Editor in Chief**
Patrick Webster, **Managing Editor**
Lindsay Snyder, **Advertising Manager**
Kim Young, **Adviser**



News Editor Ashley Bressler	Humor Editor Ben Raymond
Assistant News Editor Lenny Smith	Assistant Humor Editor Jerry Pohl
Sports Editors Danielle Brown Kara Struski	Head Copy Editor Rachael Conway
Opinion Editor Janet Niedenberger	Copy Editors Chris Brown Janet Niedenberger Jessica Samol
Food & Drink Editor Chris Brown	Student Life Editors Joshua Lane Scott Muska
Photography Editor Mike Sharkey	

Penn State Erie,
The Behrend College
First Floor, The J. Elmer Reed Union Building
Station Road, Erie, PA 16563
Contact the Beacon at:
Telephone: (814) 898-6488
Fax: (814) 898-6019

This week in politics



By Chris Brown
copy editor

Both the House of Representatives and the Senate passed an Iraq funding bill that had a non-binding demand to withdraw all troops from Iraq by spring 2008, and set the beginning of that withdrawal starting as early as July this year. This is the weaker of the proposals that has come in congress; in effect the spring 2008 deadline is only a 'suggestion' the way this bill is worded. Nevertheless, President Bush has vowed to veto the bill because of the withdrawal date attached.

Unfortunately, Congress will not have enough votes to overcome the veto, even with public opinion on their side. Even if Congress ends up passing a weaker bill in the end after the veto, they still scored a major victory in forcing President Bush to deny money for the troops he has sent to Iraq.

The passage of the bill has sent the message to the Iraqi government that this isn't an open ended commitment and

that ultimately their future lies in their own hands. Iraq has been slow to govern itself and the rebuilding effort has gone even slower. This bill sends the message that once Bush is out of office, there is a likelihood that the troops will be leaving and for once, the United States military will be able to focus its attention on the more important area of the war on terror.

Japan's Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, is set to visit the United States this week amidst growing controversy about Japan's role in World War II and sex slaves. A few weeks ago Abe said that there was no evidence proving Japan's military forced women into brothels for troops during the war and he appeared ready to recant an official apology made

threatening to pass a resolution denouncing the actions and lack of atonement on Japan's part.

While many will make it appear as a cut & dry issue, there are deeper cultural and political issues that motivate this discussion over 60 years after the fact. For many in Japan they see the actions of the government during WWII as fascist and that they were being manipulated, a feeling the U.S. government encouraged with the Tokyo War Crime Trial.

Also, there is a resurgence of nationalism within Japan and a lot of discussion about amending Article 9 of their constitution to allow for them to build offensive military capability; currently Article 9 makes it against the law for Japan to have a military for anything but defensive purposes. This has caused renewed worry in China and South Korea, motivating at least partially the controversy surrounding Japan's past. They hope that by focusing the world's attention on the sex slaves they will be able to prevent Japan from successfully asserting themselves as a world leader, a strategy that worked during Japan's bid for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council in 2005.

Abe's visit underscores the close relationship Japan and the U.S. have shared since the end of WWII. Over the past few years this relationship has evolved and Japan is beginning to assert itself not just as a leader in East Asia and the world. If Japan wants to become a world leader, they need to act like one and take responsibility for their past actions, because sometimes leaders are forced to do things that they don't feel is right and this is one of those times.

This bill sends the message that once Bush is out of office, there is a likelihood that the troops will be leaving and for once, the United States military will be able to focus its attention on the more important area of the war on terror.

in 1993 by then Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa. After many governments and people expressed their outrage at Abe's statement he 'clarified' his stance saying he has always expressed remorse for Japan's actions during the war. For some, this is not good enough or far enough; Representatives in Congress are

It's time for my opinions

By Janet Niedenberger
opinion page editor

I figured that since I've been editing this page all semester, that I'd throw out a few of my opinions.

First off, in general, I believe that everyone should have their own opinions and beliefs, and that they should not be judged for those beliefs. Unless, that is, they try to push said beliefs on everyone around them. Do you want someone tearing you apart for what you believe? Odds are, probably not. Remember the Golden Rule, and let others think what they want. Don't shove your opinions down my throat, and I'll return the favor.

Next up is abortion. I am pro-choice. I believe that women should have the option to do what they wish with their bodies. It is illegal for women to get abortions after their second trimester of pregnancy, unless the pregnancy has

become life-threatening. Many pro-lifers try to bring religion into abortion policies, and say that fetuses are humans and that abortion is equal to murder. However, scientifically, fetuses cannot live outside of the womb before the third trimester. Therefore, it is not murder, and is the mother's choice. Women who get abortions have to live with that decision for the rest of their lives, but it is their decision, not the government's or someone who thinks that it's wrong.

Yet another issue that I feel strongly about is gay marriage. I feel that one cannot help who they fall in love with, and should therefore be able to take part in all of the legal and personal privileges that married couples have. Even if it were to be called something other than "marriage," I feel that people shouldn't be restricted in that sense of their lives, and that the choice should be theirs.

The last and final issue I feel like discussing is drivers who are elderly.

Don't get me wrong, I plan on driving 'til the day I die, but I think there should be laws put into place for those older than 60 or so. In my six years of driving, I have been rear-ended three times. Once was by a friend who was joking around. The other two? They were both older people. Now, of course this doesn't mean that everyone over 60 isn't a good driver; my dad is 65 and the only time he's wrecked in the past 20 years or so has been when hitting deer; and who in Pennsylvania hasn't done that anymore? I believe that those age 60 and over should be required to retake their driving test every two years or so. If they're good, responsible drivers, then this shouldn't be a problem. If they fail, then they can study and retake it, just like a beginning driver does. I think this would possibly eliminate not only some amount of accidents on the road, but also would possibly tone down aggression that I know I personally feel when I'm behind an older driver.

Letter to the Editor

In response to the April 13 article entitled, "Behrend student finds therapeutic release in writing."

What is Poetry? Perhaps poetry is words strategically placed on a blank piece of paper? Or is it nonsensical, rambling content "written" somewhere for readers to see? Poetry, by definition, is "writing that formulates a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience in language chosen and arranged to create a specific emotional response through meaning, sound and rhythm" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary). With good poetry, content is important but not nearly as important as are the words that portray the content.

The moment a poet finishes writing a poem, the poem has already taken some sort of form. Contemporary poets recognize, appreciate, understand, and respect the traditional form (punctuation is included in form), yet they try to break tradition while using the knowledge of form. Oscar Wilde once said, "Literature always anticipates life. It does not copy it, but moulds it to its purpose." Form is just a specific term under the generalized word of literature. Contemporary poets/writers try to come up with new form, style, and content, which usually just means bending, molding, and

reusing forms, styles and contents from the past. However important form is for the overall look of the poem, it also helps the content/idea of the poem. By using certain poetic devices, enjambment, alliteration, allusion, etc, phrases, words and lines end up with multiple meanings, which allow the poet to play with language in ways that others wouldn't imagine. Overall this makes the content of the poem stronger.

Robert Frost, who is a canonized poet, was recently accused of not being "real" supposedly because he didn't write about "real" issues. What makes Robert Frost a poetry genius is his ability to have his poems interpreted in several ways. Someone who likes to look at poetry sees Frost as a nature poet. He makes these readers feel warm and fuzzy about trees, apples and roads less taken. However, readers whole like to experience poetry know that Frost isn't a warm and fuzzy nature writer, but instead is a very dark, deep poet. As for using "elaborate metaphor and endless analogies" along with "big words and phrases" all misconceptions of good poetry by people who forget what poetry really is. Remember that even the simple four letter words often times have several meanings, and without looking them up in an Oxford English Dictionary. "Simple"

poems are often misread and simplified. Also let's not forget that Robert Frost is not a contemporary poet. He isn't even alive anymore. What would be considered "real" issues now, were probably not "real" issues then. If you would like an example of a contemporary writer who dealt with, "drugs, alcohol, strippers, and hangovers" read something by Jeffery McDaniel.

I encourage people to write, and if you feel the need to self-publish your work, go for it. This is not an argument for or against self-publishing; rather it's showing that literature, more specifically poetry, isn't as easy as it may look. Anybody can pick up a pen and write a sixteen-line sonnet, but can that person make it a real piece of important literature? Emily Dickinson said, "If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry." Poetry, along with all literature, is work if you truly want the full experience. To start rambling on about a subject matter that you obviously have no idea about, not only makes you sound ignorant, but also makes you look like a fool. Poetry and Literature are worth all the work that is put into writing and reading it.

-Amanda Dziubkowski

Scientists have found a new Earth-like planet 20 lightyears away. I'm asking congress for an astronaut surge and to approve funding for 300,000 guns and 400,000 bibles to liberate this planet.



Jerry Pohl

THUMBS UP



- One week of classes left!!!
- Puppies
- Summertime
- Stephanie Colbertle, the Leatherback turtle
- Regattas

THUMBS DOWN

- Censorship

- Drivers that take 10 minutes to make a right turn

- Liars

- Teacher evaluations

- Colbert's AmeriCone Dream ice cream being out of stock



Submission Guidelines

The Beacon welcomes readers to share their views on this page. Letters and commentary pieces can be submitted by email to jan219@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.

The Behrend Beacon reserves the right to edit any submissions prior to publication.