


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.



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FOUNDED IN 1948

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A time for change

By Chris Brown
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When I first heard about the wildfires in California, my thoughts went to the residents there, hoping that no one was killed or injured. My second thought, possibly a testament to where our society puts its priorities, was who is going to pay for this? With over 500,000 people displaced, a number dead, and the declaration of a national emergency I also began to think about the similarities between the fires and Hurricane Katrina. Though the devastation may be where the similarities end with Katrina and the forest fires.

Perhaps the greatest difference between the two will be the response from the federal government. Southern California is much more powerful political and economically than New Orleans. When all is said and done, there will be a noticeable difference between the way aid from the government will be distributed, and I can guarantee that there won't be over \$45 billion in unspent aid waiting to be distributed over two years later.

However, this does not mean that the government is corrupt, or the system is broken. It will not be because Republicans are evil, Democrats don't support the troops, or because as Kanye West said, "George Bush doesn't like black people." In fact, I'm not entirely sure anyone deserves the blame because if California gets more than New Orleans it only means **I doubt California** and our children will have more opportunities when this is not necessarily the case. Things can get worse or things can get much better than anyone has ever imagined. I've never heard of an economy or civilization collapsing because businesses and individuals gave too much money to charity.

This is a system that will have a difficult time obtaining the federal aid for rebuilding after the wildfires

shown that this is not the case. Instead, they represent the constituents that elect them. And in today's elections this does not even include voters in some respect, but the businesses and power brokers that supply the money to campaigns. A politician is more likely to get elected today because s/he has more money than their opponent, even if their stance on important issues leaves something to be desired. Substitute power for money and the American political system makes sense. Those that have money have the power and those that have power get the money. One only needs to look to the Presidential primaries for an example of this. No Presidential candidate could ever expect to win an election bid supporting the removal of farm subsidies. They would lose badly in Iowa, limiting the prospects of their success in winning their party's nomination for President and many other votes in farming states. A funny outcome considering that these subsidies force a larger number of Americans to pay over \$25 billion on food due to inflated prices.

But this is the system we designed, we live in, we embrace. It is one based on free market principles, but practiced

by egoist power mongrels - all of us included. Everyone wants something for nothing, everyone else be damned. After Hurricane Katrina hit, there was a sense that it was the residents of New Orleans' fault for living in a city below sea level and not evacuating. That they should somehow pay their own way out of the tragedy, because after all, everyone knows how well off they were before the hurricane hit. I wonder if the same pundits will mount the same accusations at the people of Southern California for developing an area historically prone to forest fires.

I doubt California will have a difficult time obtaining the federal aid for rebuilding after the wildfires. In my opinion it boils down to limited resources and maximizing production, and in that equation California wins every time in comparison to New Orleans. When it comes down to it, how much is the birthplace of the Blues worth in comparison to MTV Cribs in America?

Chaos Theory tells me that if a butterfly flaps its wings in England there will be a thunderstorm in Kansas, and Economic Theory tells me that the best way to distribute scarce resources in the midst of unlimited demand is the free market. It is easy to forget that when it comes down to it, Capitalism (egoism may in fact be a better term to describe our current situation) - can be wrong, just like every theory. For many it is a foregone conclusion that our lives will be better than the lives of our parents

and our children will have more opportunities when this is not necessarily the case. Things can get worse or things can get much better than anyone has ever imagined. I've never heard of an economy or civilization collapsing because businesses and individuals gave too much money to charity.

Political scientists use statistics and experiments, economists - graphs, and mathematicians - equations, all to convince me that the way things are today is the way things will always have to be. That our current situation is a fact that can't be debated. But, when it comes down to it, no matter what race, creed, ethnicity, culture, or nationality you identify yourself with, something just does not seem right about our government, about money, about jobs, about education, or anything else these days. We may not be able to agree on the causes of this feeling, or the solutions to the problem, but we all agree that something needs to change. These feelings don't make you un-American or any of those other dirty words usually ascribed to those that question the current establishment, in fact it makes you more human.

No matter what the 'experts' tell me, I like to think this gut-instinct, developed over millions of years of evolution, that something is fundamentally wrong with the values of society today carries a little more weight than what some scientist, politician, or economist says.

There's only one kind of Nittany Lion

By Lenny Smith
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Let's take a journey back to your senior year of high school when you made your college decision. You were probably very excited about being accepted into Penn State Behrend and couldn't wait to graduate from high school and get away from all that drama.

"Hey Len, where are you going to college next year," a friend asks. "Penn State Behrend," I reply. To my dismay, I am not met with any congratulations. No, I simply get the look of discomfort and then the response, "Oh, you couldn't get into Main, huh?"

Yes, I didn't get accepted into University Park for my freshman year, but that doesn't mean that because I go to a commonwealth campus I am any less intelligent. This seems to be one of the worst misconceptions among Penn State students, primarily those in State College.

There are numerous reasons why a student would choose Behrend over University Park. Behrend has a lot to offer on its own right, aside from the Penn State degree.

They have smaller class sizes, which means a smaller student to faculty ratio, award-winning professors and programs, as well as the greater opportunity to participate in athletic programs.

University Park also has its highlights, too. You are right in the midst of everything that is Penn State. All your needs are met within walking distance, and there is a greater opportunity to find who you are in the very diverse environment.

I initially had my heart set on University Park and after I was diverted to Behrend I was pretty upset. However, I have grown to really like it here in Erie. I have been involved in a large number of programs and clubs and academically, the smaller class setting has definitely been an advantage. However, I do plan on transferring because I cannot finish my degree at Behrend.

demically, the smaller class setting has definitely been an advantage. However, I do plan on transferring because I cannot finish my degree at Behrend.

What really makes me mad is when the students at University Park feel like they have the right to demean all the students at commonwealth campuses. A remarkable 60 percent of first year students start their degrees at a campus other than University Park. Any of these students that are in good academic standing have the option of changing their campus assignment to University Park.

Behrend students deserve the respect of their fellow Penn State students. We have some of the best academic programs in the nation, including our Plastics Engineering Technology major.

This year, one of UP students' main argument against commonwealth students is their right to football tickets. They think that they should have first dibs on student section seating because there are in State College. They believe that we should not even have to option to purchase tickets because all we supposedly do is sell our tickets for a profit. I was fortunate enough to buy season tickets and have attended every game that I can. Over the course of the season, I will have only sold two tickets. I know a lot of people at University Park that have student tickets, but have not felt like going to the game and have left their ticket to go unused. What is worse, a ticket going unused or a ticket from a commonwealth student being sold?

At the end of our tenure, we will all have a diploma that reads "The Pennsylvania State University." There will be no way for anyone to know where you began or even finished your degree. The commonwealth campus system gives students from all campuses valuable resources from all over the state. We are all one Penn State.

Submission Guidelines

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.

The Beacon does not publish anonymous letters. Please include your major, faculty, or administrative position and semester standing. Deadline for any submission is 5 p.m. Tuesday afternoon for inclusion in the Friday issue.

The Behrend Beacon reserves the right to edit any submissions prior to publication. Please keep complaints as specific as possible.

Email submissions to cmb5313@psu.edu or drop them off at the Beacon office.

If you think of a title, then put it here

By Chris LaFuria
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If you don't like the president, then vote for someone that you do like.

If you don't like the way Behrend is run, then join SGA and change things.

If you drink underage on campus, then you will get caught and be punished.

If you do drugs, then you will be 45 years old pushing a shopping cart along Peach Street.

If you have sexual relations that are not consensual, then you will encounter the same scenario in prison.

If you cheat on your exams, then you will not learn anything and will be pushing shopping carts along Peach Street.

If you dream something, then you can achieve it.

If you train dogs to fight, then the law will bite you.

If you don't read a newspaper, then you will have no idea what's going on.

If you appreciate art, then you have

imagination.

If you don't like snow, then you shouldn't be in Erie.

If you drive your car too fast, then you will get in an accident or get a speeding ticket.

If you look at child pornography, then you better get used to saying, "Hi, I'm your new neighbor. I'm a sexual predator."

If you ask questions, then you will find answers.

If you spit your gum on the sidewalk, then someone will step on it, getting it on their sneakers.

If you don't like paying too much for gasoline, then you should carpool or explore other modes of transportation.

If you say "Thank you," then people will be more likely to assist you in the future.

If you party too much and neglect your studies, then you should learn how to say, "Welcome to McDonald's. Would you care for a Value Meal?"

If you have nothing to believe in, then

you have nothing to live for.

If you never say "I love you" to the people you care about, then don't expect to be loved.

If you play with fire, then you may experience the heat.

If you smile in the direction of at least 10 people, then you have changed 10 people's lives.

If you don't believe in miracles, then expect the unexpected.

If you can read people's cheesy bumper stickers, then you're driving too close.

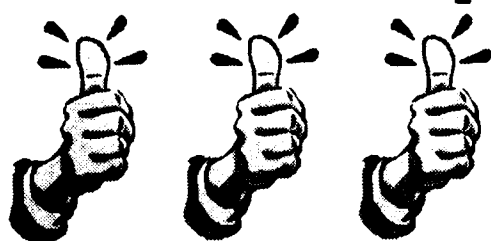
If you spend hours on your appearance, then you should register for Extreme Makeover: Soul Edition.

If you have no friends, then you're not friendly.

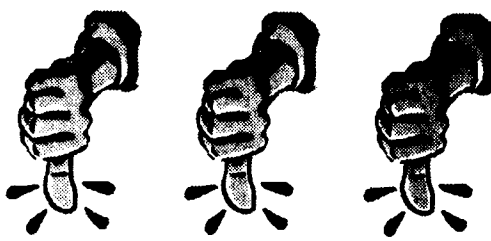
If you start a sentence by saying "I'm not trying to be a bitch," then you're going to say something that renders you a bitch.

If you read this entire piece, then I hope you learned something.

Beacon Thumbs Up



Beacon Thumbs Down



- Hummus at Bruno's

- Cage season starting

- Halloween

- Wes Anderson

- Smashed pumpkins

- Rain

- Wildfires

- Everwood

Quote of the Week

"The bottom line is that to the extent the spending is not offset by higher taxes or reduced spending elsewhere in the budget, and therefore simply adds to the deficit, the total budgetary impact of the war, including spending to date, possible future spending, and higher interest costs would amount to between 1.7 trillion and 2.4 trillion dollars through 2017."

Peter Orszag, the head of the Congressional Budget Office