



THE

BEHREND BEACON

RECEIVED
MAR 25 2008
LILLEY
LIBRARY

Friday, March 21, 2008

A Penn State Behrend Student Publication

Vol. LIV No. XVIII

CNN: Special Investigations Unit anchor Soledad O'Brien visits Behrend

By Rachel Reeves

opinion editor
rcr5052@psu.edu

When Soledad O'Brien stood to speak in McGarvey Commons on Tuesday night, it was with a definite air of ownership. It was clear that she had worked hard, sacrificed much and that she had earned her position.

O'Brien has come a long way from the little girl who watched the nightly news with her family and created a domestic publication with her siblings. She began her higher education as a pre-med student, but soon realized that medicine was not what she was made for. To bide some time, O'Brien began her career with an internship at a small market TV station and ended up discovering her vocation.

"I didn't care if I was going to be the coffee girl for the rest of my life. Everything about it was just so exciting."

However, for a young woman of mixed Cuban and Australian heritage, breaking into the business proved harder than usual. One station even told her that they had a place for one black broadcaster, but that O'Brien was not dark-skinned enough to take the job. Yet another requested that she change her first name, saying that "Soledad" was too complicated. O'Brien's refusal cost her the opportunity.

O'Brien's story is one of dogged perseverance or as she called it, "outplaying the ref." She fondly recalled her mother's favorite piece of advice, "Most people are idiots, lovie," when talking about her refusal to give up and go home.

O'Brien's hard work started to pay off and she began to move through the ranks of NBC. Starting at a local affiliate, she eventually worked her way up to reporting nationally for the *Today Show* and the *Nightly News*. Some of the most memorable stories under her coverage were John F. Kennedy Jr.'s tragic plane crash, the Challenger Space Shuttle disaster and the War in Iraq.

In 2003, O'Brien moved to CNN. She traveled to New Orleans to cover the wreckage after Hurricane Katrina and interviewed the then head of FEMA, Michael Brown. She reports for the *Special Investigations Unit*, and occasionally fills in for Anderson Cooper on *Anderson Cooper 360*.



Daniel Smith/CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CNN anchor Soledad O'Brien speaks to a packed McGarvey Commons about her career, her family, and finding a way to balance both while doing it all.

One ever-important facet of O'Brien's career is role models. When working on the *Today Show*, Katie Couric would take her aside for a few moments and make suggestions or minor corrections. "As long as you are open to criticism," O'Brien said, "you can get what you need to get ahead." Then, when O'Brien was in need of an agent and went to Couric for guidance, Couric suggested that O'Brien simply take her own agent. "You can be a really good human being and still be successful," said O'Brien.

Journalism is only one part of O'Brien's life.

Another demanding yet rewarding role she plays is that of mother. Balancing her career and raising her four young children is an art that she is still learning to master. Learning to take some people's judgments in stride is proving to be just as difficult. "As soon as I was in the field, people would say, 'where are your kids?' What do they think I do with them when I'm at the station?"

O'Brien recalls days that began at 4 a.m., making something for one of her kid's projects even before going into work. She also recalls getting on the plane for Guantanamo, eight and a half

months pregnant. Although O'Brien has somehow found a way to do it all, "I have always resented the 'you have it all' thing," she said.

If O'Brien does have it all, it's not because she compromised her heritage, her family, or herself. It is not because her success fell into her lap. It is because she got up every day and worked for what she wanted. The message she left the audience with was simple yet profound – sometimes you just have to outplay the ref.

Internet connection speeds in residency halls increased

By Matthew Schwabenbauer

assistant news editor
mjs5387@psu.edu

All Penn State students that use internet connections hosted by the University have received a major upgrade to their service. Residential Computing sent an e-mail to all students that live in residence halls on March 14 which gave the specifics of the changes and reasons for them.

According to the e-mail, the increase in internet capabilities comes from student requests for improved internet. The upgrade is only a trial lasting the remainder of the semester, but will determine the internet limitations imposed on students during the fall 2008 semester.

In addition to a 120 percent increase in general internet capacity, the weekly upload and download limits have been raised from two gigabytes to four gigabytes. To avoid any unfairness to students whose service may have been revoked due to misuse, all upload and download violations have been expunged.

Many students have been anticipating this change for quite some time. Complaints from students about campus internet generally include slow speeds, harsh download restrictions, and frequent interruptions.

"Our internet was basically unusable from about twelve to five," said freshman Shane Appel. "It's really frustrating when you are trying to do research or play a game and your browser takes minutes to load a page, if it can at all." Now that the student connections have

been upgraded, these shortcomings should be remedied.

Despite campus internet's former unreliability, students are optimistic about the enhancements.

"Two gigabytes for the download limit was way too low," said freshman Zack Smith. "The upgrade is welcome, though. I needed a higher download limit for World of Warcraft."

The increased speeds and download limit means students will have increased capabilities for file sharing and downloading pirated movies and music. Before, many students went over the upload limit unknowingly because many programs continue uploading music from your computer even after the download has completed. With the increased limits, situations such as these are no longer an issue.

Despite the increased ease in file sharing, Residential Computing has advised students against such behavior. "Students are reminded to use the new capabilities responsibly and to abide by all laws and applicable University policy," Residential Computing stated in the e-mail. "A useful web site to remind yourself of your responsibilities, as a Penn State student and citizen, can be found at <http://its.psu.edu/policies/copyright.html>."

Despite what you use your connection for, you should notice an enhancement in its quality for the rest of the semester. If the change in policy turns out to be for the best, then the upgrade will carry into next semester. For more information about on-campus internet connections, go to www.rescom.psu.edu.

"Our internet was basically unusable from about twelve to five."

**-Shane Appel
Freshman**

Iraq War five years later

On the five year anniversary of "Shock and Awe" questions remain

By Chris Brown

copy editor
cmb5313@psu.edu

On the night of March 19, 2003 President George W. Bush announced to the world that "American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger." The attack capped the Bush administration's long campaign for war that began with Bush's "Axis of Evil" speech in January 2002, only months after the devastating terrorist attacks on 9/11. After the State of the Union speech Bush and other administration officials traveled the world, visiting the U.N., Europe, and a host of other nations to try and garner support. Despite these efforts many long standing allies, including Germany and France, refused to help the United States.

In making the case for war, Bush relied on evidence that Saddam Hussein had failed to disarm his weapons of mass destruction programs and abide by the terms ending the first Gulf War. At the same time, Bush insinuated that there may be links between Al Qaeda and Hussein. In his 2003 State of the Union Speech he said, "Before September eleventh, many in the world believed that Saddam Hussein could be contained. But chemical agents, lethal viruses and shadowy terrorist networks are not easily contained. Imagine those nineteen hijackers with other weapons, and other plans - this time armed by Saddam Hussein." Only after the war began did the American public, Congress, and the world learn that much of the intelligence used in making plans for the war was either misinterpreted, of dubious origin, or inconclusive.

By April, American troops had entered Baghdad and the last remnants of Hussein's old regime were gone from power. Just as soon as signs of any visible opposition by Hussein's followers ended, chaos erupted. Lacking sufficient numbers to maintain security, American troops were unable to control mass looting of government offices, stores, and museums. People ran off

with as much as they could carry and chaos ensued. Then, on May 1, 2003 Bush gave his now infamous "Mission Accomplished" speech announcing the end of major combat operations aboard. But the war was far from over.

A number of increasing spectacular suicide bombings and attacks soon hinted that there may be problems ahead on the road to a stable and free Iraq. The United Nations voted to give an international mandate to the United States and Britain, giving the two international legal authority to rebuild the country. Only a few months later the U.N. left Iraq after a car bomb destroyed their headquarters.

Despite the carnage, there were bright spots at times. Iraqis held their first free elections in over 50 years. They voted and passed a draft constitution. But, troubles remained and the government is still deeply divided. Violence continued to worsen. Sectarian and ethnic tensions kept in check by Hussein's iron fist came back with a vengeance, forcing the United States to create uneasy alliances and opening the door for Al Qaeda in Iraq. Meanwhile, revelations about pre-war intelligence and the failure to find weapons of mass destruction raised questions about motives for war.

Five years later, at least over 160,000 Iraqi civilians dead (estimates vary as high as 1 million), over 4,000 U.S. soldiers dead, many more injured, and somewhere close to a \$1 trillion spent with another \$2 billion estimated by the time the United States is finished paying for disabled veterans 50 or more years later. The war has taken its toll on the soldiers, their families, and the military overall. Some soldiers have been forced into re-upping through the military's stop-loss program; also known as the backdoor draft because regardless of a soldier's intention they must re-enlist. Facing recruitment and retention shortfalls since the beginning of the war the military has been forced to reduce its minimum requirements, taking the highest number of criminals ever. A burden once shared by others in the "coalition of

See *IRAQ* on page 2.

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Contents | |
| News..... | 1-2 |
| Opinion..... | 4 |
| Humor..... | 5 |
| Sports..... | 9-10 |
| Entertainment..... | 6 |
| Student Life..... | 7 |
| Music..... | 8 |

We are now on the Web!
Visit us online at www.thebehrendbeacon.com