

OPINION

THE BEHREND BEACON

FOUNDED IN 1948

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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 administration position and semester standing. Deadline for any submission is 5 p.m. Thursday 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 rcr5057@psu.edu or drop them off at the Beacon office.

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:
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.

Beacon Thumbs Up



- Daylight Savings Time
- Unsticky keyboards
- Tropicana
- Pints - of ice cream.

Beacon Thumbs Down



- Parking tickets
- Room Inspections
- Justice
- Exhaustion

Working world bigger than anticipated

By Rachel Reeves
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Over spring break, I stepped into the working world for the first time. And it scared me to death.

I decided to pursue a summer internship at a TV news station or news publication. So, one morning I rolled out of bed, got dressed and headed into downtown Rochester, New York to get myself employed.

I had no idea what I was getting into. What I was expecting to be small offices and friendly receptionists turned out to be big, shiny lobbies and security guards behind glass windows.

To even get to those lobbies required managing a complex system of one-way streets, bus lanes and paid parking. Streets changed their names on a whim,

and the river cutting through the dead center of the city gave me more trouble than I care to admit.

People wanted my resume and my transcript, and a cover letter and letters of recommendation. I called voicemail after voicemail, not once speaking to a human, trying to leave the appropriate contact information while crossing Main Street without dying.

After an afternoon of not talking to anyone I wanted to, and being asked for paperwork I didn't have, I ducked into a coffeehouse. Tea was the least expensive thing that I could order to secure a table for a few minutes - it was 5 pm and I wanted to avoid the afternoon rush hour.

I practically sprinted over to a small table in the window, threw down my bag and tea, and collapsed in the chair. My hands were shaking, my knees were

wobbly, and for the first time since my first trip to summer camp I wanted to call my mom and make her come get me.

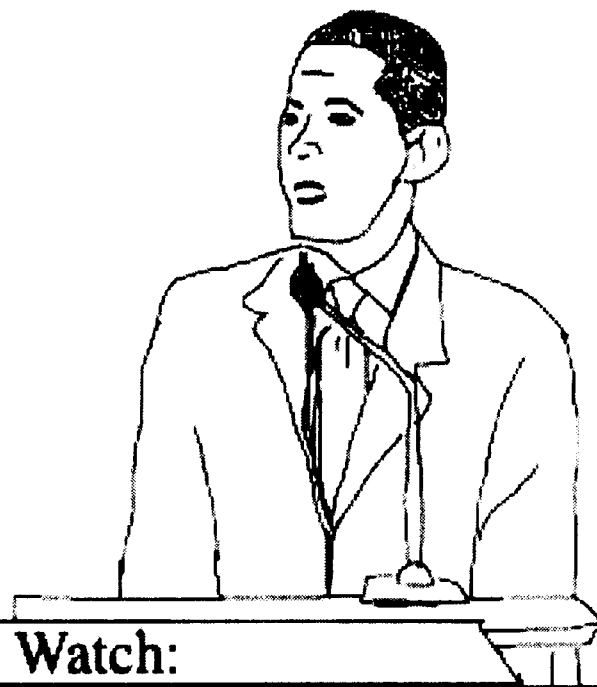
But I sat still. I breathed deep. I watched people in the coffeehouse and tried to ignore my own panic. And then I took out a notebook and a pen, and I began to outline a plan.

I sorted out who I had called from what station or paper. I jotted down everything I needed, when I needed it by, and who I had to talk to to get it. And I realized that even if I didn't get a position this summer, I would learn what to do and how to do it for next year.

It's not about the days that make you feel 12 years old and two feet tall. It's what you do with yourself at the end of them.

Cartoon by Rachel Reeves

What really is the big issue here?



Campaign Watch:

OBAMA SPEAKS ABOUT PASTOR'S COMMENTS:
CONFRONTS QUESTION OF RACE

ECONOMY IS FALLING INTO RECESSION - AMERICA IS STILL IN IRAQ

Five year anniversary solicits reflection

By Chris Brown
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This week marked the five year anniversary of the War in Iraq. President Bush marked the occasion with a speech and Dick Cheney gave an interview. However, instead of coming to grips with the reality of the war, they used this anniversary as an occasion to spin the war as a conflict on the verge of success.

In President Bush's speech he touted the "success" of the surge and said, "War critics can no longer credibly argue that we are losing in Iraq - so now they argue the war costs too much." This is just the latest example of Bush and Co. changing the length of the goalposts, the definition of success, over the last five years. America invaded Iraq five years ago to disarm Saddam, but the Iraqi people only became important once weapons of mass destruction could not be found.

When the surge began, the goal was to provide space for political reconciliation because it was thought that violence was hindering the process. Even General Petraeus admitted that no one "feels that there has been sufficient progress by any means in the area of national reconciliation."

I don't think there was any doubt that more troops could reduce violence in Iraq. (Unless, of course, you are counting the opinions of Bush, Rumsfeld, and Cheney during pre-invasion planning for troop deployments.) This is only one aspect of the "success." The United

States also started paying the militia groups and soldiers with guns, ammunition, and money, people who only a few months ago were shooting at our soldiers, to play nice. This hardly seems like a strategy that will guarantee long-term stability.

If the definition of success is an Iraq without car bombs and suicide bombers, but remains politically paralyzed, then maybe we are setting the bar a little low.

Bush also talked about the cost of losing this war. He said, "Al Qaeda would regain its lost sanctuaries and establish new ones...with access to Iraq's oil resources could pursue its ambitions to acquire weapons of

Through nothing short of ignorance, Bush remains immune to any cost-benefit analysis.

mass destruction to attack America and other free nations." Is he talking about the non-existent Al Qaeda sanctuaries during Saddam's rule?

Or the ones established after we invaded with too few troops leaving the minority Sunnis with no option but to join Al Qaeda? I wonder how he expects a nebulous, decentralized, clandestine organization like Al Qaeda to secure oil profits when neither the Iraqi government nor the United States can pump enough oil to make money.

Cheney's celebration of the anniversary of the war was no less spectacular or disconcerting as

Bush's speech. When ABC News' Martha Raddatz told Dick Cheney that "two-third of Americans say it's not worth fighting" Cheney responded in typical Cheney fashion, "So? Last time I checked, it was the government's job to reflect the will of the people."

There are no easy options in Iraq. It is easy to criticize our leaders and their policies, but today maybe more than any other point in the war there are very few options left, almost none of them good. At some point, America may just have to cut its losses and come to the realization that the war may be unwinnable. If it is possible to win, the requirements might be too great.

Through nothing short of ignorance, Bush remains immune to any cost-benefit analysis. He said, "We have heard exaggerated estimates of the costs...but those costs are necessary when we consider the cost of a strategic victory for our enemies in Iraq."

However, the costs in lives, livelihoods, and the American economy are undeniably large. Nobel Laureate in Economics Joseph Stiglitz recently co-authored a book with Linda Blimes detailing the hidden costs of the war that haven't been realized yet.

So, instead of using this anniversary to reflect on mistakes made and how to improve the situation, our two highest elected officials used the occasion to give the American public more of the same: misstatements and mischaracterizations. It is only fitting that they chose to stay the course.

Movie soundtracks are becoming accomplished albums

By Chris LaFuria
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Somewhere between watching Evan Taylor and Louis Connelly dueling with guitars in the park in the Oscar nominated August Rush and seeing Paulie Bleeker try to win over Juno MacGuff with the Moldy Peaches' song "Anyone Else But You" in the Grammy-winning hit Juno, I realized that Hollywood has come along way from the disposable soundtrack era and has evolved with premier original scores and soundtracks.

Many of the recent hit movies do not just sell tickets and put viewers in the seats by stunning story lines and compelling characters. More and more, coinciding with a successful movie is a hit, and sometimes award winning, soundtrack.

In 2007, Sean Penn directed and wrote the screenplay for the Jon Krakauer book "Into the Wild." In the movie, Chris McCandless, a.k.a. Alexander Supertramp, travels the country with no money, vehicle or identity to find his route to Alaska, the Great Outdoors. Along the way, McCandless finds many companions and adventures en route to his wilderness destination and his ultimate fate.

The movie overall was phenomenal.

The message from McCandless was that man does not need money and material goods to find true, spiritual happiness. Accompanying the movie was the soundtrack, written by Seattle grunge-rock pioneer Eddie Vedder. With songs such as "Guaranteed" and "Society," Vedder sends a strong of message about freedom and spiritual liberation that Krakauer was writing in his book.

Every once in a while, a film will come along that tells the simultaneous tale of love and success. In the 2006 Oscar-winning John Carney movie Once, Glen Hansard, lead singer of the Irish band The Frames, plays an unnamed Hoover repairman who meets Markéta Irglová, the unnamed songstress and flower merchant who serendipitously meets Hansard, only to put together a music demo to audition in London.

The direct result of the movie is a beautiful, well-written, full-length, Grammy-winning album, which contains songs written by Hansard and including duets from Hansard and Irglová. The album was nominated for the Grammy award for Best Compilation Soundtrack Album For Motion Picture and also for Best Song Written For Motion Picture. One song from the album eventually won an Oscar for best song from a soundtrack.

You can't mention movie soundtracks without the most talked-about soundtrack in the last few years. Across the Universe, the fictional tale of 1960s romance mixed with free expression and war protesting, features animation and live footage of 34 Beatles songs are included within the plot. The film, which was nominated for a 2008 Oscar for Best Achievement in Costume Design, also was nominated Best Compilation Soundtrack Album for Motion Picture in the 2008 Grammy's.

The key scene that made this film worth the attendance occurs with my favorite Beatles song. The crowd is watching the media coverage of Dr. Martin Luther King's tragic assassination, as JoJo, played by Martin Luther McCoy, softly and emotionally sings "While My Guitar Gently Weeps," George Harrison's masterpiece, as the crowd gets somber. While the movie may have many weak points, the soundtrack is a successful homage to the Beatles.

Directors and producers have come a long way since the early days of soundtrack. While some films in the 80s and 90s such as *The Bodyguard* and *Titanic* have achieve commercial success, the more recent soundtracks and original scores are at its greatest point in music history.

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To get rid of paper. You can get everything digitally - pictures, books, lessons, your news. Schedules and lists now go in PDA's and iPhones, archives are in hard drives, essays are on flash drives. Paper is heavy, flammable, and kills trees. It takes up too much space in desks and backpacks, and printers should be on their way out, anyways. Also, no one sees you scribbling in a notebook and says, "Wow! What generation is that?"