

PERSPECTIVES

THE BEHREND BEACON

FOUNDED IN 1948

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Submission Guidelines:

Letters should be limited to 350 words and commentaries 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 it.

The Beacon does not publish anonymous letters. Please include your major, faculty, or administration position and semester standing. Deadline for any submission is 3 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



- Bagels-to-go from Bruno's
- Ben & Jerry's
- Stevie Wonder
- College football

Beacon Thumbs Down



- Weak spoons
- Size 12 fonts
- Congestion
- Over caffination

Governor Palin believed to have more experience than Senator Obama

By Daniel J. Smith
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With her years of executive experience and many accomplishments for the people of Alaska, Governor Sarah Palin is more prepared than Senator Barack Obama to be President of the United States. She's made decisions, taken action, and faced accountability. Senator Obama's "experience" is running for political office; Governor Palin's experience is bringing people together to get things done. When Senator Obama was a community organizer, Governor Palin was serving as local chief executive. When Senator Obama was voting 130 times on the most contentious issues of the day, Governor Palin was taking on corruption within her own party and stood up to the special interest groups, lobbyists, big oil companies, and good-old boy networks.

When Senator Obama was voting with the Democrats 97% of the time, Governor Palin was standing up to members of her own party and passed a landmark ethics reform bill. When Senator Obama was requesting nearly

\$1 billion in earmark spending, Governor Palin was championing reform to end the abuses of wasteful earmark spending. She put a stop to the "Bridge to Nowhere" that would have cost taxpayers \$400 million. Governor Palin has a record of accomplishment that Senator Obama simply doesn't have. She has spent her time in office shaking up government in Alaska. Senator Obama has only passed one bill as the lead sponsor.

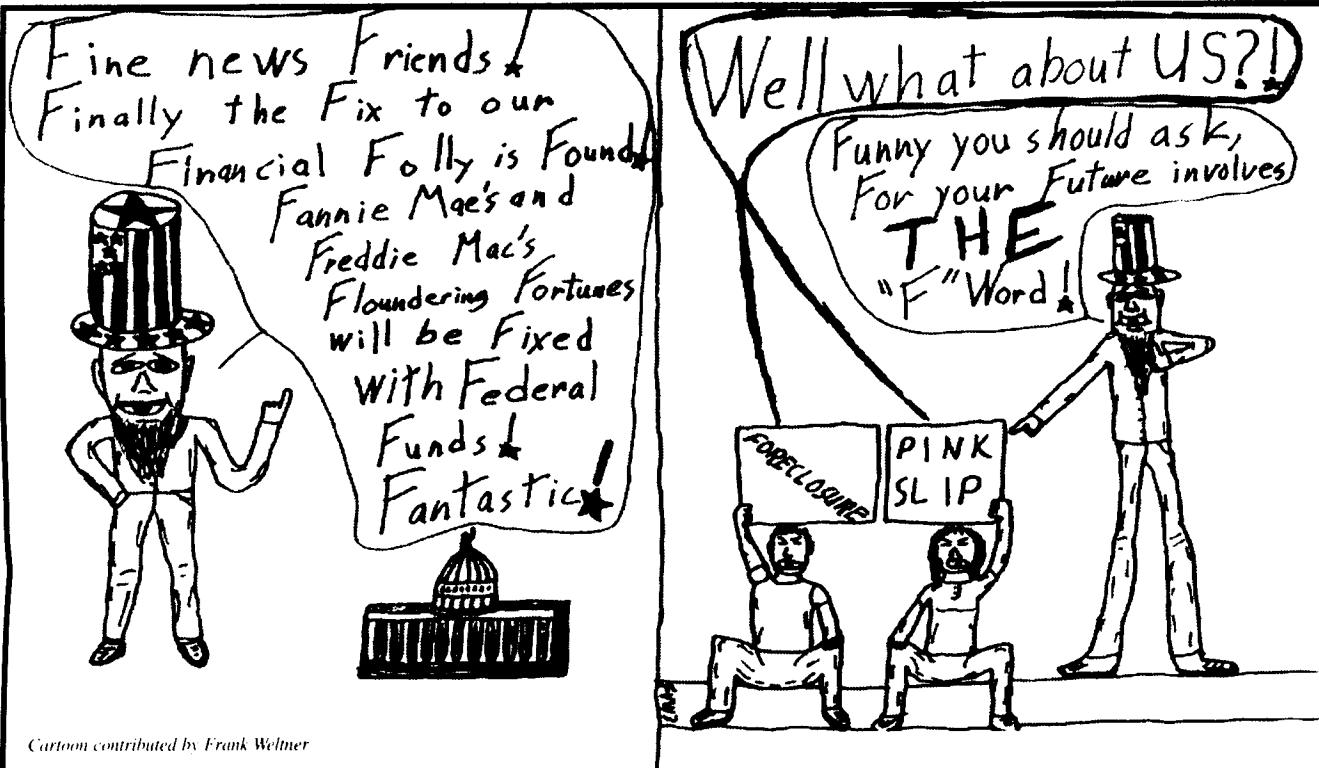
Governor Palin is an energy expert having served as Chairwoman of the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission overseeing energy development on state lands in Alaska. Governor Palin is a tough executive who has demonstrated during time in office that she is ready to be Vice President. She has brought Republicans and Democrats together within her Administration and has seen approval ratings over 80 percent.

I believe Governor Palin has more executive experience for the following reasons. One: she has managed a state government of more than 24,000 employees with a budget in the billions. Two: with Republicans and Democrats, Governor Palin has crafted and passed

two annual budgets of billions of dollars. Three: in two budgets alone, Governor Palin vetoed nearly \$500 million in wasteful spending. Four: our nation's governors serve as chief executives and impact every aspect of people's lives including job training, taxes, education, safety from natural disasters, first response, health care, and numerous other services.

Senator Obama talks, Governor Palin leads. Senator Obama talks about fiscal responsibility, Governor Palin has actually crafted budgets and vetoed nearly \$500 million in spending. She has actually used her veto to bring spending under control. Senator Obama talks about taking on oil companies.

Governor Palin has challenged the influence of the big oil companies and brought competition to the oil and gas market to develop new energy resources. Because of Governor Palin's leadership, they have begun a \$40 billion natural gas pipeline to help lead America to energy independence. Senator Obama talks about energy independence, Governor Palin is an energy expert who has challenged the oil companies to develop our energy sources here at home.



Cartoon contributed by Frank Welmer

You get what you pay for

By Christopher Brown
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I don't think anyone questions the dire situation facing the United States economy. The International Monetary Fund rates this current crisis the worst since the Great Depression that began in 1929. The statistics speak for themselves: unemployment is at a five year high, for the first time since World War II the average household income has declined during economic expansion and over the last eight years, five million people moved below the poverty line.

As college students, we sometimes feel separated from the problems facing the "real" world. Often the biggest problem facing college students revolves around the decision between Bud Light or Miller Lite.

Soon enough here's what we face, especially those graduating this May. The average income of a college graduate is \$48,400, an increase of only \$200 since 1985, according to the Department of Education. Graduates this spring will have a tougher time finding a job than if they had graduated ten years ago. They will have greater amounts of debt to repay than previous graduates, their future employer will probably not provide insurance, and inflation will be on the rise. College used to be a ticket to a stable economic future. Unfortunately that is no longer the case.

The economic policies, above all else, will have the greatest effect on our future as college graduates and it is about time we start paying attention to what John McCain and Barack Obama offer us in their plans, even if McCain would prefer we worry about lipstick on a pig.

The number one answer I get from people when I ask them why they don't support Barack Obama is, "He will raise my taxes." Yes, Obama plans to raise taxes on households earning above \$250,000 and, based on U.S. Census

Bureau statistics, less than one percent of Erie County will face an income tax increase under Obama's plan.

Chances are if you are reading this, you won't be facing a tax increase. In fact, it would be more accurate to say, "Obama wants to raise taxes on someone I will never meet, who could care less about the issues I care about or affect me."

That hasn't stopped the McCain campaign from running a malicious and misleading commercial stating that

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Obama would add "painful tax increases on working American families" and that they will bring about "years of deficits," "no balanced budgets" and "billions in new government spending." That is patently false. In fact under the Obama plan, working American families will save more than under the McCain plan. And frankly, neither campaign will balance the budget, but at least under Obama's plan government revenue would increase.

You don't have to take my word for it either. According to the Tax Policy Center, a non-partisan think-tank sponsored by the Urban Institute and the Brookings Institution, "middle-income taxpayers would see their after-tax income rise by about five percent, or nearly \$2,200 annually." However, under McCain's plan "after-tax incomes an average of about three percent, or

\$1,400 annually, for middle-income taxpayers."

The Tax Policy Center also found that McCain's plan would cost Americans over \$275 billion in lost revenue over the next four years. However, Obama's plan would increase revenue 112.9 billion dollars because instead of giving a 9.5 percent tax break to those earning more than \$250,000 (McCain's plan), Obama would increase taxes by 1.5 percent.

"But the government is part of the problem, not the solution. Obama just wants to spend more money on bad programs," cries the conservative. The question should not be less vs. more government, but better vs. worse government. Too often the concepts are conflated with one another. Our country is in a state of disarray, our infrastructure is falling apart, the Federal Highway Fund is running out of money, everyone complains about old crumbling schools, some students are forced to share books in elementary schools and our veterans are not receiving the care they need when they return from battle. It would be a shame if these problems remain unaddressed because the electorate holds on to such unrealistic and simplistic Reaganesque platitudes. The question is not how we can get rid of the government, but how we can make it better. Perhaps the greatest strength of Obama's movement is the inspiration he gives to young people to work for the government and invest in the future of this country, not bring it down or destroy it.

It is about time people in the middle class voted in their economic interest, because I guarantee that those individuals earning above \$250,000 a year have absolutely no problem voting in their economic interests. So the question is, are you better off than you were eight years ago? If the answer is no, would you rather have someone in the White House who supports those same failed tax cuts, those same failed economic policies? Or do you want change?

Pages of Silver and Gold

By Nathan Carter
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Are the pages gold? Are the texts some sort of rare and legendary script? As we all walk out of that bookstore here on campus, we wonder these same questions.

What in God's name makes our textbooks so expensive? Well, in my research, I found that several things actually do make our textbooks expensive but really they can all be tied to a certain amount of greed.

There are some publishers, like Prentice Hall and Houghton Mifflin, who raise the prices of their textbooks donating a portion to charities and organizations that help out poverty-stricken students in their purchase of textbooks. The publishers would be the logical source to point our fingers at, as they are the creators of the texts, but the vicious cycle continues.

The publishers often blame the professors who pick the books. Some professors say the retail markups are too high and their choices are limited.

I've spent nearly \$550 on textbooks for my first semester. Needless to say, I'm looking forward to selling them on Amazon and getting as much back as possible.

All the while, the retailers are blaming both publisher and professor in their indifference toward the student plight.

I stand in awe at the fact that - regardless of the reasons posed - I've spent nearly \$550 on textbooks for my first semester. Needless to say, I'm looking forward to selling them on Amazon and getting as much back as possible. However, I'm sad to report that an amount has already accrued that I will never be able to get back. I recently - and regrettably, I might add - purchased a lab book for a course that cost me \$60. For those of you who do not know what a lab book is, it's a laboratory companion in which you answer questions. This entails writing in black ink, tearing the pages out and handing them in to the teacher. I know what you're asking and yes, the pages turned green before my eyes. As I turned that lab assignment in, a miniature George Washington winked up at me from the paper at hand.

I know I joke here in this article but I want you to know that there is not a more serious matter in my eyes. Some of us are saving up for cars or apartments or Spring Break.

Is the high cost of books something we just have to get used to in our college career? Or can these prices be lowered so that this student body can walk out of the bookstore smiling instead crying with outwardly turned pockets?

Do you read the paper?

Have an opinion?

Wanna express it?

Do you see where I am going with this?

Email me:
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