

CAMPUS CULTURE



EVAN KOSER
culture editor

A thick haze of harmful contaminants often cloud the two main entrances to the Reed Union Building, Koche and sometimes many of the residence halls. But the question is: is this a problem?

The nation is full of smokers and ranks second only to China, whose government sees no issue with how its population chooses to live.

Compare that apathy to the U.S. government. Tobacco lobbyists lobby for rights to advertise and sell how they want and to keep regulations as lax as possible.

Anti-smoking campaigns nationwide do just the opposite. In fact, the latter organizations have often succeeded in the past - the last television advertisement for cigarettes aired on January 1, 1971. Since then, most ads have been seen in magazines.

Campus-wide, that doesn't stop students from smoking or even voicing concern about the availability of cigarettes, cigars and other tobacco products on campus. Nor does it prevent students of the other end of the spectrum from championing their case against the lax restrictions of smoking. While Behrend is host to many smokers, just as many (if not more) nonsmokers share the air.

With plans for a convenience store in the works, many students wonder if tobacco products will be sold. However, last semester a poll of students showed that tobacco sale was "not very important."

"I'd be happy about it," said Jevois Harrigan, a sophomore majoring in astronomy and astrophysics. "It'd be convenient. I mean, I don't smoke all the time, but it's nice."

Harrigan, like many smokers (casual or habitual), appreciates the idea of selling tobacco products on campus. However, not everyone agrees.

Steel Flynn, a junior mechanical engineering major says that he "wouldn't like it."

"I don't like receiving second-hand smoke

walking to and from class everyday," Flynn said. Anti-smoking lobbyists have certainly left their mark. Many restaurants nationwide have done away with their "smoking" sections altogether in favor of more "family-friendly" environments. In Pennsylvania, The Clean Indoor Air Act banned smoking from nearly every public establishment, and including and many bars and restaurants.

Throughout the Penn State campuses, smoking is technically banned only indoors and within campus-owned vehicles.

While some of the other satellite campuses have stricter policies than those of University Park, Behrend students are allowed to smoke outside of buildings within a specific distance from entrances.

"I don't mind smoking on campus," said Dan Hido, a junior political science major. "I think it's unfair that people smoke in front of doors where people walk through. They [the campus] should have designated smoking areas away from the buildings."

One idea that has been tossed around was to install heat lamps, much like those seen in the stairwells, to some of the many light posts. This would give smokers the incentive to smoke away from populated entrances.

"If they did that, I'd stand under it," said Jeff Barber, a senior political science major.

"I would definitely use that," said Zack Goncz, a junior political science major. "I've heard about [the policy], but I'm not gonna stand in the snow and I won't blow smoke in people's faces."

At the University of Iowa, smoking is banned altogether. Students are fined for any infringement on the policy. Penn State, however, has no plans for such a ban.

Still, many students feel that it's their right to smoke, and that any such ban on smoking would be an infringement on those rights.

"People have a right [to smoke] because when the university took their money, they never said they couldn't smoke on campus," said Allison Maino, a senior English major. Maino doesn't smoke, but says that one of her parents does.

"You see it at OBS, too," said Kyle Murdoch, a junior political science major. "I'm actually indifferent because I worked where people smoked indoors until the Act. It doesn't bother me that much, as long as they're not directly blowing it in my face."

Not all nonsmokers on campus are as accepting of smokers, though. Perry residence hall now has designated smoking and nonsmoking areas on the building's outside porch. The elevator stairwell on campus even has "No Smoking" signs posted on both entrances. However, many students still light up within.

"I'm not happy about [smoking outside]," Goncz said. "I mean, it's legal. Sorry if it's rude, but I don't like seeing people chew with their mouths open."

Joni Taylor, a junior general arts and sciences major, feels that the campus is accommodating for smokers.

"There's plenty of canisters and I have yet to get a dirty look while smoking. But you shouldn't ever blow your smoke toward people who aren't smoking."

Even the on-campus apartments allow residents to choose whether or not they want to smoke within their living quarters.

"It's a student's right to smoke, just not inside [public places]," said Murdoch, who feels that the university should enforce a distance-from-the-entrance policy. "Naturally, smokers will be near the doorways."

However, Barber disagrees.

"It's unreasonable if I would have to stand 20-feet from a doorway. Why should I have to stand in the snow [to smoke]?"

"I'm not really happy about it; it's freezing outside," Goncz said.

Whatever policy the campus decides and whatever products the convenience store will provide, there will always be smokers on campus. So long as no full-fledged ban is in place, intolerant nonsmokers might just have to hold their breath.

FILMS
2000s in film: the death of cinema

DAN KINEM
senior reporter

It's a brand new decade, and with every new decade comes plenty of reflection. Reflecting on experiences you had, the friends you made, and most importantly, the movies you saw (or didn't see).

When I glance back at the most popular movies of the past 10 years, I feel disgusted. Luckily, the movies that the general audience flocked to see represent the worst film had to offer. With every new record-breaking movie that comes out or effects-laden generic that explodes off the screen, I find myself shaking my head and cursing the good name of Cinema.

However, I am forgetting the golden rule: "The majority is made up of imbeciles!" Mindless drones who feed off of explosions and robots. If that definition applies to you, then I can't believe you made it this far, now get back to your Call of Duty.

After every decade, film snobs (myself included) are always left screaming "the death of cinema!"

However, no matter how much I say it, deep down in my black heart I know it isn't true. There are normally at least a few hundred masterpieces floating around there somewhere. I could easily rattle off a hundred movies that I feel everyone should see before they die to make them an all-around-better and more cultured person.

Instead, I will try and narrow each year down to one or two movies that really deserve your attention. Whether you ultimately enjoy each and every movie I list, all of them will have some effect on you, and they are all extremely worth finding and seeing.

2000 - Almost Famous (preferably the "Untitled: Bootleg Version"): Very few good films have such an emotional resonance, especially with a teenager. Cameron Crowe takes his childhood and presents it on screen; chock full of great classic rock tunes. As a writer this had a very strong effect on me, but as a teenager it had an even stronger one. I have yet to find another movie whose character I so connected with.

Honorable Mention: *Requiem for a Dream* and *George Washington*

2001 - Bully: Based on the 1993 murder of Bobby Kent in Cooper City, Fla. This is one of the few movies that genuinely scared me. It sends chills down my spine to this day whenever I think of it. The fact that I come across kids like this daily makes the entire situation even more terrifying. Larry Clark manages to create a realism unlike any film like it.

Honorable Mention: *Ghost World*

2002 - City of God: This is the bridge into foreign film. There is not a soul alive who could watch this and get bored with it or be turned off by the fact you have to read. It is just non-stop. The film is seriously a relentless story of drugs and power told through the eyes of kids and a camera lens.

2003 - Kill Bill Vol. 1: Tarantino's homage to kung-fu/revenge flicks is a stylistic masterpiece that is any film lover's wet dream. There are countless different film elements, techniques and styles running through the movie. It's an addicting rollercoaster where anything can happen.

2004 - The Brown Bunny: I'd never tell anyone to watch this, so I don't really know why it's on this list. It is definitely an acquired taste. Watching someone drive with rain fall on the window for an hour and twenty minutes doesn't sound like a blast, but the end makes it all worth it. Vincent Gallo and Chloe Sevigny are amazing.

2005 - Brick: I love film-noir and detective movies, and this is a stunning homage. Whoever came up with the idea to take the drug lord detective noir story and place it in a high school with teenagers deserves my utmost respect. It plays out brilliantly and keeps you guessing until the last second.

2006 - Pan's Labyrinth: One of the best fantasy films ever created. It drags you right in until the very end. You become highly invested in the story, and the amazing visuals only add to it more. Mix in the war elements, and you have a masterpiece.

Honorable Mentions: *The Departed*, *This Film Is Not Yet Rated*

2007 - The Simpsons Movie: I'm biased, whatever. I am obsessed with *The Simpsons*, and this is a good extended episode.

2008 - Gomorra: An inside look into Italy's modern day crime families. One of the most realistic crime films I've ever seen, it takes its time to show you in detail what other films would just skip over. The precision of the writing and directing makes it feel like cinematic perfection and damn it's close to it. If you like Scarface, watch this and learn a thing or two.

Honorable Mention: *Hunger* (it takes acting to a whole other level).

2009 - Fantastic Mr. Fox: Yeah, Pixar's great. *Up* was really good. But if you want a real family film, this is the one. The comedy is so pitch perfect I had to hold in my laughs so I wouldn't miss any amazing character moments. This is undeniably the best quote-unquote "kids" movie ever produced. It's the funniest, too.

Avoid like the plague: *Garden State* (2004, only movie as bad as *Boondock Saints*), *Amelie* (2001), and *Million Dollar Baby* (2004)

CAMPUS MUSIC

Behrend to host charitable concert

SHANNON EHRIN
asst. culture editor

Jason Bishop and the Young People's Chorus of Erie (YPC) will perform a concert benefiting Haiti relief. The Green Children, a recording duo from Los Angeles, will join YPC on Feb. 20 at Mc-

Dowell Intermediate High School. The concert had already been in the works, but the recent Haiti devastation caused Bishop and The Green Children to "change the plan...[and make] it a benefit for the victims of the earthquake."

"The main thing we would love for people to do is buy tickets and come, because all of those proceeds will go to a Haiti relief organization," says Bishop.

Bishop and organizers have not yet decided which organization the money will go to.

There will be about six pieces performed solely by YPC in the first half of the concert with The Green Children following in the second half. Both groups will end the concert with a collaborated performance. The men of the Behrend choirs will also join YPC on one of their pieces during the concert.

YPC is an outreach program of the Behrend School of Humanities and Social Sciences and includes other outreach programs such as the Center for Organizational Research and Evaluation (CORE). YPC focuses on diversity and multiculturalism within the community, while fostering musical talent from elementary to high school levels. One hundred thirty Students from YPC will be involved in this particular benefit concert.

The Green Children has performed all around the world. With their music they are able to press upon important social issues in different countries, especially those that are underdeveloped.

Although Bishop and YPC have never performed nor met The Green Children, he calls the part-

nership "a natural collaboration." The first meeting and practice will be the afternoon before the final concert.

Besides this Haiti relief benefit, Dr. Bishop and YPC will be presenting many more concerts during the spring semester.

On April 18, the Penn State Behrend choirs will perform a Broadway review concert. The performance will be held on campus and will be an alternative to the Behrend's annual spring play.

That next week, YPC, along with the singers performing and not performing at Carnegie Hall, will give the Erie community a preview of their performance at Fairview High School. About 275 students are involved in this performance, compared with the 175 students performing at Carnegie Hall in May.

Those who are going to New York City are singers from the YPC Chorale, The Northeast High School Choir, the Erie Philharmonic Chorus, and both of Penn State Behrend's choirs. Twelve or more singers from Oklahoma will also join these choirs. Out of all of these ensembles, the Northeast High School Choir is the only group that Bishop does not conduct and is the most recent addition to the company. Most of the singers going to New York have never been to Carnegie Hall.

Bishop on the other hand, is no stranger to this music center, but says, "I've never actually conducted on the stage. This, for me, is my conducting debut."

The singers will perform *Lord Nelson Mass* by Joseph Haydn and will be accompanied by a pre-arranged orchestra. The production company, Distinguished Concerts International, arranges all aspects of the performance and pre-performance: rehearsal times, rehearsal space, orchestra and publicity.

The Carnegie Hall appearance will be a major achievement for these choirs and with good reason.

Bishop says "This [concert] has been a year in the making."

Haiti Relief Benefit featuring
YPC
Young People's Chorus of Erie
with International Recording Artists

7:00 PM
Saturday, February 20, 2010
MHHS Little Theatre

The Green Children travel the world year-round bringing awareness to social causes through their music. This month they will be performing in Erie to raise money for Haiti relief.