

MY VOICE

# Has Spring Break gone too far?

Spring Break is only a week away, and students are getting antsy. In what many people think of as the typical Spring Break, however, students take their mind off of school and instead completely lose their mind.

While we all can't afford to migrate south, some college students choose to do so. What goes on during these festivities would normally be nearly un-speakable.

Spit is swapped by those who hardly know each other, STDs are passed through one-night flings, the total amount of beer consumed would overwhelm even an alcoholic, and the amount of drugs outnumbers a pharmacy.

While to some that may seem like fun, I just can't get behind the idea of letting go of morals for a week.

Maybe it's because I don't drink or do drugs. Maybe it's because I like my women

classy, the ones who don't take their tops off before the guy even finishes asking. Maybe it's because my idea of crazy is staying up until 2 a.m. on a school night.

I don't mean to sound like a boring prude who has a "holier than thou" attitude. I don't consider myself boring. I'm not a prude, and I know that I, too, am not perfect. I know there is a lot of temptation to let loose and get some ca-boose. I get that.

However, how can a college student justify going crazy for a week, acting like their Spring

Break vacation is some kind of other universe where nothing matters? The week might be fun, and you might see more cleavage than a mammogram technologist, but the consequences of that week can last a lifetime.

Dr. Drew Pinsky, well known for his hosting of MTV's 16 and Pregnant, speaks out against Spring Break.

"The businesses are playing into the pathological behavior of the young people, giving them unlimited alcohol and plenty of rooms," he said.

There have been casualties of college students who drank themselves out of reality

and lost their lives for no reason.

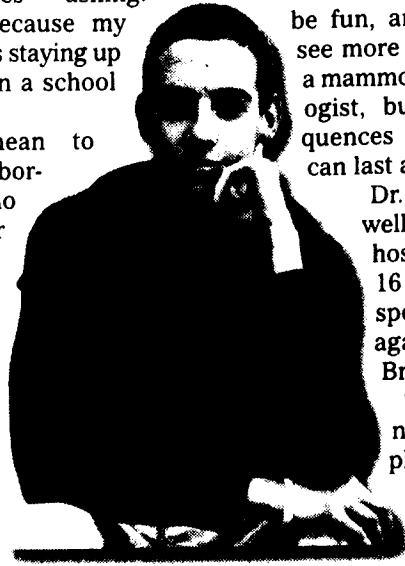
There are plenty of eye-popping stats and statements about Spring Break vacations. On average, guys have 18 drinks a day and girls have 10.

Theft, assault, and rape are all more likely to occur during Spring Break due to the excess of alcohol consumed by college students.

If you are still planning on heading to warmer weather during the week, be safe. Travel in groups, watch your drink, and know your limit.

That being said, enjoy your Spring Break, whatever you choose to do. If you want to go and party, I'm not going to stop you. As for me, I'll stick around in dreary Erie to unwind and relax. Maybe I'll even try to stay up until 3 a.m.

Then again, I don't want to get too crazy.



BRANDON BOYD  
senior writer



# Stimulus failed?

ED MISETA  
lecturer in economics

On the recent anniversary of the Economic Stimulus Bill, one thing that I kept hearing about is how it was a colossal failure.

This is utter nonsense. In my mind, the stimulus has been an overwhelming success.

If you don't think so, you probably are just failing to see the big picture.

If you don't remember, years ago, many politicians felt that Americans with no money or bad credit weren't buying enough houses. This is not fair, they thought. So they went to the banks and said "please make more bad loans."

To encourage this, the politicians agreed to have Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, two quasi-governmental agencies, buy the bad loans to take them off bank balance sheets.

Freddie and Fannie sold the loans to other banks and securities firms. Large insurance companies like AIG insured them.

Politicians took lots of money from these companies and pretended they didn't know what was going on. When the Federal Reserve decided to raise interest rates, the mortgage market imploded and the economy collapsed.

The Bush administration thought they had the solution. They sent checks to Americans to increase consumer spending and get the economy going.

Unfortunately, Americans went on cruises and paid off their credit card debt.

We went billions deeper into debt and the economy continued to tank. Which brings us to the almost \$900 billion stimulus.

Most Americans felt the money would be used to create private sector jobs, and we

were even promised that with passage of the bill, unemployment would not rise above 8.5 percent.

Unfortunately, by the end of 2009, unemployment was over 10 percent.

This, I think, is driving all of the "stimulus was a failure" talk, which is flat-out wrong.

If the goal of the bill was to put Americans back into private sector jobs, then obviously it was a failure.

But when you look at where and how the money was spent, you have to wonder.

\$87 billion went to help states with Medicare costs. \$2 billion went to Section 8 housing. \$36 billion went to extend and increase unemployment compensation. \$25 billion went to health coverage under COBRA. \$21 billion went to increase food assistance. \$16 billion went to increase Pell Grants. \$15 billion went to aid needy individuals. \$3 billion went to increase block grants for welfare programs, etc.

There was even money to double the size of the Department of Education in Washington, DC.

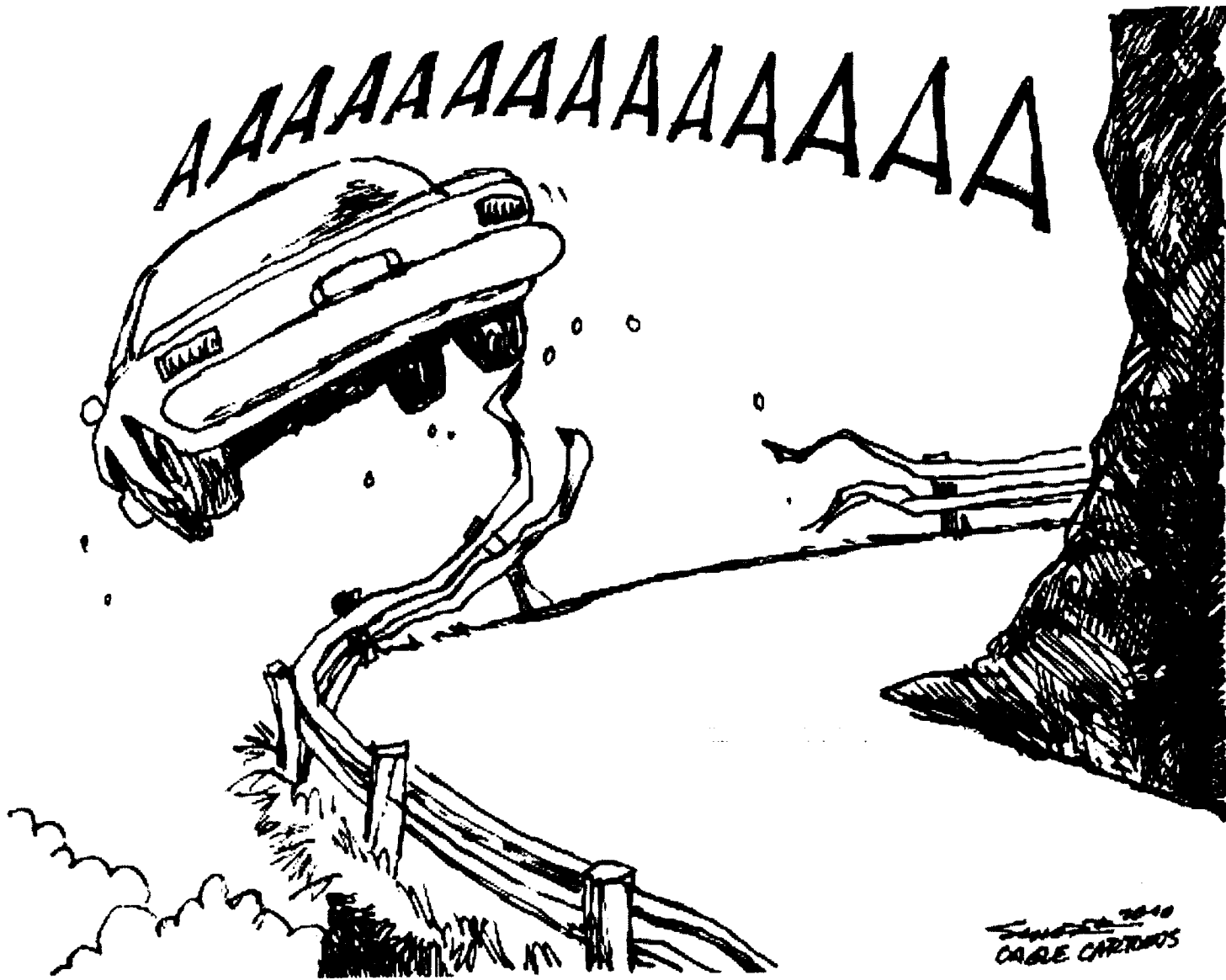
In Erie, \$1.4 million in stimulus money is helping the homeless. Unfortunately, homeless people don't create jobs.

I could go on, but I think I've made my point.

This money is not creating private sector jobs because it was never intended to do so; the stimulus was designed to grow the size of government and the number of people who are dependent on handouts from the government.

And in that regard it has succeeded fabulously.

Unfortunately, most workers in this country will continue to see the economy stagnate and the national debt go to higher and higher levels.



TOYOTA. MOVING FORWARD

February 26  
CARLE CARTOONS

MY VOICE

# February

JOHN QUINN  
contributing writer

February might only have 28 days, but you can't convince me that it is the shortest month. Comedian Lewis Black, who visited this campus about two years ago, once said "It's when you want to slit your wrists just to see color."

Now that football season is over, what possible reason is there to even wake up on a weekend before 5 p.m.

I'll give you skiing, but college kids are cheap and lazy. Unless you're in the midst of a bender, there's no way you're getting up at 9 a.m. on a Saturday morning to schlep up to Peek'n Peak.

Even if you did want to go, who the hell would be stupid enough to want to go with you?

You want entertainment in February?

You'll get nothing and like it. You're better off drinking until dawn on Friday and Saturday night and waking up in the early evening. Aside from all the extra fun, you'll miss breakfast and lunch those days and theoretically get thinner.

College football and the NFL give you something to look forward to in the fall. Even if you don't like football, at least the weather is nice. That's a lie, actually. Outside of September, the weather is spotty at best. At least there's the hope that it will

be 60 degrees and sunny.

November, December, and January are cold like February, but we get substantial time off. Those months also include Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Eve, and Superbowl Sunday.

February has a day featuring a groundhog.

Incidentally, Groundhog Day brings about a rare potential in American history: an assassination that would be really funny.

On February 1st, everything comes to a screeching halt. But after this month, it's gravy.

March arrives, which kicks off the conference tournaments, which lead into St. Patrick's Day, which leads into the NCAA Tournament, which leads into April, which brings us nicer weather, the sun, George Harrison, etc.

There's actually hope. February is like a 28-day sentence in a prison that's freezing cold and has no convenience store. At least you're safe in the shower.

So, since Black's idea for color is not completely realistic, our only choice is to put our heads down, close our eyes, and plug on. March 1 will, theoretically, arrive at some point. Meanwhile, since the real Olympics suck, you can spend the rest of the month watching *Cool Runnings*.

If John Candy can't lift your spirits, you're better off dead.

All profile photos taken by Daniel Smith / Behrend Beacon

MY VOICE

# The death of dating



MARISSA LANICH  
staff writer

Dating is out, hooking up is in.

As college students, we all know that this is true. We see it at parties, among our friends, and possibly in our own lives as well.

Instead of an invitation to dinner and a movie, it is more common to receive an invitation to a party where beer and bedrooms are conveniently close.

The "demise of dating" and the hooking up phenomenon have been more openly discussed in the media over the last several years, and those from previous generations are learning about the new norms for modern sexual relationships.

Some still hold conventional views and find this hooking up culture to be inappropriate and backward.

However, many believe that

this is a healthy progression and an appropriate lifestyle in today's society where birth control and a more liberal view of female sexuality have created a more relaxed attitude toward sexual activity.

I have yet to form a strong opinion on our society's movement towards casual hook-ups. While I see the strangeness in relationships progression backward and the cons of a more promiscuous lifestyle and I also see the inevitability of this movement toward "hook-up" culture and the beneficial effects of this liberation.

However, when it comes to the end of dating, I do hold an opinion.

Beyonce once said that "If you like it then you should've put a ring on it." Similarly, I think that if you like it then you can take me out for dinner. Or at least show me some respect.

Regardless of how a relationship begins, whether it's with a friendship or a hook-up, there comes a time when, "come over and party at my place tonight" isn't sufficient.

Although drinking Natty

Light and getting drunk with your obnoxious roommates may sound like a good time to you, this is not a good seduction technique.

Commitment and exclusivity are becoming less common requirements for modern sexual relationships between men and women, but that doesn't mean that respect should go out the window as well.

Regardless of what you're searching for, whether it is a committed relationship or even just a casual relationship, put a little effort into it.

A relationship may be purely casual; however walking your hook-up to the door and respecting him or her as a person is still essential. If that relationship has potential, extend an invitation for something a little more personal than a keg party.

This mutual respect is not only fundamental in any human relationship, but will also be beneficial down the road, whether the relationship results in a consistent hook-up, a friendship, or even a commitment.

4701 College Drive, Erie PA 16563  
Room 10H

## THE BEHREND BEACON

Telephone: (814) 898-6488  
Fax: (814) 898-6019

### Executive Board

**Editor-in-Chief:**  
Connor Sattely  
editor@psu.edu  
**Managing Editor:**  
Shawn Annarelli  
sma5189@psu.edu  
**Web Editor:**  
Jeremy Korwek  
jdk5009@psu.edu

**Business Manager:**  
Bethany Long  
bjl5037@psu.edu  
**Faculty Advisor:**  
Kim Young  
kij10@psu.edu  
**Marketing Manager:**  
Katie Cook  
kic5293@psu.edu

**News Editors:**  
Ally Orlando  
aco5051@psu.edu  
Rachelle Thompson  
rit5065@psu.edu  
**Asst. News Editor:**  
Eric Peirce  
ewp5052@psu.edu

**Sports Editors:**  
Nick Blake  
npb5041@psu.edu  
Alec Italiano  
ajl5037@psu.edu  
**Opinion Editor:**  
Neil James  
opinion@psu.edu

**Culture Editor:**  
Shannon Ehrin  
sbe5017@psu.edu  
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jsk5161@psu.edu  
Marcus Yeagley  
mij5012@psu.edu

**Photo Editor:**  
Daniel J. Smith  
djs5223@psu.edu  
**Video Editor:**  
Mike Fultz  
mjf5204@psu.edu  
**Engineering Editor:**  
Ryan Frankouski  
rsf5054@psu.edu

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