

## Changing students

JENNA ABATE  
staff writer

The *New York Times* recently conducted a study determining how today's college freshman are changing from those of decades ago. Some argued that the changes are minimal, while others thought the complete opposite. The study prompted questions such as: how are students handling the social, academic and financial pressures of modern day society?

Many campuses have orientation programs to help new students make the transition, meet new people, and help them get acclimated in their new environment. Even so, who better to comment on the transforming freshman than someone who can tell you first hand, me, a Penn State Behrend freshman!

Linda Bips, a psychologist, and an assistant professor at Muhlenberg College argued, "In my experience, college has always been demanding both academically and socially, but students now are less mature and often not ready for the responsibility of being in college."

However, I would have to disagree with Mrs. Bips. I feel that today's college freshmen come from more competitive high schools, and upon entering their senior year, know what colleges are expecting of prospective students. They are building more rigorous schedules to appeal to top colleges. Because our society is so forward and many children are exposed to things at younger ages, I would have to argue that students develop maturity much sooner than Bips gives credit for.

Our society is more stressful in general because of the current economic and political realities. In contrast to Bips' opinion, I think many students are forced to face the responsibilities of adult life early on. Within my graduating class alone, I would say nearly 90 percent of the stu-

dents filed their own FAFSAs, filled out loan applications, and were made more aware of their families financial situations than in previous generations. Students today are left with the question "how am I going to pay for college?" rather than "how are mom and dad going to afford it?"

Students who are more aware of their financial situation are more money conscious in many respects. For example, a majority of the freshmen I know came to campus looking for a job to help pay tuition costs or to put a little extra cash in their own pockets, rather than having their parents send them money. Students are not only becoming more aware that an education comes with a price, but they are aware of how much that price tag actually is.

I would like to even argue that students today are different in regards to social aspects by means of underage drinking. It is not an issue worth arguing if it goes on or not, but how students today handle it. Chalk it up to previous experiences or paying good attention in high school health classes, but students today are being wiser about their limits of alcohol consumption. On this point, Bips and I do in fact agree that if in the event students encounter problems when under the influence, such as someone becoming ill, they know how to handle the situation and are much smarter than students of generations past.

Despite if you're a first semester freshman or a graduate here at Penn State Behrend, I think it is safe to agree that college student's do in fact change and will keep changing as the years go by. No one freshman class is quite like the next. In years to come when our children go to college, we will be asking ourselves the same question as those at the *New York Times* did: are college students changing? How?

## A 'Situation' that calls for more partying

MARISSA LANICH  
staff writer

As college students actively pursuing a degree, the majority of us will be spending four years reading, writing, calculating, experimenting and discussing. Why? To learn what we need to learn in order to turn all of those minus signs into plus signs on our degree audits.

After all of this hard work and time that we spend in school, it is sad to say that many of us will never make the kind of money that we dream of making. We can only hope that after we fulfill these requirements and receive that diploma, that somewhere out there a job is in our future. A job that will pay us enough money to survive, and if we're lucky, enough to pay back our student loans before we're 40.

I am currently in my seventh semester, and while I hope that I have made the right choices, sometimes I can't help but doubt myself. Did I choose the right major? Will I make enough money? Will I enjoy what I do?

However, a "situation" recently came to my attention that seriously made me reconsider where my life is headed, and might make you want to re-evaluate your choices, as

well. Why pursue a job in business, or any field for that matter, when we could make \$5 million a year to party and GTL?

Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino will make over \$5 million in 2010 alone for his role on MTV's hit reality show *Jersey Shore*, event appearances, product development, and product promotions.

The Situation, previously a manager of a Staten Island fitness center, found himself unemployed at 25 and began modeling underwear. According to *The Situation*, three weeks after he began modeling, he was referred to MTV

for the *Jersey Shore* pilot.

After two seasons of the incredibly popular and surprisingly entertaining show, he now finds himself making \$60,000 per episode for drinking heavily, hooking up with countless women (including his cast mates), and coining terms like "grenade" and "landmine."

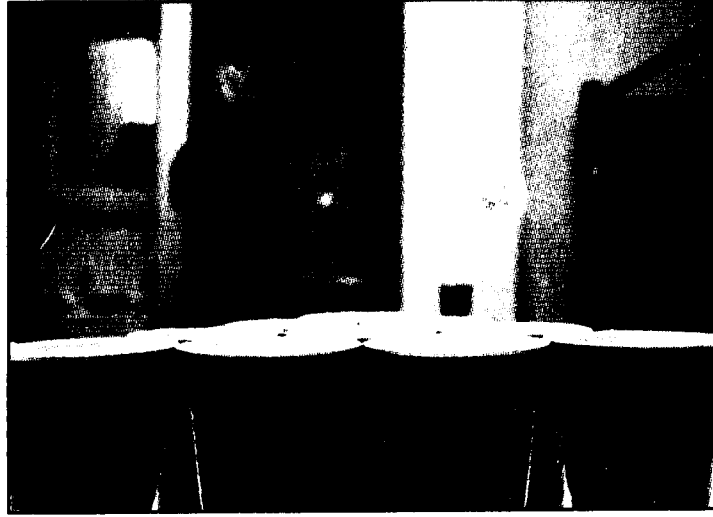
This should anger us. We should be furious that this guy is getting paid to have fun while we work hard to make less than a twentieth of what he makes. However, and maybe I'm alone in this, but I think I'm more impressed than angry.

This cast of guidos and

guidettes has captured the attention of America. We sit in our living rooms on Thursday nights in anticipation of the next fight, the next hook-up, and of course, T-Shirt Time. How did they manage this? How has this crazy group of eight convinced us that their partying is worth our time and attention?

Sure, their ridiculous, moronic behavior might not be admirable, but it's one of the most entertaining things I've seen on TV in a long time. And while I can't say I recognize any significant talent among the group, their candid nature and strong personalities make them naturals in front of the camera.

I'm not too proud to say that I'm jealous of *The Situation* and the rest of the Jersey-licious crew. Who wouldn't like to get paid to party like it's freshman year all over again? I don't know that I'm outrageous enough for an MTV reality show, and I doubt that anyone would be very interested in "Pennsylvania Shore." However, if the opportunity presented itself, I would certainly have to leave marketing behind and give it a shot. Until then, I'll keep my skin bronzed and my partying skills sharp.



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## Focusing on positives

LAURA RUPPEL  
staff writer

I have come to realize the majority of the articles that make up the opinion section of the *Behrend Beacon* every week tend to draw attention to the negatives. Whether they are reactions to recent tragedies or complaints regarding everyday life and experiences, emphasis on what's wrong with the world dominates.

And I'm not complaining about these criticisms; everyone has the freedom to express how they feel through the *Beacon*. I have taken part in these deprecations and I have had my fair share of stressing my conceptions of corruption and unethicality, but I have decided to change my direction. I'm going to begin focusing on the positives.

I understand it is important to accentuate the troublesome, detrimental aspects of the happenings in our society and world, but there is no need to dwell on what the situations are. Instead, there's a need for making progress toward improvements and solutions. There is a difference between talk and action and improvement only results from talk leading to action.

When I truly feel there is a conflicting issue I need to draw attention to and speak my mind about, I will do so; however, I'm choosing to exercise my right to convey my opinions to the student body of Penn State Behrend as a staff member of the *Beacon* by highlighting and writing about what's going well in the world, through my perspective, of course.

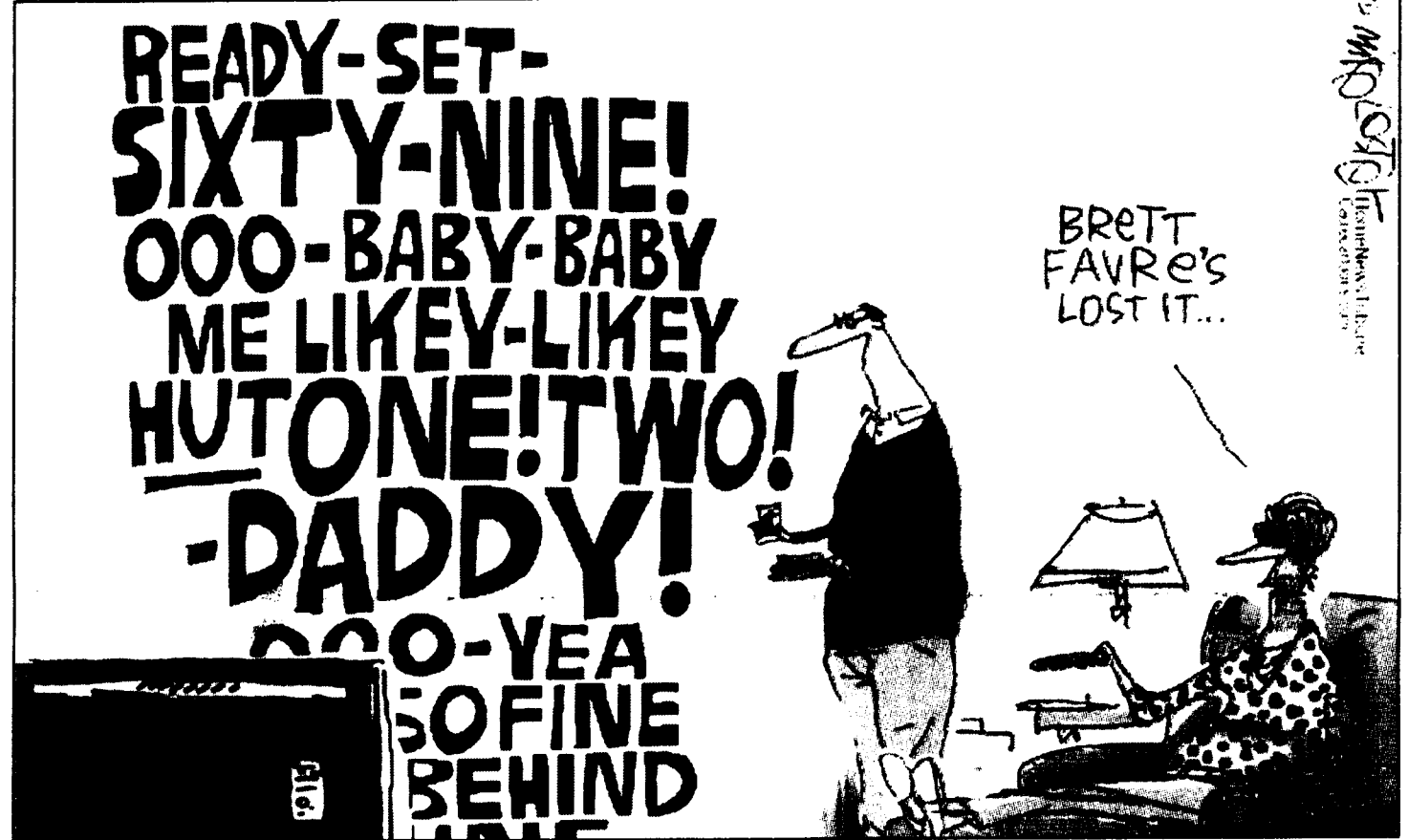
I am kicking this off with emphasizing my appreciation for all of the meatless and/or vegan eating options available on campus. The dining facilities of Penn State Behrend truly make an effort to provide healthy selections alternative to meat and dairy, which conveniently makes staying true to my vegetarian lifestyle a simple task.

The menus located on Penn State Behrend's Housing & Food Services website distinguish which options are meatless and/or vegan. A blue, circled "m" icon labels the meatless items and a green, circled "v" icon marks the vegan items. These choices include: fruit, oatmeal, sandwiches, pastas, salads and so on. As far as the beverages go, my personal favorite is the vanilla soy milk.

While not all of the meatless and/or vegan selections are considered healthy, a wide variety is provided. When you've had enough of rice and oatmeal, French toast sticks, home fries, and soy desserts are fine in moderation. A red, circled "h" icon brands which items on the menus online are healthy, as well.

This positive element may seem minor, but it makes a major impact for students with lifestyles and situations similar to myself. In the words of my wise and strikingly handsome boyfriend, Michael, it's all about perspective. Focusing your time and energy on things you look forward to and make you happy make life easier and more enjoyable. Not letting things you dislike or disagree with bother you lets you live in the moment and live life to the fullest.

**Have an opinion to express???**  
**Write for us: [bmb5290@psu.edu](mailto:bmb5290@psu.edu)**



## Knocking on those who don't knock

TALIA FINOTTI  
staff writer

Knock! Knock! Knock! It's simple and it only takes three hits of a fist to a door, this act is called knocking. As a matter of fact, it's an art, and it has become a lost art. It seems customary, or even polite for that matter, to knock on a door when it's closed. However whether it's due to this new generation being bolder, or the lack of customary ideals or politeness, people just don't know how to knock.

I could be in my room chilling out, and all of a sudden someone barges into my room. Door flinging back to the wall; thank God the doorstopper is there, and they stand in the doorway acting like nothing is wrong. Umm, hello? What are you doing? Or I could've been naked! Or

doing something that might make you question my values! Or doing something embarrassing like reciting pick up lines into a mirror! (Come on, we've all done it). I mean, seriously, it better be a damned good reason why you have to burst in my room like the friggin Hulk, without even a knock.

Those are the times it gets embarrassing, you either go to the bathroom or to some sort of stall to do whatever you have to do and someone decides, "Hey, knocking is for squares!" They don't even knock, they just pull, and if it's locked they

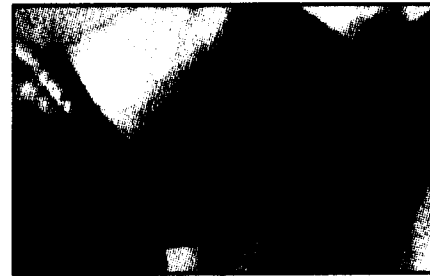
go nuts. It would be such a preposterous and completely outrageous idea if someone were actually using this stall or this room. So they tug and pull until it opens, and they either do one of the following reactions.

First reaction; "I am so sorry!" and they proceed to say sorry while you keep reassuring them that it's perfectly fine, when really it's not and you know it and it gets kind of annoying. Or they do reaction two; "What the hell!?" and they get angry because you are occupying the space. In both cases you come

out embarrassed or the bad guy.

I can't tell you how many times when I go home for the weekend and I go to the bathroom and my brother opens the door on me. DUDE! What are you doing? And there is this screaming battle between my brother and I, because somehow it's my fault that I left the door shut and didn't lock it. After that there is this sarcastic demonstration of how to knock, until it actually sinks in.

Knocking is not a difficult art form, make a beat out of the knock, do the standard three hits and wait to see if everyone is decent. It's not rocket science, but seriously, start the art of knocking instead of barging into a room or a bathroom like a frenzied beast.



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## A preview of Prop 19

JENNI BOLSTORFF  
staff writer

If the phrase "Prop 19" doesn't ring a bell, now is the time to become acquainted. On November 2nd, the state of California will vote on a ballot that will (if passed) permit local governments to regulate and tax commercial production, distribution and sale of marijuana. This means that an estimated 3.3 million Californians presently using pot for recreation would be permitted

and protected by State law to use marijuana, if the ballot passes.

What deems pot smoking legal? According to the ballot, persons 21 and up may possess up to 1 oz marijuana as well as grow and use pot in a private residence. With elections rapidly approaching one major concern is the budget deficit; California's state government's debt trumps all in the land.

This is easy to argue from an economic standpoint; we

need more taxes to sustain the deficit. Why not legalize marijuana? Tax revenue from marijuana sales could generate as much as \$1.4 billion a year. Legalization could potentially reallocate law enforcement resources, shifting focus from possession charges to violent and property crimes. Also damage to public lands would decline with a drop in illegal grow operations and trafficking from Mexico and Canada. Though pot isn't all smiles either; a fear exists that one day

employers won't be allowed to require random drug tests and that the law will require outlandish accommodations for another con with serious impact: Proposition 19 does not define "driving under the influence." The details of the ballot need to be examined and their impact(s) weighed.

One thing is certain concerning the great weed debate: if the ballot passes, lawsuits will be piled miles high. Pun intended.

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