

Faculty Focus:

(Dr. John McDiarmid)

Behrend is the third institution of higher learning at which I have taught. For five years or so in the mid-1970's, I was on the faculty of a smallish, decent, church-related college in New Hampshire, and after that for one year at a large state university in Texas. My two pre-Behrend affiliations didn't represent the pits in American collegiate education, though they didn't represent the heights either. I find comparisons among the three places are a useful means for me to keep Behrend in perspective.

1. There are a lot of very bright people at Behrend who are interested in what they're doing. This applies to students, faculty and, if I can say this without breaking from the ranks of worker solidarity, the administration.

The Behrend administration does not seem to regard the defense of any particular faith as its primary mission, nor is it obsessed with numbers and regulations to an absolutely untoward degree. (At the state university in Texas, there was a fat book of university procedures and regulations; according to legend, the procedure for using the telephone began with "No. 1. Pick up the receiver.")

My faculty colleagues at Behrend are self-sacrificing, a band of well-trained, hard-working, dedicated teachers, deserving of substantially increased salaries and reduced teaching loads. (As a matter of fact, I think most of the words in that sentence are true).

As for Behrend's students, I wish some of them weren't so

obsessed with using their college careers solely as routes to good jobs, because they'd be very much worth having in classes on some impractical, non-vocational subjects I like to teach, such as literature and the arts. But I can hardly blame students these days for worrying about the future, and even now near the middle of the term I can say I enjoy my classes.

2. Behrend's campus is beautiful. Every college seems to be built on a hill, to be close to Plato or God I suppose.

At least I don't have to climb up to the very top of ours to reach my office. The hill in New Hampshire was barren and particularly windswept. The one in Texas was extremely steep, crowded with buildings, and a roosting place for big flocks of grackles (I think that was the name): these were noisy, diarrhea-prone birds who always looked like they'd just bathed in an oil slick.

There was a river down by the base of the hill in Texas where people were out swimming and sunning themselves even in February; but being well-trained, hard-working and dedicated I didn't get down there much. My office faced into an air shaft above which were the grackles.

At Behrend I can look out the tiny window of my stall in the barn (Turnbull) and see beautiful trees in the fall and spring: an important pleasure. The Erie winter of course is another story, but New Hampshire was almost as bad.

3. The atmosphere at Behrend is reasonably free and open. If

you don't believe in God or Texas, you don't have to worry too much about saying so to the wrong people.

Most people here don't seem to be too bothered by the presence of disagreement.

It was comforting sometimes at the church-related school to have students who had been intimidated by pistol-packing nuns throughout their childhood, and who approached teachers with caution and deference; but basically I prefer students who feel free to say what they think.

4. Behrend is not a college (yet).

I think that most of the school's problems that trudge so wearily across our minds come, ultimately, to that.

"College" of course is related to "collect", a word that connotes both the separateness of items and their gathering together to form a whole. Behrend is a very uncollected place.

The original commonwealth campus/main campus pattern involves the odd premise that a single, continuous experience, the pursuit of an undergraduate education, can be successfully divided between two entirely different settings and sets of dimensions; collegium interruption doesn't sound very satisfying to me, and I'm glad I didn't have to go through it.

The buildings Behrend most desperately needs are collecting places: decent dorms where students could gather together; a gym and a library, where students and faculty members can pursue their diverse interests separately yet within sight of one another.

In the absence of a decent library building, the pressure on faculty to do research becomes a dispersing factor, whereas it could be an integrating one. It would be very nice if Penn State had ever decided to build a col-

Erie Area Has Many Sites

By John Skrzypczak

Erie and the surrounding area has much to offer for the outdoor minded person. There are many sites to see and most of them are free.

One of the most beautiful parks in this area is Presque Isle State Park (the Peninsula). The park was named by the French, and was a strategic location for Oliver Hazard Perry's fleet during the Battle of Lake Erie in 1813.

No fee is charged to enter or use any facilities at Presque Isle. The Peninsula has year round ac-

lege up here; until it does, I suppose all us grackles will have to keep on roosting.

As I write, we've just started preregistration, which should in some minimal way be a collegiate experience - everyone gets put on a list together; instead, it's one in which we're constantly referring to a huge overhead of majors and courses that basically belong to another institution.

Collegiality can also mean everyone having fun together, and the college as a whole should not become so vocationalized, so intent on its outward-directed mission, that it misses the chance to savor its life as it passes.

I like getting the monthly calendar of events; it makes the school seem more whole and real, less just a random aggregate of exiled Nittany refugees.

I don't know how my list of distinctive traits will strike other people: it's purely personal.

I suppose my main feelings these days are that I hope we get those new buildings soon, I like teaching here, would like for many reasons (some obvious) to stick around, and wish more students felt the same way.

tivities for everyone.

In winter ice-fishing, ice-boating, X-country skiing, hunting, and hiking are very popular.

Presque Isle can easily be reached by W-4 Westminster bus that leaves Erie Hall. The 50 cent ride on the EMTA is well worth it.

The bus will drop you off right on Peninsula Drive (Rt. 832) about ¼ mile south of the park entrance.

Another very beautiful area that many of you are already familiar with is Wintergreen Gorge.

The Gorge, named for its wintertime pine green color, is an extremely popular hangout for Behrend students and others.

This 30 mile long gorge extends from Norcross Road in Harborcreek, Pa. through North East, Pa., right up into New York State.

The Gorge has been cut out by four-mile creek, which flows toward Lake Erie.

The Gorge forms a scaled down version of the Grand Canyon.

Some of the largest deer in Pennsylvania, and all types of wildlife, make their homes in the Gorge.

When hiking in the Gorge area many fossils and rock formations can be found.

The scenery, topographic diversity, and wildlife, combine to make a very interesting tourist attraction.

Besides hiking and rappelling, fishing is also popular. Some of the best fishing in the area can be done in 4-mile creek, 12-mile creek, and Trout Run. (All of these streams flow through The Gorge).

Speaking of fishing, some of the best trout and salmon fishing in the state can be found in the Erie area.

Walnut Creek (accessible by E.M.T.A bus), Elk Creek, 20-mile Creek, Avonia Beach, and Cascade Creek (also accessible by bus), are some of the prime fishing waterways in this area.

If a good waterfall is what you yearn, then you are about 30 minutes away from one of the most beautiful in this area (second only to Niagara).

The Franklin Center Falls are located about a ½ mile north of Franklin Center in McKean. Just take I-90 West to Rt. 98 South and head for Franklin Center.

Don't go to Franklin Center though, about ½ mile before Franklin Center on Rt. 98, is a sign indicating the left turn to get to Davis Pond.

Well, go right at the sign and then after a about a ¼ mile you'll run right into the waterfall.

The waterfall which is located on a tributary of Elk Creek, is located right along the road and is easy to see if you drive slowly.

Now is one of the best times of the year to visit the waterfall because of the ice formation. Take your camera and hiking boots because you have to climb down a cliff to get a really good view of it.

These three sites are just some of the highlighted locations you must see in the Erie area. A few more sites to take in are: Devil's Backbone also off Rt. 98 on Frances Rd. (5 miles south of Girard). The Backbone is similar to Wintergreen Gorge.

Other fine spots in the area to visit are Shades Beach Park in North East, Pa., Raccoon Park (East Springfield, Pa., off Rt. 5), Gudgeonville Covered Bridge (located on Gudgeonville Rd. four miles south of Girard), and 6-Mile Creek Park on Iroquois Ave. (Rt. 955) in Lawrence Park.

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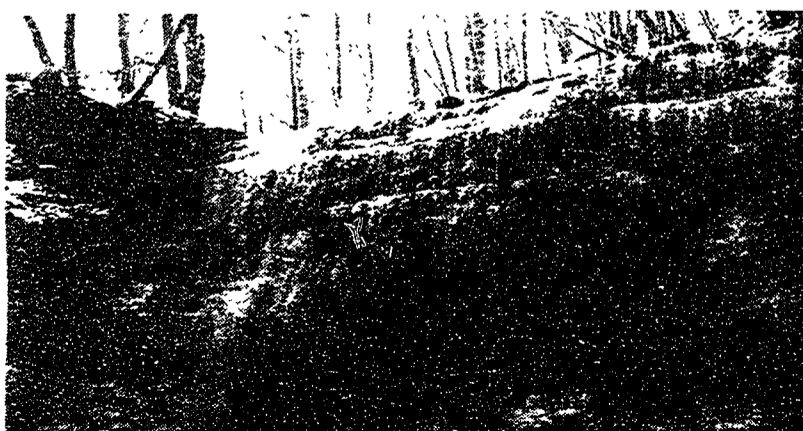
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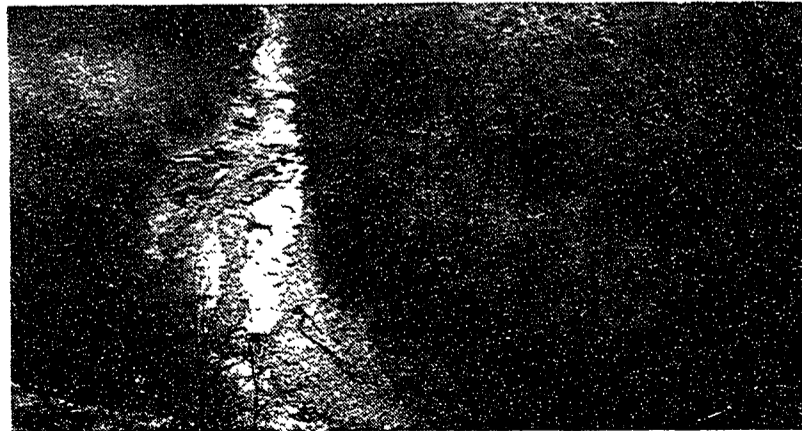
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Presque Isle Pathway



Franklin Center Waterfall



Wintergreen Gorge

Photos by John Skrzypczak