

OPINION

Reader Opinion

Behrend Advancing Toward Societal Collapse?

Dear Editors:

The other day I did something I've been planning to do for a

long time. I filled out the form that enables me to stay here at Behrend. I'm proud of that fact, and I'm both proud and glad to be

here at Behrend College.

The first time I saw the college, a dreary day in April nearly two years ago, I knew that this was the place for me. Even in the rain, I felt the tranquility of Behrend's natural setting. I noticed that there is something rather exciting about the blend of the rustic with the ultra-modern which is one of Behrend's unique qualities. In more ways than one, it is truly the best of two worlds.

With all these thoughts rolling through my head, I thought it was time to rededicate myself to my responsibilities as a student and as a member of several campus organizations. As a student, or even just as a person, I feel responsible for pointing out several dangerous trends I see the college taking.

The first trend is the one mentioned by Ken Sonnenberg in the last issue of the *Behrend Collegian*. Mr. Sonnenberg addressed the issue of the increasing trend in hiring instructors in place of full-time faculty. While this may seem economically feasible, academically it is not. Instructors

are showing up in business and science classrooms, as well as humanities. While these instructors may be as qualified as full-time faculty, and they may take as much interest in their students, the simple fact that they have neither offices nor office hours makes them almost completely inaccessible to the student outside the classroom.

The second trend deals with the college's claim to a "partnership with Northwestern Pennsylvania." This was the clever theme for the 35th Anniversary Fund Raising campaign which was partially responsible for the present construction of the Hamermill and Zurn buildings. I say it was both "a claim" and "clever" because the administration has made some rather hasty decisions which I feel will end up harming that community we are trying to assist.

The administration has stated on several occasions that its present goals are toward the production of majors in the fields of business and technical engineering. There is nothing wrong with

this goal. I believe that this is a very fair examination of some realistic needs.

However, this trend toward greater and greater technical specialization could ultimately lead to the collapse of society. This sounds rather absurd at first glance, but look at the implications of overspecialization: people begin learning more and more about one single thing and less and less about everything else. Soon, only people in the same fields will be able to communicate, as language too will become highly technical. Eventually people become genius-like in their field, and completely ignorant of everything else. In essence, people become capable of only one task, and like machines, are useless in any other application.

I'm not saying Behrend should halt its wheels and not build new science buildings and new sports life facilities. These are all well and good, but we should at least have on the drawing board plans for a new facility for communication, visual and performing arts and humanities.

Yes, the college is growing, and should continue to grow, but not at the cost of our entire societal structure. Isn't it time the Behrend College rededicated itself to its number one responsibility, the wholehearted and well-rounded education of members of the society of Northwestern Pennsylvania?

Yours in concern,
Thomas P. Milley
Third Semester
Behrend Accounting

Faculty Member Clarifies Part-Time Takeover

To the Editor:

I appreciate the interest in the humanities and arts expressed in the letter from Ken Sonnenberg in your November 21 issue, but I must clarify one point which he makes. Neither History nor German includes any part-time faculty at Behrend; our three historians are either tenured or on the tenure track, and our faculty member in German is also on the tenure track.

Sincerely,
Archie Loss
Head
Division of Humanities and Communications

Editorial Policy

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OSRIN

The dean is out, just now.
I am a computer.

I am programmed to handle
university matters in the dean's
absence.

Now, then...

...what is this complaint about how
we neglect the teaching of
the humanities?

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