

OPINION

Editorial Opinion

Activities Fee Could Cure Apathy

Why is the attendance at many campus activities and events so poor? Is it due to the inadequate quality of some events or can it be attributed to the apathetic attitude of a large portion of our students, faculty and staff?

The low attendance at Cultural Series programs is a prime example of this apathy. Why are some people interested in attending only the performances of comedians, hypnotists, and rock bands? Why do some of you lack the interest to appreciate the arts such as poets and ethnic dancers?

Many students do not attend cultural events claiming that some events are on the same educational level as the academic courses they attend everyday. I can appreciate the desire to attend an event that doesn't require much educational thought, but this should not occur. You are paying thousands of dollars to learn, why not get your money's worth by taking advantage of every learning opportunity available to you? Some of you are missing out on so much.

I won't deny the fact that comedians are funny and entertaining, but they're not as "educational" as fine arts performers. We are in college to educate and enjoy ourselves. However, education should be our first priority. It is too bad that some of you won't reach beyond your academic curriculum to educate yourselves in other areas. More often than not, cultural events, too, are quite entertaining.

The implementation of an activities fee may help solve the attendance dilemma. A Task Force has been formed to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the fee that would increase tuition by an estimated \$100 per student each year.

The Task Force pointed out a few disadvantages of the fee but failed to support them. They noted "there is a lack of student support for increasing the cost of attendance through increases in tuition." There will always be a lack of student support for tuition increases, but the benefits of such an increase must also be considered.

Secondly, they feel "the expectations of students for services would increase if a fee were established." Why are the Task Force members uninterested in meeting students' expectations? We should be their main concern since Penn State is an educational institution for students.

Finally, they believe "the establishment of a fee would require a considerable planning period." They leave me with the impression that they don't want to take the time to benefit students.

The advantages of this fee are numerous. This additional money would be available to reflect your interests by providing the entertainment that you want to see.

The Task Force stated, "the level of programs and services provided by the University has eroded considerably over the last decade. If increased funding is not available in the near future, the programs and services so necessary to provide a quality total educational environment will continue to be reduced and deteriorate."

A fee may be necessary to support high quality entertainment, both educational and entertaining, for Behrend students. The implementation of an activity fee will guarantee better programming, and in turn, hopefully encourage more students to attend campus events.

by Risa Glick
Collegian Editor

Reader Opinion

SUB Advisor: "Bailey Could Not Give Leadership"

Dear Editor,

As faculty advisor to the Student Union Board, I feel obligated to respond to some of Ed Bailey's comments in the Feb. 1 issue of the *Behrend Collegian* concerning his resignation from the Student Union Board.

When leadership transitions occur, such as the one that happened in the student union management

position, there are bound to be changes not only in personnel, but in the philosophies of how such organizations should be run. These times offer an opportunity for those with real leadership talents to use their talents.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Bailey was unable to make the most of the transition that happened at Behrend last semester.

To blame his lack of leadership on those who tried to work with him last semester is a grave injustice. They were very good people who obviously needed something Mr. Bailey could not give - leadership.

Sincerely,
Mary Sellen
Head Librarian

Freedom of the Press: A Constitutional Right

Michael Eric Wimms
Collegian Staff Writer

Freedom of the press is a right that was enacted early in our country's history. It is one of the golden freedoms Americans hold dear. We adamantly fought the British so that we could maintain some personal rights...now we're fighting one another to put an end to this freedom.

What does this freedom entail? Why should only a select few have this power? Do we have the right to restrict this freedom in any way?

I see freedom of the press as being a personal guarantee to liberty. As long as there is some entity within our nation keeping the public well informed, we can just about be sure that our rights are protected.

Subversion can only be allowed where there is blind and dumb ignorance. When the people are informed of what is going on around them, they can make certain their government is doing exactly what it was enacted to do; serve the people.

Nations that have blindly and foolishly allowed their freedoms to be siphoned away live under a dark cloud of fear. These people who bury their heads in the sand are allowing themselves to be subjected, and are only putting off the inevitable.

Sooner or later they will have to deal with the problems they have ignored in the past; that is, of course, if it is not already too late.

We have the right to speak out against any form of injustice that we see, if we do not, we cheat ourselves.

The press is not the only body that has been empowered to speak out. If everyone in this country wants to be a member of the press, they have as much chance as anyone else provided they possess the qualifications.

It is not just a select few who

have been given the power to keep our government in check. We all have the constitutional right to speak out. The press only serves as a better medium for which to voice the opinions of the people.

Restriction of the right, or the power of the press is an abstract idea. It is almost like trying to separate church and state.

I believe that the church has the right to inform the public in any way, shape, or form that does not abuse, endanger, or infringe upon the right of another. One might argue that this would restrict the workings of the press, thereby denying them their constitutional rights. This may be, but no one, especially the press, should be allowed to deny the privacy of others to report the news.

In many cases, it is necessary, but in others it is not. For example, should the press have the right to report the dangers of drunk driving, and in doing so be allowed to pursue a drunk driver, persecute him and deny him his right to privacy?

The answer to this can only be that it depends on the person and the circumstances. If the drunk in question happens to be the mayor of New York City, has killed seven innocent people, and has

not been punished, then by all means the press should report it.

Reporters are responsible for informing the public, and sometimes must go to extreme measures to get the story to the public. To expedite matters more completely, many reporters rely on informants. In many instances it becomes necessary for a reporter to keep the informant confidential, for the source's protection.

The Supreme Court has judged that the press does not have the right to do this. I will not debate the right or wrong in this situation; I have merely introduced it here to delineate the fact that we should not be denying the press any rights, but protecting the ones they do have.

Freedom of the press was something Americans fought hard and long to receive, dare we start eroding it at its very foundation. Can we ever afford to let our freedoms be diluted until nothing but anarchy remains? Will we?

I recall a great quote that stated the feelings we once had for freedom. It went something like "I may not agree with what you say, but I'll fight to the death your right to say it." What a shame we do not always live up to this.

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Postal Information: The *Behrend Collegian* (898-6221) is published fourteen times annually (seven times during each academic semester at The Behrend College) by the students of The Behrend College; The Reed Union Building, Station Road, Erie, PA 16563.