

by James Martin
Collegian Editor

Editorial The B.D.R. Blues

B.D.R.- Baccalaureate degree requirements, words that bring fear, disgust, and a sinking, sickening feeling to the hearts and stomachs of college students everywhere. I refer of course, to the large body of courses all college students are required to take before getting on to the "important stuff." These are classes that a student perceives as having positively nothing to do with his or her major and as such are totally worthless.

Many individuals have no desire to learn anything that they cannot directly relate to their professions. On one hand I find this kind of comforting. When I go to a doctor it is a considerable comfort to know that his years of education were devoted primarily to medicine and were not consumed by years of conjugating French verbs and mulling over Renaissance paintings.

The concept of teaching only those courses related directly to one's course of study is perhaps exploited by some business and technical schools. These schools claim that they teach you "only what you need to know," and as such take up less of your valuable time. I'm fond of the

one area business academy that can teach anybody to be a certified to be a certified cosmetologist in three weeks, a dental assistant in four or in even less time- a Delta airlines pilot. I also notice that in advertisements for that same school; one of their alumni boldly asserts "I done good at (school X)". I just hope their hairstyling skills are better than their English.

I don't like taking some of these B.D.R. courses better than anybody else. I think overall that I would be a much happier, much nicer person today, had I never been forced to attend a single math class. I've spent many long hours agonizing over a lot of classes whose benefits I can't readily identify. But all things considered I think the advantages of being "forced" to take a wide variety of courses, easily outweighs the disadvantages.

There are very few of us fortunate enough to have an absolute, unwavering vision of how we perceive our future. For those possessing this vision I think technical schools, teaching the essentials of the field, are an excellent idea. But for the rest of us, wandering, unsure and lacking precise goals; I think a

liberal arts school with a broad curriculum is perhaps our best bet.

Speaking from personal observations I know of several Collegian staff members considering journalism as a career, who arrived at that decision through such varied routes as engineering, wildlife science, and accounting. What if these individuals had attended a school where they did not receive exposure to news writing and a strong English curriculum? It seems likely, that without this exposure that they would one day find themselves in jobs in which they had no interest. It simply makes good sense that exposure to a wide variety of subjects-make it more likely that one will find what he is looking for.

In sum, I'm not really trying to criticize the business or technical schools that teach nothing but certain specialized skills, they

certainly have their place. I'm simply suggesting that despite the unpleasantness of many required courses that the end result is often a good one. The average college student changes his major three times during the course of his college career and a liberal arts education, packed full of various required courses gives that student the opportunity to find hidden talents and interests.

Does all this mean that I'm glad I spent a semester in art history and I feel that I'm a better person because of it? Well - I wouldn't go that far.

College is a necessary time in life, when it's expected that young people can be self absorbed, even self centered. You have four years away from family to find yourself, figure out what you really want, what lifestyle is best for you- even try on faces that aren't really you.

Concluding a letter recieved from my sister, a Penn state Graduate whom I love very much,
John D. Garman

We'd like to thank the staff members of the Collegian for their patience in dealing with the recent and numerous computer difficulties. We appreciate the patience required to tolerate the many foulups encountered and the work required to master the new system. Special thanks to Bill Warner and Dave Machuga for getting us through it all. With any luck things should run more smoothly in the future.

Thanks again,
The Ed.s

THE BORN LOSER ©by Art Sansom



The Test Full Of Curves

by Steve Aller

When I left home to go to college one half of my brain was saying, "Good-bye Mom" and the other half was thinking "Helloooo Freedom". With money in my pocket and all of my worldly possessions carefully crammed and shoved throughout every nook and cranny, of my dubious vehicle I set off for what I envisioned as "Partytime 1986 through '90". Let me translate...

The "money in my pocket" consisted of first month rent money from my mom, my meager life savings, and the piddling sum from my summer job that I had somehow managed not to squander in my quest for life, liberty, and the pursuit of something resembling happiness. (A noble pursuit, to be certain; an extremely costly pursuit without fail.)

My "worldly possessions" ranged from a motley stereo system to my telephone, both of which cost me a fortune in recorded music and long-distance bills due to a severe lack of what dieteters and husbands of housewives have termed "willpower".

My "dubious vehicle" is a point I'd like to skip and forget in this translation; but unfortunately I feel impelled to include all of the gory details of my past delusion in order that the moral of this story will not seem unfounded. Appropriately named early on in its career as my vehicle because of its green color, sordid appearance, and generally bad attitude, the "Boogersnotmobile" has been through the equivalent of several decades of front-line combat with yours truly behind what's left of the wheel. At one point uninspected, uninsured, unregistered, unlicensed, and overall generally unfit to drive because of poor tires, no floorboards; one front seat and a broken hood latch, Booger has now been permanently parked on display at my present residence as a constant reminder to me in my attempt to repent and is eagerly awaiting the next local car smash contest. Unfortunately, it took the threat of inevitable imprisonment for me to discover the true joy and exhilaration of walking to school during a winter in Erie. My only wish is that people who do occasionally give me a lift to the store or to classes would understand my involuntary response of hyperventilation, excessive sweating, and uncontrollable body spasms every time I see so much as a vacant police car parked in front of a donut shop.

And finally, the most appropriate translation of what I thought was going to be "Partytime 1986 thru '90" came to me in the form of a slap from reality and the gradual but total deflation of my ballooned belief in the easy way out. Due to a lack of studying, severe overinvolvement in a club I need not mention, and susceptibility towards the temptation to partake in the imbibing of alcoholic beverages on every, err, any night of the week, I managed to change "Partytime 1986 thru '90" to something more like "Partytime 1992 to infinity..." provided that I graduate and am gainfully employed by then.

All joking aside (almost), the moral of the story is a fill-in-the-blank question on the most difficult test you will ever take. It's a test everyone takes each and every day and just so happens to be the name of Mikey's favorite everyday cereal... Life. Called a bitch by some and a beach by others, what you call it is a decision you make everytime you raise your head off your drool stained pillowcase.

Whatever you decide, don't expect the other guy to agree with you. After all, what kind of test would life be if we all thought alike?

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In Response...

To Lynn Popovich,

I am a student at University park and recently read your Penn State Behrend Collegian. I read with interest your comments on homosexuality. I liked the part, "I don't think the idea of having homosexuals on campus is a very good one..." Well guess what dear? It is a fact that approx. 10% of the population is exclusively homosexual. That means that with approx. 2500 students at your campus, about 250 are gay! Could it be that you may actually have a gay friend and not know it? Yes they do exist... In class in social activities, and in work. I cannot believe that you are actually an elementary ed. major with such an uninformed and closed mind. Oh...the other part of your comment, "For them to live in the dorm..." Who is them? We are people, not the plague. (by the way, I'm gay if you haven't noticed) Do you also feel that we are responsible for AIDS? Well, if you ever take a science course, you may learn that viruses don't discriminate like you do. AIDS can affect anyone. It doesn't matter who you are. One more thing; I used to go to Behrend and I was a friend of yours. I'm sorry that I must tell you that I have lost respect for you now. Maybe you should re-evaluate your thinking before you get quoted by a newspaper again. Just to let you know....

A concerned friend

P.S. I must remain anonymous because if it got out that I was gay, there would be incredible consequences. Isn't it a shame that I can't even be honest to my friends? I wish I could be in your shoes for a day.

Editor's Note-
Following the Student Voice Column in the last issue of the Collegian, Lynn Popovich received the letter on the left. The letter came in response to views that she expressed on the subject of homosexuality.

In order to perhaps provide a unique perspective on the issue, The Collegian decided to print the letter, (with Lynn's permission), along with her response.

To a concerned friend,

I would first like to say that I'm sorry if I offended you with my comments about homosexuals. I do not discriminate against people that are different than I. "To each his own!" People can do whatever they want sexually, that's not my concern. I know that homosexuals are people too! About the comments on AIDS-- I never thought that homosexuals created the disease; I do know a little about science. When I commented about dorm living, I didn't mean AIDS spreading! If you are so into being being an individual, then why are you ashamed of your sexuality? If you were my friend last year, you still are at least to me! It doesn't matter if you have different sexual preferences than I do. All of my friends are different in a lot of ways. If your not going to tell anyone about your real self, that's your prerogative. I'm sorry for hurting anyone. No malice was intended.

Still Friends?

Lynn Popovich

Letter to Ed.s

Dear Editors,

Penn State Behrend pride is being degraded by the appearance of our campus, and I feel that it is passed due time to clean it up. Being a volunteer tour guide at the Admission's Office, I find it very embarrassing to show prospective students a garbage filled campus. The parents of these students find it highly revolting to step in the remains of an orange that a "respectable" student has left splattered on the sidewalks and stairs around campus. Not only the outside, but the inside of the buildings are disastrous looking. I realize that the problem lies within some students, but the solution may belong to the Penn State system. In order for the Admission's Office to have some of these unfortunate messes cleaned up there is a sizeable charge they must pay. If some of our fellow students insist on leaving their little reminders for the rest of us to admire then there will have to be something done. I feel that a few people or a crew should be formed to deal with the situation. If this breaks into the budget of the system then I guess in order to pay for it they should raise the tuition or take the money from our general deposits. This method may make some students think before they create food sculptures around the campus. Although this may seem to be irrational to some, if you felt the embarrassment of explaining the situation to 200 parents and students at each open house you would probably be as angry as I am. If students want their school to look like and be known as a dump then they don't have much to wish for.

Sincerely,

Ray Van Dusen
2nd semester Political Science

Editorial Policy

The Behrend Collegian's editorial opinion is determined by the Editor, with the Editor holding final responsibility. Opinions expressed on the editorial pages are not necessarily those of the Behrend Collegian, The Behrend College, or The Pennsylvania State University. The Corry Journal, the publisher of the Behrend Collegian, is a separate corporate institution from Penn State.

Letter Policy: The Behrend Collegian encourages on news coverage, editorial policy and University affairs. Letters should be typewritten, double-spaced, signed by no more than two people, and not longer than 400 words. Students letters should include the semester and major of the writer. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification of the letter. The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters for length and to reject letters if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste.

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