

Let's Talk

A Look at Campus Crime

by Ray Sines
Collegian Staff Writer

Campus crime, a recent national issue, has been highly publicized by USA Today, The Phil Donahue Show and a number of individuals across the nation.

The Cleary incident is responsible for much of the recent publicity. As reported in national newspapers on April 5, 1986, Constance and Howard Cleary's daughter, Jeanne, a 19-year-old freshman at Lehigh University, was raped, beaten and strangled in her dorm room by Joseph Henry, another Lehigh student. The Cleary's launched a relentless crusade for nationwide reforms in campus safety.

The Clearys won more than a \$2 million lawsuit against Lehigh, and they have been publicly encouraging others across the U. S. to sue likewise until improvements have been made in campus security.

The Cleary's lobbying has produced a new Pennsylvania law, effective Nov. 1, which requires the state's colleges to publish crime rates for the previous three years. The new law also requires colleges and universities to supply students, faculty and staff with information relating to crime statistics and prospective students and to provide employees with the same information upon request.

Colleges will be required to report all crimes to the Penn. State Police following Uniform Crime Report format. Gene Johnson, Behrend chief of police and safety, told me that Behrend has been reporting since 1976.

"As far as I know we (Behrend) are the only campus that has been filling that long," said Johnson.

According to a recent USA Today campus survey (Oct. 4, 1988) alcohol abuse has been linked to most violent campus crimes (50 campuses surveyed). The FBI Uniform Crime Reports (UCRs) verify the high correlation with alcohol abuse and violent crime on and off campus.

I, likewise, researched the past five years of the UCRs to compare the crime rate on and off campus in various locations. I found that when comparing college crime rate (proportionately) with crime rate in general that college crime has not gone up. Violent crime, in fact, is increasing statewide and nationwide.

A violent crime now occurs every few seconds across our nation. Pennsylvania has a violent crime occurring every 11 min. 45 sec.

A New Place.... A New Perspective

by Peter Weichlein
Collegian Staff Writer

If you've been following my column, (I sure hope somebody you may have come to a conclusion. Yes it's true, so far all that I've been doing is complaining, being disgusted, being offended and appalled. So, for a change of pace I have decided to be a little on the positive side. Today I'd like to be patriotic, upbeat, and proud. Just bear with me.

PETE'S PERSPECTIVE

Complain, complain, complain; but who am I to continuously rag on American politics etc., since I am what some people lovingly refer to as a "damn foreigner". four years ago I came to this country, with a rather reserved outlook for my future. And who could blame me? Up until 1984, I lived in West Germany, being a happy German among many other happy Germans. The first 16 years of my life were spent in Munich, and now, by a twist of fate I found myself with all my earthly possessions, including mother and dog, stranded at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York City, which, as many of you know, can be a rather frightening place. So here I was, a rather scared 16-year old German, feeling rather out of place. (Yes, for those of you who still haven't figured it out, it's not a speech impediment -- it's what's left of my German accent).

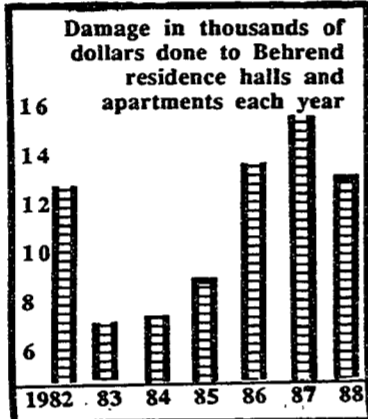
Go west young man, go west. New Jersey was as far west as I got, not a bad place to start, and there I



College campuses are not sanctuaries. There is no immunity from danger inside university boundaries. Door locks must be used and precautionary measures must be taken in dorms, the same as in homes across the U. S. Proper lighting is as important on campus as it is in city streets. Alcohol abuse is as dangerous on campus as it is off campus.

In comparing per capita statistics across the nation, Behrend is one of the safest colleges in Pennsylvania and ranks high nationwide. Does this mean that Behrend students can take safety for granted? For God's sake -- No!

Precaution, common sense, good lighting, safety seminars and campus police have made Behrend the safe campus that it is. Yet, as enrollment increases, these measures must increase accordingly.



For example, operation ID (identification), initiated in 1987, is available, free to every Behrend student. According to Tod Allen, Behrend police and safety officer, any student may sign out engravers from security to properly identify his/her property.

Crime watch was also initiated in 1987 which caused vandalism and property damage to decrease accordingly.

was. Years of continuous warnings by well-meaning German friends were about to come true. The picture of the ugly American vividly in my mind, I set out to overcome the few years of paternal dependency left, and move back to my beloved Munich as fast as possible. If I could move to America, I could just as fast recross the ocean and get back to civilization.

I shall spare you tiresome stories of the new kid on the block trying to make it in his new high school, etc. For those tear jerkers please refer to "The Karate Kid." I made it through the first couple of weeks though, and, low and behold, Americans actually turned out to be humans.

And, slowly but surely a change took place. I began a process of Americanization. No more weird haircuts. I now listened to music that was played by people and not by computers, and for the first time in over five years I was the proud owner of a pair of jeans. While my German friends were disgusted, my American friends applauded the new me. There are still some German traits left in me, and I'm trying like crazy to keep the accent, but basically I have adjusted very well and now feel at home in this country. Now my main goal is to get done with Erie and move back to civilization in New Jersey.

Living in the United States, to me, is a privilege, of which to be proud. Of course there are flaws in the system, just look at the upcoming election. And naturally I miss my place of origin. After college I will go back to Munich. But only for a year or two. My future is here in America.

OPINION

Letter Questions Priorities

Dear editor,

Congratulations on a job well and finally done. Yes I'm referring to the new bookstore. The new bookstore is a great asset and something that was really needed here. However, I'm not here to talk about the new bookstore but the space that is now the old bookstore.

Last spring it was decided that the old bookstore would become student organization space which would be used by clubs as offices for their organizations. That is still the case. However their is a question now as to when this space will be renovated.

Renovation was supposed to take place when the bookstore was removed but now the funds that were to be used for renovation for the bookstore are being considered

for improving the gym.

I believe that our beloved Erie Hall does need improvement but as the Student Government Vice-President I feel that 55 clubs and organizations do need a little more office space than the 609 square feet they presently occupy. Right now you have the Student Government; the Collegian; all the major Councils and three other organizations trying to work out of such a small space. There is also the question of our radio station (yes a radio station) that gave up its space for an entrance way. I believe that the student organizations need this space more than the gym does and I believe we are rightly entitled to it.

Beth Buck,
S.G.A. Vice President

Beth, we couldn't agree more. Athletics can certainly play an important role in the college experience, but the organizations you mention have already waited too long for action to take place.

As a freshman, I was told a library would be built by my junior year and a life fitness center would be built a year later -- lets hope the promise of new office space won't be yet another promise put on hold. - J.M.

LOVE ROB Rob Goes to Russia

by Rob Prindle

The Branches have left town and I'm going to follow them. Theodore and Cheryle Branch have had an interesting year. It seems that last November the couple decided to defect. The two middle-aged, unattractive, boring looking Erie natives took a tour of the Soviet Union and liked it so much they decided to stay.

The couple lived happily in The USSR for almost a year. Apparently they enjoyed all of the luxuries of Soviet society. It was reported that, for a while, Theodore worked as a venom extractor. After raising to the top of his profession at the old snake pit, Teddy convinced the Russians that he could be of more use to them as a propaganda machine. Seeing the wisdom in this idea, the Russians gave him a job with Radio "free" Moscow.

Now I don't want to hear anyone calling Ted and Cheryle traitors. Put yourself in Teddy's shoes for a moment. The poor guy was living in Erie. He was out of work. He had bills to pay. Hey, for all we know maybe the Branches were tired of the potholes.

For whatever reasons, they decided to leave America and head to the land of opportunity, Mother Russia.

Here this happy story takes a detour. Our heroes, those brave souls who took a ride on the risky Communist Express, returned to the oppression of the United States last month. Someone, they said, tricked them. Ted and Cheryle said an official from the U.S. embassy in Russia told them that America wanted them back. The USA wanted her brave heroes back home and would do anything at all to have them return.

The Branches were not greedy. They only asked for guaranteed jobs, free housing and medical care, along with a sizeable loan at low or no interest. Not much to pay, if you ask me, to have two heroes back.

Ted Branch left his job as a propaganda man for Radio Moscow, packed up himself and his lovely (if a little overweight) wife and moved back here to Erie Pa. After arriving in Erie, they flexed the power of the Soviet ruble and promptly checked into the swanky and world renowned Arnold's Motel.

The globe-trotting duo stayed at the lower west-side pleasure palace for about a week, then started worrying. The promises all fell through. No money, no housing, no nothing.

The U.S. State Department has, of course, denied ever offering anything to the couple. Now Theodore and Cheryle have really had it. Our American government has probably lost them for good. The Branches said they want to go back to the USSR and never return. We have lost two true American heroes. I shed a tear for that loss.

The Branches are pioneers of sorts. They have shown me a way out from under my oppression.

Love Rob has taken a beating lately. I have heard this column referred to as trash. I have heard my views called (gasp) conservative. I have been called (in effect) schizophrenic by a seventh semester psychology major who, after only four weeks decided that my woman-hating friend, Butch, was a figment of my imagination. I have had enough.

I am tired of living in a country where we take George Bush and Junior Quayle seriously. Bush apparently wanted someone even more wimpy than himself running on the Republican ticket.

I have had it with living in a country where presidential candidates actually gain support by not answering direct questions. I can no longer live with the fact that the pledge of allegiance (composed, by the way, by a socialist who worked for a flag company) is a major campaign issue.

I feel I must leave a country where Johnny Carson gets three hours of prime time TV every few months because the Tonight Show is having another anniversary. And another thing, how can I stay here and continually be embarrassed by ugly Miss Americas?

So, there you have it. I'm packing for Russia. As you read this column I am waiting for the Russian ambassador to call and guarantee me a good election system, pretty Miss USSRs and a job that doesn't involve snakes.



Letters to the Editor

Not everyone loves Rob

Dear editor,

After reading the latest "Love Rob" column in the September 29th issue of the Behrend Collegian, I did not know whether to be shocked, appalled, or dismayed at the substandard material the editors allow to go into print. After being victim to Rob Prindle's absurd arguments and opinions for two semesters, I felt it my duty as a concerned Behrend student to question the value of "Love Rob" to the Collegian.

I myself was a Collegian staff writer for a full year, and never in that time were the editors so desperate to fill a quota of articles that trash such as "Love Rob" went into print. Granted, the Collegian has made marked improvements over the past couple of years, which makes me wonder even more how Rob Prindle's articles have slipped by the editor's pen. I really had a good laugh when I discovered he was the feature editor. My sympathies go out to the feature writers who are subject to Rob's guidance.

The latest "Love Rob" column is possibly the most ridiculous I have had the opportunity to read so far, which prompted me to write this letter. Rob Prindle repeats what his buddy Butch believes about women today. Butch argues that women who smoke are "men-hating frigid commie-infiltrators," and that it's men's duty to seek these women out and convert them into subordinate door mats.

I have a few questions burning in the back of my mind, and would be extremely grateful if Rob could address them for me sometime in the near future. First of all, if Rob did not know that so many people knew how to read, then why does he feel so compelled to continue writing this blasphemy? Has he nothing more constructive to do with his time than to write articles in vain for an illiterate audience? Secondly, who is "Butch", and what makes him an authority on women today? Furthermore, what Behrend student really cares what Butch thinks? After I finished Rob's article, it became very clear to me that "Butch" is a figment of Rob's imagination. This merely demonstrates to me that Rob does not have the courage to stand behind his convictions and has to hide behind an imaginary character so as not to be held responsible for his own arguments.

Now that I've established that these arguments originated within Rob, I wonder how he can call himself a "Renaissance Guy". If he is so readily accepting of the "joys of feminism", then why does he need the security of a men's group where he can hide from feminist women? By the way Rob, don't hold your breath waiting for "hard-up chicks" to hit on you "Renaissance Guys." I'm not a smoker, but I'm seriously considering adopting the habit in order to keep Rob, Butch, and Rob's imaginary buddies away from me.

I think it is the duty of the Collegian Editor to be more selective about what he prints to prevent the Collegian from becoming unsuitable to even line the bottom of my hamster's cage. Despite the fact that Rob writes articles on the Opinion Page, the Collegian is ultimately responsible for what gets printed, and should follow the guidelines of good taste.

Michelle F. Grasmick
7th Semester, Psychology

In Response

Dear Michelle,

Thank you for your letter. While I may not agree with your assessment of Love Rob, I appreciate hearing your views.

Each reader, having a unique perspective, will interpret an opinion article in his own way. Rob Prindle says he writes his column as satire and I think this is how most readers choose to interpret it.

This is not to say Rob's words are all humor and bear no substance. Typically, satirists overstate their words to make a point. For example - I think it's safe to say that Rob Prindle is not fond of the smoking habit, but I hesitate to believe that he feels female smokers are actually men-hating frigid, commie infiltrators.

To make his point, to make us think or look at things in a different way, the satirist purposefully overstates his case, or will even fictionalize his account.

For example -- Shocked by your revelation that Butch is a mere figment of Rob's imagination, I frantically searched the student directory, looking for Rob's buddy Butch. Finding none, I made inquiries at the city's four hospitals, again, in search of Butch. Alas, you're right. He is a figment of Rob's imagination and I thank you for clarifying this point.

All joking aside, I'd like to address your suggestion that Love Rob is either slipping by the editor's pen or is being used to fill up space. While slip-ups and oversights do sometimes occur, printing Love Rob is not one of them. We try to print things in the Collegian which people will learn from and enjoy -- not to just fill space.

I am ultimately responsible for what gets printed and frequently objectionable items are submitted but are not printed.

James Martin, Editor

Dear editor

Who would, without even a mention of anything Christian, raise themselves to 'Reverend' status? Why none other than Love Rob a.k.a. The Reverend stamp out Commie, Yugo driving, Cigarette Smokers' (Oct. '87 issue, Collegian) Rob. Who would make a vain attempt to beat the Woman Today Club senseless with the word 'Liberal'? Love Rob (Sept. '88 issue) would.

Who would make such an open attack on well-intention women and (those who are 'Liberal' enough to join) men, and then attend the next immediate meeting of said women with a pathetic plea to "Please blame Butch, not me!" Love Rob, of course.

"Butch", as Rob puts it, "is my alter ego". Why does Rob hide behind the skirt of his alter ego? The world may never know.

Rob's reasoning is, although written by him, Butch's words are Butch's, not Love Rob's. If what 'The Reverend' professes is so, then it should be perfectly legal for a schizophrenic to go out and commit a crime while in his or her alter ego. After all, it was the 'other person' who committed the wrongdoing, not the person who should normally be held accountable for the act.

I wonder, what it must feel like to insult others based on a pure lack of knowledge of the persons being spat upon. How does it feel to orally degrade another human being, Rob? I guess even the person making a rebuttal must feel some of that as well, such as now, but I don't. Rather, I am defending not only myself, but all people who smoke, and drive Yugo's, and even women. All people who have become your targets over the course of your 'shoot-em-till-they-drop' writing career.

I'm sure you know, Rob, what it must feel like to stab people in the back. Why, you've even gone so far as to call all women who smoke "Men Haters" which must sit rather well with some of the women you know. Unless you follow your own advice and disassociate yourself from all such men-hating, pinko commie smokers. Me thinks the man who loves rock throwing hasn't been home lately, or he'd have seen his glass house shattered.

Love Andy Festa and Chris Sorgen
Andy and Chris,
Thanks a lot for your letter. I thought I'd let Rob respond to this one personally. - ed.

Oh Yeah! -- Rob