

Love Rob

by Rob Friedle

I have an amusing anecdote. A few years ago when I was attending Tech Memorial High School sitting happily in Mr. Swabb's English class, a female friend of mine leaned over before class began and told me something odd. She looked quite philosophical and said, as if it had been preying on her mind for a long time, that she had a tremendous responsibility. She said that being a female she was under a constant pressure from men. She said "Ya Know Rob, I could get 'Laid' anytime I want."

This was perhaps the single most philosophically charged thought I had heard up to that point. It remained the most philosophical thing until this past summer. I watched the Democratic Convention and saw the Reverend Mr. Jesse Jackson say that even though there had to be a winner and a loser to the primary election, even though he had lost, the Democratic party was what was important. Small differences should not stop him and all those who supported him from now turning their support to their Party's candidate Michael Dukakis. Unfortunately all of Jackson's supporters did not feel that "Lions and lambs should lie down together." Dukakis lost the



election, and I had a hard time falling asleep as I realized that George was our new president and Junior Quayle was second-in-charge.

My first thoughts after the votes were counted were pure evil. Now those Republicans will dig themselves a hole, I hissed under my breath. I wanted to see terrible things happen to the country with no one to blame the carnage on except that Republican fool who haunted the White House.

But let me stop here and tell you that my feelings towards the GOP were not always so vile. Before this

election I was not anti-Republican. I would have voted for Dole if he had survived the primaries, but George Bush soured my taste for the whole Party. After all, he represents them. Bush was the invisible man for eight years while Reagan ruled. He was the man-out, he was the guy that was too big of a joke to be joked about. How could this person expect to be elected by avoiding questions and covering himself in the licky-sweet goo of God, Guts, Guns, flags and prayer? Didn't Americans demand issues instead of hype?

I thought and hoped that Bush will do such a crappy job that the next time a GOP member is elected, Love Rob will grace not a newspaper, but a tombstone.

Perhaps this was melodramatic, but I honestly felt that the word Conservative would become the cus-word of the '90's and beyond. I believed that just as Jimmy Carter took the blame for the Nixon/Ford years, Bush would take the heavy burden of the national deficit and the widening gap between rich and poor that Reagan built.

I have since remembered the words and ideas of Jesse Jackson. I realized that it would be masochistic to hope that the country deteriorates further under Bush. The Republicans claimed that

they created jobs -Not hard to do when you use 2 trillion dollars that are not yours. The Republicans loaded the Supreme Court with Conservatives who may someday decide to make women who have abortions criminals. This is unfortunate and frightening.

I hope that Bush will be a good president and pull The United States out of debt. I hope that the new president will be fair to everyone and nominate open-minded justices to the highest court in the country. I give my complete support to President-elect Bush.

Bush is not a stupid person, he is a patriotic man who, I believe, truly wants the best for our great country. I hope and pray that he can separate the 'goo' that got him elected from the stuff that it will take to improve this country. Americans might vote for a candidate who wants prayer in public schools, but we need a president who is smart enough to realize that Americans need a president who will spend his time on much more important issues. I think that Bush is smart enough. I am throwing all of my confidence into the next President of The United States of America. No kidding.

So, President Bush, Do good, please.

Smoker Tired of Being Insulted, Criticized

by Peter Weichlein
Collegian Staff Writer

In times to come someone might refer to this column as the futile attempt by a smoker to justify his addiction.

An addiction it is. Even the Surgeon General came to that brilliant conclusion not too long ago. Let's face it: the man's a genius. And his flash of brilliance came just in time to join a nationwide crusade against butt-heads, a crusade which infuriates me in its bluntness.

As I see it (of course I'm biased since I smoke), this fight is just another example of American's thinking they are the chosen people, chosen to fight anything they believe to be antisocial, chosen to crusade against the unbelievers. First it was the unsuccessful war against alcohol, then against smoking pot, now the smokers get their turn. A bit far-fetched, maybe, but I'm mad.

I'll be the first one to admit that smoking is stupid. That revelation occurred when I was told by a certain young lady after our first sensual kiss that my mouth tasted like an ashtray. The lady didn't work out and I remained a smoker. Out of conviction, out of habit, out of fear of gaining 200 lbs. if I ever did manage to quit. It is therefore established that I am

aware of the wrong-doings I'm subjecting my body to. I'm a nice smoker. I only light up when it has absolutely been established that no one around me will mind. Just ask my roommates. They've put up with me for over a year now, and whenever they have felt bothered by my smoking, I obliged and any problems were resolved. I don't smoke when people are eating, I don't blow my smoke into people's faces, I don't light up in non-smoking areas. I try to keep my smoking as personal as possible, affecting my lungs only, and nobody else's.

Yet the government and most of America's population seem to

PETE'S PERSPECTIVE

hate me. I'm less popular than Charles Manson. Northwestern won't allow me on their airplanes anymore, and if I ever get caught riding a bus, I'll find myself in a lot of trouble. And now my beloved school, the institution I hold most sacred in the world, a place known for its open-mindedness and its fight against discrimination, my beloved Penn State has openly admitted that it hates me, too. A

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OPINION

Letters to the editor

Thank You Letter

Dear editor,

For a second consecutive year my daughter Sara and I have enjoyed the special kindness of the Halloween Trick or Treat "Wee Peoples Project." Later that evening the candy covered a third of my floor prior to sorting, storage with consumption (though much was eaten on the spot). Thank you! Our candy supply could even outlast the memory of the students and their rooms decorated appropriately. Many students will discover that one of the best parts of being a parent is once again, to act like a child at Halloween. We faculty had a great time, not to mention our children! That so many of you phrased, "to share the evening with the children from the Barber Center should be a source of great pride for all of us. Keep up the good work."

Zach Irwin,
Associate Professor of Political Science

An Opposing View

Dear Editor,

After reading the column "A select Few" in the Oct. 27 issue of the Collegian, I was prompted to reply. The columnist relates an incident where a person, one of the "select few" insults another student because of his or her weight. The columnist also tells of similar incidents he has observed on the Behrend campus.

The writer then states his distaste for this type of behavior and says that he does want to, at the same time, "acknowledge these attacks with rebuttal, that would only lower myself to their level." But in his column, the writer uses the labels moron, uncouth losers, illiterate baboons, perfect swine, and uses the phrase, "these vermin are subhuman." Isn't this the same behavior that the "select few" display?

I am not trying to defend the actions of the "select few," but they should be allowed to voice their opinions even if others find them offensive. The writer also states, "we strongly out number them." We being the writer and his "fellow misfits", and them being the "select few." Is the writer saying that his opinion is right because the majority support him. If this is the case, why doesn't the writer and those that agree with him form a group and call themselves the "select many?" Then the "select many" could condemn anybody or any group that disagrees with their views because they are the majority.

Christopher Clark
6th semester
Mechanical Engineering

I thought I'd let the author handle this one. J.M.

Method to Madness

Dear Christopher Clark,

After reading your letter I concluded that you think it is all right for any person to express his opinion, no matter who it hurts. If you truly believe this then you have no problems with the following opinion. I think you are a narrow minded fool who speaks without thinking and is probably suffering from an abnormal and unhappy childhood. Do these statements offend you in anyway? They should, but (after reading your letter) they embody my opinion of you and according to your letter I am entitled to express it.

Now I realize that the printing of these statements is totally uncalled for and that by doing so I am only lowering my own credibility. The reason I had to print them is that it is the only way I imagined my point would get across. I apologize for the rudeness of these statements.

The idea that I should form a group and sit around condemning anyone that disagrees with me is crazy. Once again, the only people I intended to condemn were the group of people who committed these crimes. The fact that you want to add yourself to this list by defending these criminals simply reinforces your misunderstanding of my original column.

Again, I am sorry that I had to make such a crude example of you but I hope you understand there is a meaning to my madness.

Insipidly yours,

Richard G. Cain

Helpful Classmates

Dear editor,

I'm writing so that two Behrend students might receive the recognition they deserve. On Friday, October 14, 1988, I left campus after class and headed out Route 430 to my home in Wattsburg. While on the bridge over I-90, I was struck broadside by another vehicle. I had suffered some injuries and was quite scared. Steve McGarvey, a Behrend student and old friend was passing by. He took the time to stop and come over to my car to calm me down. Steve stayed with me the entire time and even followed the ambulance to the hospital. He contacted my parents and stayed with me at the hospital until they arrived. Steve can't begin to realize how important his being there was to me and my family. My appreciation also goes out to Scott Schuller. Scott is a volunteer for Brookside Fire Department and responded to my accident. He must have seen my parking sticker or was told that I was also a Behrend student. Scott went out of his way to speak to me as a fellow student and keep my mind off of my injuries. His smiling face and friendly work made the whole ordeal more bearable. These two young men went out of their way to make my situation easier. I thank them. My family thanks them. And I feel Behrend faculty and student body should be proud to have these students out at campus.

Sincerely,

Kristin Smith

Wonders About Smoking Ban, Collegian

Dear editor,

The smoking ban is a response to the non-smoker's rights violations of the past. These rights have long been ignored by the smoker; although it was done all the time, it was rarely done with malice. Over the past couple of years, smokers have become very aware of what they've been blindly doing to non-smokers and the consequences to them. The smoker has been following this routine for so long that it's become a habit. Old habits are hard to break. This is a bad habit both for the smoker and for the non-smoker, and should indeed be broken. That is, the idea behind the smoking ban is valid and long overdue.

I'm a smoker who dislikes the present situation and who also agrees to the Smoking Ban. I would like to point to two statements which are rather confusing:

(1.) (generalized statement) "Secondary smokers are at greater risk than smokers." How can this be? How is this possible? If someone smokes a cigarette, the smoker is creating two types of smoke: Direct (from the cigarette, inhalation), and Indirect (from exhalation). The people involved are either smokers or non-smokers who both must breathe the same polluted air. There is, however, a basic difference between what these two groups of people inhale.

Would someone explain to the smokers of the world how smoking is worse for the non-smoker than for the smoker? (2.) In the Collegian's October issue, a statement was made that effectively does to the smoker what the smoker has been so often ridiculed for doing to the non-smoker. The smoker is no longer being recognized as the person she or he is, but rather as someone who deserves to be outcast. The position of defending a group of people's rights has now

reached the other extreme, all but cancelling the smoker's rights.

"The policy originally called for a one year grace period which would have provided separate smoking and non-smoking lounges"

This statement speaks about a grace period which would give the smokers at least a chance for partial recognition of rights. Is this grace period, which it now appears will not be provided, anything like a Grandfather Clause? Something like the Grandfather Clause would be wrong, because all it does is allow for enough time to pass before stripping away the next group of students rights. Wouldn't a grace period, which implies temporary, be nothing more than a ploy to allow the policy to take effect without a rebuttal?

"The group finally decided not to further explore this idea because of problems which could develop in determining which areas to set aside for smokers."

This is the next sentence in the Collegian news article. Does this sentence, as it implies, mean that the idea of upholding a group of people's rights is not worth pursuing, and if so - why not? Who are these omnipotent people of "the group"?

Are these people thinking about the rights of people, or are they rather thinking about the financial aspects of this situation? Finances should never be more important than the rights of even one individual, that's NOT what this country was founded and built on.

Don't people realize that the Smoking Ban, without consideration given in every area, is only the first step in the stripping away of the basic rights of the people of the United States? If this is permitted without taking everything into account, where will it end? will it end at all?

Further, has anyone from this group of policy makers looked at the psychological consequences of such a bold move? Has anyone stopped to consider the impact on the individuals who are the recipients of this Ban? Does anyone from the group even care about the negative impact such stress can have on a person? Stressors such as

the Smoking Ban are not severe in their impact. The most pressure is in the fact that there is no recourse for the smoker, and contrary to the present non-smoker way of thinking, as voiced in the Collegian, classes will not help in the short term. Since this is a University, which means turn-over of student population, the short term should be high on the list of priorities. Smoking cessation classes are wonderful ideas, and quite welcome, but they are designed for the long term. The short term can be addressed with

areas set aside for the smoker to smoke.

Is the University so concerned about costs that the rights of a group of people (albeit small) can be allowed to fall by the way-side? If the concerns aren't costs, what are they?

The Smoking Ban is long overdue. Implementation (April 1, 1989) is meant to not force the smoker out into the cold this winter. Does this mean the rule is only in effect unless the weather turns bad? If not, then this seems to be a covering of the true intentions, which seem to be to buy enough time to let this policy take hold without anyone having a chance to speak out against it. By waiting until April 1 of next year this policy is being nice to the smokers right now, but what about the incoming freshmen of next year?

Andrew D. Festa

In response...

Dear Andy,

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us on this matter. We can certainly respect your mixed feelings on this issue. Weighing one value against another is never easy.

However, I almost wonder if we're talking about the same news article. You seem to take exception to a generalized statement which indicated that secondary smokers are at greater risk than smokers. So would I - except that the article never said anything even remotely to that effect.

Secondly, you refer to a statement "that effectively does to the smoker what the smoker has been so often ridiculed for doing to the non-smoker." I'm not exactly sure what you're talking about here, but keep in mind that a news article should not attempt to express the writer's opinion. We do quote some people. But their opinions are not necessarily ours.

As a matter of opinion I do feel you raise some important questions, but try not to forget that we don't necessarily endorse everything we report on.

James Martin, Editor