

TEACHERS: A Problem for  
Behrend Engineers  
by Jim Michali

Did you ever wonder how the need for more engineers is being solved? Well, let's take a look at Behrend, for example; it's about as typical as you can get.

All good engineers must be versed in the field of physics. Our physics teacher has a fondness for bowties and his wispy light hair (although its difficult to see now that he got a haircut) conjures up memories of Ev Dirksen or Dr. Zorba. You'll run into him anywhere on campus if he doesn't run into you.

He has affectionately been called Clarabell by his students, who have among them 50% of Behrend's Brothers of the Bush. To say which of these is the stranger is to throw bad argument after the good. His reasoning ability is beyond question--he likes to ignore things which tend to go away as all good things must--but he has a habit of grumbling a lot and adjusting his book when lecturing.

His philosophy can be summed up by his theories that physicists solve an appropriate problem exactly while an engineer solves an exact problem approximately. To illustrate, a physicist describes the force exerted by two fleas by one erg. Of course the physicist doesn't care if they are female or male, having had a hard day on the dog, or if it's close to their bedtime. The engineer, however, will use the science of dynamics (with all its intricate fabrications of fulcrums, hypothetical stresses, and concepts of force) to build a bridge that is far from perfectly rigid, but one that will sway in the strongest wind and give to the changes from winter to summer. It's no wonder that this contradiction in purpose is perplexing to most engineers. I wonder if business administration students have such

problems?

Oh, by the way, speaking of engineer's problems, have you ever met a mathematician? It seems there is one disguised as a teacher here on campus. He is often seen in a brown felt hat, a brown corduroy jacket and buckle shoes. It seems his philosophy as far as class goes is to never say die, especially on sticky integration problems. However, he occasionally for gets his masquerade and tells his students little anecdotes of the strain of heresy and riddle-making in the mathematicians of old. Or maybe he will expound upon why any axiomatic system is not only incomplete in explaining reality, but always will have meaningful statements that cannot be proven or disproven. How about that!

I can understand why there are very few physics and math majors, but why there are engineers at all is beyond me.

Keep the faith baby to...

THE END

#### SKEPTICS CORNER REVIEWED

Those attending the meeting of the Skeptic's Corner in the Carriage House on Thursday, January 19, had an engrossing session with Mr. Fred Thompson, Assistant Director of the Greater Erie Anti-Poverty Action Committee.

Mr. Thompson spoke about the activities of the local program, which is carried on under the Office of Economic Opportunities in Washington D.C. Speaking of the three major poverty pockets in this city, he noted that 65% of the adults in this area (25 years old or over) have an eighth grade education or less.