

Eye on Our Generation

He Said — Glenn Beck's "Restoring Honor" Rally — She Said

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Glenn Beck's "Restoring Hope" rally in Washington, DC has been the center of significant controversy for the past two weeks. Although the numbers vary, depending on the source, tens of thousands of people showed up for the August 28th event. Many have complained about the date of the event, claiming that its coincidence with the 47th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech is an ignorant (at best) or intentional (at worst) insult to King, the Civil Rights Movement, and even black society in general.

Those who argue that Beck's presence at the Lincoln Memorial on the 28th was an offense of some kind are simply being foolish. First of all, the area is a public arena and Beck obtained all the proper legal permits required to gather there, so everything was on the up and up, legally. Secondly, Beck's presence on what some are calling the "hallowed ground" in no way whatsoever defiled the legacy of King or his beautiful and inspiring speech. Lastly, since when is the 47th anniversary of anything especially significant? On the first, fifth, tenth, twenty-fifth, and fiftieth year milestones, the pavilion should be left for those commemorating King and the Civil Rights Movement...all those other years in between, it's fair game.

Glenn Beck is like abortion: he's controversial all the time and not always easy to watch, but is, for some, a necessary evil. There is no defending his ideology or his methods of presentation to those who disagree with him. Likewise, for those who support him, my argument will neither strengthen nor weaken their support. It is typically not logic that convinces a critic or

supporter to feel the way they do, but something deeper—something I likely cannot change in just a few minutes.

What I can argue for, however, is the right of Glenn Beck to exist in the manner that he does—in a manner even Reverend King himself would support. It's not important whether, for you, "progress" is synonymous with "hope" or with some other four-letter-word. It's not important if Beck's enthusiasm and tears and appeals to God excite or infuriate you. What is important is that America—past and present, in the left wing and the right wing—supports freedom of speech. It supports even speech that demands equality, condemns the government, and is motivated only by an untraditional dream.

It supports the speech of protesters, and sitters-in, and men who don't support the government's leaders. It supports men of intelligence and foolishness. It supports black citizens and white citizens. It even supports Glenn Beck.

With this freedom comes the blessing (or the curse) of having those with controversial ideas lead the pack. I laugh when people criticize Glenn Beck's infantile attitudes, because that's what we get! We swore that all of us were equal, that all of us deserved a say, and then we rip apart those with whom we disagree. We call them idiotic and we belittle them. Glenn Beck has the right to rally, and, by God, he should! He represents America, after all. He's either the passionate, moral leader whom we want to rise to the top or he's the buffoon whom we said is worth protecting...regardless, he's reminding us what it is to be an American—I think King would dig that.

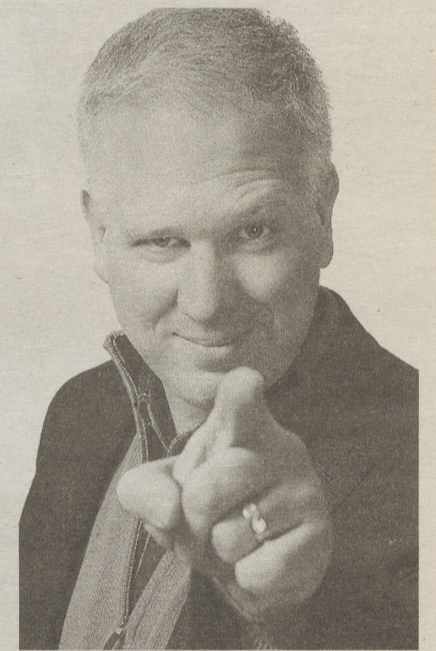
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Glenn Beck; some people love him and some people hate him. I personally don't know a lot about the guy, in fact, before volunteering for this article I knew nothing about him. The only information I seemed to gather from people around me was that if you were a conservative you were more likely to watch and enjoy his show, whereas if you were more of a liberal, you couldn't stand the guy. Recently the big controversy with Glenn Beck is his "Restoring Honor" rally in Washington DC on the anniversary of Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech.

For those of you who may not know too much about Glenn Beck, here are a few simple things about him. He has a show on FOX news (which is generally a conservative news station). He loves portraying the government out to be Progressives trying to control our every move. He claims that no one should tell you how to live your life, yet every episode he has some new direction to give his viewers. His logic on how to prove any of his points is extremely skewed—he writes words on his chalkboard and breaks them down to prove a negative point about the government (also adding in pictures of swastikas and other offensive paraphernalia). And lastly, he has a tendency of making everything he is personally against out to be "apocalyptically dire." After doing a little research on the subject, Beck has said that the initial reason he chose August 28th as his rally date was simply because that day was open in his schedule; however, after realizing this was a major day in history, he remarked that it was appropriate to regain justice on that day. From what I can tell, Glenn Beck seems to be an extremely smug man. Once Beck noticed that he chose to do his rally in the same place and on the same date at Martin Luther King, he replied "I won't be on the same stair as Martin Luther King, but I will be two

flights down." Perfect, that makes the whole thing way more appropriate now.

Like I said in the beginning of the article, Glenn Beck is not a man I know much about, but at the very least I think we can agree that his events on August 28th were anything but decent. Just the title itself, "Restoring Honor" rally, is questionable—when did we lose sight of this country's honor? Likewise, it was a rally that highlighted his beliefs and his views and put them into context of our country and its politics. Glenn Beck is nothing but a conservative libertarian trying to forward his own twisted views upon his viewers and the public for his own personal gain. Glenn Beck lost any credibility he may have had by holding his "political" and "honorable" rally on the 47th anniversary of Martin Luther King's speech.



Conservative pundit Glenn Beck once again brings about controversy with his "Restoring Hope" speech. (Photo courtesy OpinionTimes.com)

The Value of a Dollar

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According to the Registrar's Office and Student Life, approximately 85.79% of Penn State Brandywine's campus members drive to school on a daily basis. This percentage is subject to change on a daily basis. However, that is a large portion of this campus that purchase gasoline. Let's say it takes everyone thirty dollars to fill a tank per week. After doing the math, approximately \$43,500.00 is spent on gas a week just by Brandywine's students (not counting those who use public transportation)! Some commuters even drive hours to reach campus, thus spending more than a mere thirty dollars. Therefore, I think we're seeing the minimal spending price here. This leads me to my question; why are gas prices fluctuating?

When the cost of a barrel of oil rises, so do gas prices. That's simple economics. Now, what's the reasoning? According U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), from 2000-2009 Regular Grade gasoline at the average price of \$2.09 contained 51% crude oil, 22% Federal and State taxes, 15% refining costs and profits, and 12% distribution and marketing costs. However, when the price rose to \$2.34 in late 2009 the Regular Grade gasoline contained 61% crude oil, 18% Federal and State taxes, 11% refining costs and profits, and 10% distribution and marketing costs. What are

these percentages and where do they come from?

Crude oil prices are determined by OPEC or Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries. This organization can raise prices for their own benefits especially when demand is high.

Currently, the government is taxing 40.44¢ per gallon! Maybe we need to talk to the President about this issue because these numbers are high. If you're paying \$2.59 a gallon, multiplied by ten gallons, we're giving the government \$4.044. We already pay Federal and State taxes!

Refining crude oil is essential for cars. A big refining industry in the United States definitely hikes the prices for their own profit to ensure safe and effective operating systems as well as salaries for those who work in the factory.

Distribution and marketing costs are self-explanatory. To advertise the product for individual dealers and the cost to transport the gasoline from one place to another adds to the price per gallon.

Most people on campus are working for different reasons. Some are paying tuition and others are saving for books, gas, rent, etc. These gas prices put a huge dent in our pocket. Many are taking online classes, bunching classes together to eliminate an extra drive or even setting aside college plans; especially our campus where everyone commutes

to school. One student even quoted that she, "stay[ed] home on the weekends because everyone lives too far. I'm only working for spending money and gas takes my social money out of my pocket." Another quoted that he "has to beg for rides because I can barely afford insurance on my car and tuition." Everyone is impacted by these prices especially when they peaked over four dollars just a few years ago.

Does offshore drilling affect gas prices? Did the BP oil disaster really affect us? These questions are next to be answered.



The ramifications of the Deep Horizon oil rig accident will have serious impact on our generation for years to come. (photo courtesy google.com)