

# Opinion

*Letters to the editor*

## Rob Misuses Word 'Beg'

Dear Rob,  
In response to it's a white world after all, I have this to say:

Your choice of the word "beg" regarding government aid should be demeaning to all, liberal or conservative. First, all people receiving government money are consumers, so business gets that

government money. So, conservatives, no need to dehumanize here. Secondly, with choice words like "beg", it's no wonder some people feel intimidated by their needs. So, "liberals" relying on aid for and education, don't forget the Lion's Pride!

Becki Salibrici

## Non-Smokers Empathize With Smoker's Plight

Dear editor,

With an effective date of April 1st, it would be tempting to dismiss Behrend's new smoking policy as an elaborate April Fool's joke. It is not. However, along the way it has made a joke out of some cherished American principles such as tolerance and freedom of choice.

The decision by the powers that be in their ivory towers to ban smoking in all indoor areas has been undertaken, ostensibly, in defense of the public health. We applaud their concern, public health should always be of the highest priority. Furthermore, we agree that second hand smoke is, in fact, a proven risk to the public health, and indeed we also agree that non-smokers have every right to be protected from this risk. This new policy certainly accomplishes that but along the way it tramples on the American citizen's right to freely pursue a legal activity.

The real question here is whether a total ban on indoor smoking is necessary to accomplish the goal of this policy. Our group, Penn State Students on Smoking Policy (we are non-smokers) believes it is not. A room with proper exhaust ventilation, which could be used by smokers, would accomplish the same end without creating the spectacle of friends and classmates huddled together out in the cold rain and snow every

time they want a cigarette. If we can ventilate a chemistry lab then this challenge should be easily met.

We think that this suggestion would make for a reasonable compromise, one that protects the rights of both sides of this emerging controversy. Since the time of our forefathers, Americans have sought harmonious solutions to polarizing issues through compromise... those responsible for this decree have yet to make

that effort. We urge them to do so.

Without an honest and sincere attempt to find a reasonable middle ground, this policy becomes increasingly difficult to stomach as having been adopted solely for the purpose of protecting the public health. Rather, it would appear, in what has sadly become a mark of the 80's, that this is nothing more than another attempt to impose personal morality on others; in this case masquerading as a public health issue.

If the leaders of this university are seen as rigid autocrats zealously pursuing a hidden agenda then the last laugh might just be on them. There is no more time for jokes. Let's find a fair, mutually acceptable solution to this serious problem now.

Sincerely,  
Lyman D. Hunt  
Kim Bender

### Letters Policy Statement

Students frequently ask us if they can write an editorial. By definition, the answer is always no. An editorial represents the official stand of a newspaper on a given issue and is generally written by one of the newspaper's editors. Hence the name 'editorial.'

We do however welcome the opinions of our readers, submitted in the form of letters to the editor. Letters may address topics of general campus interest or may respond to the Collegian's news or editorial content.

Letters should be typewritten, signed by no more than two persons and should be turned in by 5 pm on Friday prior to publication.

# Love Rob April 3rd Fools

by Rob Prindle

I like salt a lot. I like salty, greasy wings with a passion. Buffalo style, hot, screamers, butter and garlic. I like deep fried, fat-filled, artery hardening unhealthy wings and they are killing me.

I also like beer. The alcohol is rotting my body and the beer itself is making me fat. I like things that hurt me. I am a true masochist. I would fight to the death to preserve my right to kill myself with alcohol, fat and salt.

As I write this article I can look at my left hand and see the KR insignia that has branded me. With that stamp of black ink, which I purchased for \$3.75 at the King's Rook Club, I was entitled to graze to my hearts content and demise at the all-you-can-scarf wing and greasy pizza bonanza. Yahoo. The beer was extra, of course.

I also believe that I should be able to smoke. I believe that any time I want to puff on a cigarette, I mean a real powerful cigarette like Camels or Marlboro, I should be able to. You would never catch me puffing on a cigarette with a flower on it. And you would never catch me with that low tar, extra filter, pansy-type garbage. When I want a cigarette, I want a real cigarette.

Camels are my brand of choice. Something, in maybe a former life, draws me to that smoking camel mascot. 75 going on 76 years and still smoking. That slogan never fooled me. I know that they are trying to imply that people can smoke those tar machines for a long time without having a problem. That sounds like crud to me. I am not a patient man. I want immediate results. I know that with a good pack of Camels I can turn my lungs black in a matter of hours and I appreciate that. Quick and now.

**We live in a fast-paced world. We also live in a world which is not very understanding. Can you believe that on April 3rd Penn State is going to take away our right to smoke in most campus buildings?**

We live in a fast-paced world. We also live in a world which is not very understanding. Can you believe that on April 3rd, Penn State is going to take away our right to smoke in most campus buildings? No way. Say it ain't so Rob. Sad but true. Where is the human compassion?

Before I get any deeper into this I should explain why I like to smoke. Three of the people that I admire most smoke, and they smoke very well. My father also smoked, but he died of smoking-related heart disease when I was 6, so I really didn't know him well enough to respect him. My mother also smoked - all the time. When I was sick, when I told her how hard it was for me to breath when she smoked, when all of my grandparents and her husband died of some form of smoke-related cancer or heart illness and I feared for her life, she still smoked.

But let me get back to those people I admire. The first is easy. Mr. David - Late Night - Letterman. He smokes cigars on national TV every night. The man is a comic genius, and he smokes.

The second is a teacher from high school who was very influential in my life. Mr. Swabb was and is a teacher who likes to teach. His English classes were the high points of my high school



Rob Prindle

career. He is a nice guy and a great teacher and he smokes. He is a positive role model in most ways.

The third is a Female professor here at Behrend. An outstanding and gifted teacher and a widely-published author. She has a doctorate. She also, of course, smokes.

So, I gave in. Everyone smokes. And why shouldn't they? They are only hurting themselves, right? Unless that crap about second-hand smoke is true. Unless there are many people with allergies to cigarette smoke. Unless pre-born babies really are affected by the drug nicotine. Unless the people they leave behind when they die are really hurt.

So, maybe smoking doesn't hurt anyone but the smoker. I know that killer chicken wings don't hurt anyone but me. I do have to admit that the smoke from the burning end of a cigarette does leave quite a cloud, and people do have to walk through it. People generally are not forced to eat chicken wings, but I have been forced to eat smoke all my life. That is probably the main reason I like to smoke. If I am going to be killed by smoke, at least I should have some control over it.

People aren't allowed to drink alcohol in public, they usually go to bars. That system works fairly well. Maybe smokers at Behrend could help me out and start a smoker's bar. That way I could always spend my weekends bellying up to the bar and buying my friends rounds of Camels. Maybe even doing shots of nicotine.

Well that is all just a happy dream. I really fear that smoking might become so socially unpopular that I might have to stop. God, I sure hope it never comes to that, even though I really don't smoke very much. My life would be a waste if I couldn't leave my mark on this world by showing some children, who look up to me, that they too can become smokers.

