

# Opinion

## Editorial:

### The Big Issue Is It Rob?

I have a letter to the editor sitting on my desk. It's a pretty good one, it's well written and offers some valid criticisms of Behrend academics. But I won't print it.

It seems the author felt what he had to say was so important that he didn't have to sign his name to it. A lot of people tell me they'd like to express their opinions in the Collegian, but fear they are too radical for my tastes. Of course, these people rarely bother testing their radical ideas.

There is another letter sitting on my desk right now - one that is printed here on this page. This letter comes from a faculty member from Tech High School, who says The Collegian's Love Rob misrepresented a colleague of his.

There is no question that we were wrong they tell us. They have told us this in letters and in angry words spoken over the phone. And as Rob notes they've told us bluntly, "You screwed up."

The writer of the letter suggests Rob was never a world class runner. (Though I'm not sure what that was supposed to tell us.)

While Rob's observation about a Tech teacher was made on the opinion page, and dealt with a public issue (education) and a public employee (a school teacher), we admittedly feel badly.

Although both Rob and myself agree that to single out any one teacher was in bad taste, we believe the problems in the education system are the real issue.

I don't believe Rob Prindle meant to hurt anyone, but, in an attempt to make a point about a larger issue, he inadvertently hurt someone and isn't holding his head very high right now.

Mistakes are always more apparent when you make them in front of a crowd of 3,000 readers.

We anticipate and expect a lot of these readers will often disagree with Rob or our other columnists. We hope letters will sometimes reflect differing viewpoints.

What dissapoints us is when readers who have different views

than Rob, began to badmouth instead of debate.

Perhaps the anonymous letter writer I mentioned earlier has a legitimate fear. We seem to be living in a world that loves freedom of expression, but takes it very personally when they read opinions counter to their own. It's not easy to sign your name to an opinion, even something you firmly believe in.

We seem to be living in a world that loves freedom of expression, but only as long as that expression isn't in the form of opinions that we don't agree with. It's not easy to sign your name to an opinion - even something you believe in.

I received a call from a Tech teacher the other day who was very angry. She agreed that the public school system was in trouble but noted the problem was not a certain teacher at Tech.

I'm not about to suggest that the first amendment exists for the primary purpose of making people feel bad. That's not what Rob's column was about. The reference to the Tech teacher, which has excited so many people, was a single clause in a single sentence.

While my caller expressed concerns about the school system as a whole, I reminded her that Rob didn't attend "The Public School System." He attended a specific school and could only extract examples from his experiences.

There seems to be little to be gained by speaking in the abstract about such matters. It may be easier to do and may anger fewer readers, but few of us live in an abstract world.

I truly hope the students and staff at Tech realize no harm was meant by Rob's remark. Sometimes, when you're in the practice of putting your name on the line, you say something you regret.

The woman from Tech asked how we could print Love Rob. A lot of people have asked me that question and I have an answer.

The Collegian has in Rob, a talented prolific writer whose column is the most widely read item in the newspaper. What's more we have someone with strong, well informed views, who will offer opinions to which he is bold enough to sign his name.

## LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

### It Could Happen Again

Dear Editor,

On April 9, 1989, I was part of a tremendous outpouring of love and support for women, and their right to reproductive freedom, as I marched down Constitution Avenue with my friends from Behrend College and 600,000 sisters and brothers from across the country. We gathered in Washington, DC to be part of a massive pro-choice march to demonstrate that we believe that the Roe vs. Wade decision must not be reversed. The 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision played an important role in allowing women the right to control their own bodies. Women may soon lose this right.

As I marched, I thought about the freedoms that we take for granted. In my lifetime women did not always have freedom of choice, and I can clearly remember the fear of an unwanted pregnancy. I remember a time when women died at the hands of greedy, dirty, little men who performed illegal back-street abortions. I am also reminded of the time, over twenty years ago, that a good friend of mine jumped off the top of a refrigerator in an attempt to abort herself. She did not abort so she arranged a meeting with a "doctor" to get an illegal abortion.

She was told to go to a certain basement apartment and wait there for thirty minutes to be sure that she had not been followed. The

apartment was a dirty, roach-infested dump. When the doctor arrived he was accompanied by a male friend and they forced my friend to have sex with them. She was alone and frightened so she submitted - she had no other choice. After the abortion, this merciful man of medicine left her lying on a filthy mat in great pain. This ugly scene can, and will, happen again if Roe vs. Wade is overturned. And so we marched, women and men of all colors, young and old, rich and poor, united in our belief that women will never again put their bodies in the hands of butchers.

We marched because we know that this is a critical time for women and men who believe that women must retain freedom of choice. It is time to make it clear to our legislators that we support Roe vs. Wade, and that we will settle for nothing less than complete control of our own bodies. It is a question of freedom not only for oneself, but for people like my friend who still have nightmares about their violations, for our children and grandchildren, for everyone. If we are ever going to secure freedom of choice for all women we must remember that the revolution begins at home.

Karol Tomczak  
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## McDavid Says Thanks

Dear Editor,

At first glance this may resemble a "Bob Schenker correspondence"; however it's a less lengthy note of farewell. As I depart this summer for a new assignment in the Land of The Morning Calm, I leave a very caring, supportive campus community. I'm proud to have served with such a distinguished group of dedicated professionals.

I leave the ROTC program in the competent, capable hands of Captain Jim McCarthy. Please continue to give Jim and the cadre the same support you have given me over the years.

If I had to evaluate my time here, I would simply say "I did my best - I made a difference." This is nothing new to you and your staffs however; you do it everyday. Your genuine care for the future leaders in our community is a daily response to Dr. Sweeting's challenge at the Fall Convocation to be both "interested and interesting." Your influence will have a long lasting impact on those you serve.

Cathy and I have enjoyed our visit, your courtesy, and have nothing but fond memories. We will treasure our friendships.

Again, thanks for your time together, and your support of the

ROTC program. My thoughts and prayers are with you as I'm taking care of your soldiers in Korea! Perhaps we'll meet again.

Sincerely, Mike

## Disturbing Observation

Dear editor,

Last week I encountered an act of ignorance that provoked me to speak up to the individuals involved and write this letter. This common form of ignorance plagues people who either claim to be in a hurry, or will only be at their destination for a minute or two. This pathetic act is that of parking in a designated handicap parking space.

I witnessed two gentlemen students, after they drove around a full Reed parking lot, decide to take the last two (handicapped) designated spaces. Asking if they were handicapped, I received a

stereotypical response from both of them. They said, "We'll only be inside for a minute," and continued on their way. Instead of committing such a pathetic act, I ask students to either: 1) park by the curb with your flashers on, or 2) respect the law that exists to protect the rights of those more deserving of having such a convenience in their lives. Also, if anyone sees a person violating this simple respect, don't be apathetic, speak up! Maybe the next time the people involved will think twice.

Thank you,  
Mark B. Louis

## Editorial Policy

The Behrend Collegian's editorial opinion is determined by the editor, with the editor holding final responsibility. Opinions expressed in the Collegian are not necessarily those of the Behrend Collegian or the Pennsylvania State University.

**Letter Policy:** The Behrend Collegian encourages letters on news coverage, editorial content and university affairs. Letters should be typewritten, double-spaced and signed by no more than two persons. Letters should be no longer than 400 words. Letters should include the semester and major of the writer. All letters should provide the address and phone number of the writer for verification of the letter. The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters for length and to reject letters if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste.

**Postal Information:** The Behrend Collegian (898-6488) is published weekly by the students of the Behrend College; The Reed Union Building, Station Road, Erie, Pa 16563.