

Editorial

... I'm thinking

It's good to see some letters to the editor this week. I'm glad there are still a few opinions floating around out there.

It's even better that there are opposing views on different issues. It is important that people express differing opinions to each other. In that way discussion and information will lead people away from ignorance.

• Speaking of ignorance, one of this week's stories concerns the quality of incoming college students. Over the past few years there has been a noticeable decline in the level of basic skills, such as English composition, mathematics, history and geography.

College professors argue that it's not their responsibility to teach basics that everyone graduating from high school should have mastered, and high school teachers and administrators say they can't do their job 24 hours a day -- they need help from parents and the community.

Clearly there is a problem, but no one group or area is to blame -- and in the process a lot of people are urging quick-fix solutions for symptoms to a bigger problem.

There are people who are working on the problem. Programs, such as Behrend's Diehl Elementary School program and similar ones across the country, are showing kids that a solid education pays off in the long run.

It's going to take more than that. Parents still need to get involved with their children's education, and government -- both on the state and national levels -- needs to realize that funding our nation's future is more important than funding high-tech planes that cannot be seen by radar, but can't get off the ground or "fact-finding" vacations for elected representatives.

Opinion / Editorial



Letters to the Editor

Twisted editorial

Re your editorial in the Nov. 15th issue of *The Collegian*: It is a very typical example of ignorance and short-sightedness which I had hoped would bypass anyone of your generation who is getting a good education.

Instead, you sound more like my generation - peace, love, Woodstock, and pick and choose and twist your facts to get your point of view accepted.

American soldiers, as well as British, French, Arabian and many others, are not in the Gulf area solely to protect our oil interests as you implied erroneously, they are there to re-establish the sovereignty of the Kuwaiti nation, a principle agreed to (the sovereignty of nations) after WWII by the U.N.

Take a political science class and check all the facts, please, before you write another such example of exuberant ignorance.

Pat Entley
7th semester
General Arts and Sciences

most renowned poets in the United States and there were many people both on campus and in the community who felt she was important enough to come and hear her speak.

Perhaps no one on *The Collegian* editorial staff is interested in poetry, but that doesn't mean that no one else on campus is interested either. Since English is one of Behrend's few four year majors and one of Behrend's strong points, I think that some consideration should be given to the speakers that come on behalf of the English Department, especially the ones of Ms. Ostriker's standing.

Jennifer Flanagan
3rd semester
English

"Rainforest!"

The moment I heard that I needed to do an environmental paper, my mind shouted one word: "Rainforest"! Why did my mind shout. Because I often ignore good ideas. Why rainforests? Because they are the most important environmental issue of our age. Not only do I hope to draw your concern, but I hope you will become concerned and then act upon it.

Why should people living in the U.S. be concerned with rainforests? I will tell you. No other single issue topic can be tied into so many world environmental issues as the tropical rainforest. Endangered species, greenhouse effect, global warming, disease and pest control, and feeding the world are all directly related to tropical rainforests.

Plants taken from rainforests account for the production of 47

clinically useful prescription drugs. The most striking example: Vincristine, an alkaloid isolated from the periwinkle plant in Madagascar, is used to treat childhood leukemia and Hodgkin's disease. What was once an 80 percent mortality rate, is now an 80 percent survival rate. There is also definite evidence of cancer and diabetes curing agents in certain tropical plants. With all these known facts, can we afford to just blindly let the rainforest die? How many cures for terminal diseases are out there waiting to be discovered?

There are many other important aspects of the rainforests that I would like to mention, but can't due to lack of space. I would like to encourage everyone to read up on the diverse resources that rainforests provide. Help end their needless destruction. Your life, and the lives of those who come after you will depend on what you decide to do today.

George Hiegel
3rd semester
English

Ed. Note: Let us know what you think. If you would like to voice your views on an issue, write a Letter to the Editor.

Read the Letters Policy in the staff box on this page to ensure that your letter will be printed.

Letters should be submitted to *The Collegian* office, first floor of the Reed Union Building or *The Collegian* mailbox located in the SGA suite also on the first floor of the Reed Building no later than noon on the Tuesday prior to the desired publication date.

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Letter Policy: *The 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. Letters should be submitted to *The Collegian* office no later than noon on Tuesday prior to the desired publication date.

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Uncovered poet

I was just wondering why no one covered the dinner, reading and lecture with Alicia Ostriker last week. Now, I realize that the paper doesn't have the space to cover every speaker that comes to Behrend.

However, given the fact that *The Collegian* runs CPS stories to fill space and there was a CPS story on page 2, I figured you had the space. So, I guess that means it wasn't deemed important enough.

Alicia Ostriker is one of the