

Life in a northern ghost town

The morale is low my friends.

Of course it always has since I've been here. Behrend students, in general, are so devoid of pride for this place, it's a wonder anyone stays here.

You can find graffiti around like "P.S.B.- The mistake by the lake." People stroll around with the feeling that they've been sentenced here for one reason or another; "Hey, whatcha in for? Grades or S.A.T's?" "Grades man, but I'm getting out soon and I'll be off to State."

In conversation with people who aren't from Behrend, future plans to move to University Park are quickly mentioned as a way of redeeming themselves. If anyone says that they're spending four years here, the first question out of other person's mouths is "Why?" -- along with pity for the other person.

One of the biggest complaints about Behrend is that the campus is so

small. We pretty much see the same ugly faces every day, and it's rare to bump into someone you've never seen before. It's been compared to 13th grade by a lot of folks.

Socially, unless you've joined a frat or live real close by, your weekend is doomed. Granted, Bruno's is an attempt by the school to get non-Greeks to stick around on weekends, but Behrend still tends to be considered just a branch campus- a sentence before the trip to U.P.

I don't think this place is too jumpin' either. There isn't even a convenience store within walking distance. At least the classes are. Walking to my eight o'clock classes I often mull over the advantages of a campus smaller than my old neighborhood. I talked to a friend about morning classes at U.P. He laughed and said he can never walk that far in the morning.

A huge bonus, I think, is that you can actually

meet professors. It's easier to pay attention in a classroom than in an auditorium, and it's a whole lot easier asking questions. Finding them after class isn't all that hard either, what with their plush trailer-offices being only a few feet from the classroom.

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So what now? What do we do? For most people you have two years of this place to deal with, most of which will be spent planning weekends at U.P. or saying that you can't wait to go to school there.

A lot of you realize that the education we're getting is easier to handle, so you stay here for the

two years. Others just stay here because this is where

they were accepted. Besides that, though, you still complain. Think about it, isn't it sad with the few people that go to this school, so many don't like being here? If nowhere else accepted you, quit complaining, at least you have a chance at a degree (future).

If you can get somewhere else, go.

Now, eventually maybe S.P.C. will get some excitement brewing on weekends. There was rumor that if Bruno's was a big enough success, an actual night-club sort of thing would be built. With the fact that the average Behrend student deals with the weak weekends at Behrend by getting off campus, I wish Bruno's luck.

Maybe with all the grumblings about this place things will change. Maybe if there were fewer cops breathing down everyone's necks, people could loosen up and have a good time on campus.

Seriously, there are too many cops trolling

around. People are afraid to have parties on campus, so they party off campus. Somehow P.S.B. wonders why no one wants to be here on weekends. A change there seems unlikely, but it's the only way it could be worth anyone's while sticking around here.

I appeal to the whole system to loosen up, let people be social on campus. Police, forget your quotas, and bust maybe every other person instead.

Of course it's crazy to think that cops will start turning their heads for the bettering of Behrend's social environment, but realistically that's about the only way it's going to happen.

I'm not trying to be rebellious here or promote anarchy, I just think living in a ghost town is a drag.

John Einolf is a second semester, prelaw major. His column appears every other week in The Collegian.

It's easy to figure pro-war students

by Mike Royko

Some people are puzzled by the pro-war attitude of America's college students. During the Vietnam War, students were among the most zealous peaceniks.

But now, "support the president" groups are springing up on campuses all over the country. Pro-war rallies are drawing big, enthusiastic crowds. Some campus papers carry articles by students deriding peace activists as naive, unpatriotic, sniveling cowards.

So experts are trying to probe the hearts and minds of these hard-nosed students to see how they got that way. And there are many theories.

Curious myself, I asked Dr. I.M. Kookie, one of the world's leading experts on lots of stuff, if he had any insights.

Could it be, I asked, that this generation of students could be trying, even subconsciously, to make amends for the shabby way many Vietnam veterans were treated?

"Anything is possible," Dr. Kookie said. "But based on my clinical research, I would have to say, nah, no way."

Then could it be that they

have somehow become a genetic throwback to earlier generations that were willing to rally 'round the flag--those who came of age in the Great Depression and fought World War II, and their younger brothers who quietly went to Korea, even though they didn't know where it was?

"That's possible, too," Dr. Kookie said. "But according to my studies, forget it."

Then what is behind their surprising enthusiasm for the war?

"To understand that, you have to have a background in mass psychology, which I do, among many other subjects. And it is very hard to explain it in terms that non-experts can understand."

Yes, but I'll try.

"OK. Then tell me this. What scares most people more than anything else?"

Snakes? Or maybe big bugs? Or footsteps in their roof at night?

"Yes, those are all scary. But the thing that scares people the most is ceasing to be."

Ceasing to be?

"Yes. Or in scientific terms, croaking."

You mean dying?

"Yeah, you could put it that way. When somebody is

murdered, it gets in the paper. But if they are scared by a snake or a bug, who cares?"

I see your point.

"So let us look back to the students of the Vietnam era and what motivated them."

We all know that. They were



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against against the war. They were appalled by the mass destruction an waste of life.

"Yeah, some maybe. But most of them were appalled by the chance that it was them who might, to use another scientific term, be zapped. Remember, we had a draft."

Yes, but those who stayed in school were deferred.

"Sure, but they couldn't all stay in school. And they couldn't all get jobs teaching in the inner-city schools so they'd be deferred.

That is a hard judgment.

"Maybe. But after the draft was abolished, most of those inner-city schoolteachers said: 'Bye, kids, I got to go make a buck.'"

But what about today's hard-nosed students? How do you explain their attitudes?

"I thought I explained it. There is no draft. So except for the ones who are in reserve outfits that got called up, there's no chance that they'll get zapped. Their lives aren't being disrupted. They don't have to go teach slum kids or run away to Canada or do anything but watch the war on TV.

"And so far, it's a neat and clean war, except when CNN shows some Iraqi kids in hospitals. And even then, a lot of people figure that those kids were hit by Baghdad taxicabs and Saddam is faking it."

You seem to be saying that if we still had a draft, their attitude would be different.

"Yes, that's fair to say. I think that if we had a draft, instead of

bravely signing petitions saying they support the troops and president, and telling TV reporters that they are a new, different generation, they would be having fits of hysteria, jumping up and down, screaming and hiding in their closets.

"Sure they support the troops. Because the troops are there instead of them. And they support the president because he says there won't be a draft. The day he says he's running short of warm bodies and is drafting them, they'll start putting up old Abbie Hoffman posters."

Do you have any scientific data to support your theory?

"Sure. Lots of it. You can check it out yourself."

How?

"Whenever there is one of these pro-war campus rallies, and they strut around saying they support the prez, and we are fighting for democracy and stop the spread of whatzis and the threat of whoozits, go up to the students and ask them one question."

What question?

"When are you going to enlist?"

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