

# If you hate it: voice it

So no one's writing letters to the editor anymore, and no one thinks anything on Earth needs to be changed. Come on...

We've got eight men and one woman deciding whether or not women should have the right to have abortions. Moreover, the Catholic Church, a bunch of celibate guys, has the gall to stand up and tell women what they can or cannot do with their bodies. We've got a president who lied to his country about taxes and let scandals rage, but is a god because our brothers won a war for him.

We've got police, under the general assumption that they're around to protect and serve the people, beating people, some to death, harassing kids and living out the ultimate McDonald's manager power trip.

It's hard to imagine how any of us could make any impact on the world at large when we let everything around here happen without a complaint.

Here we've got security cameras in the game room, while clothes get stolen from the laundry rooms like it's

going out of style. For some sort of moral reason, I suppose, they took cigarette machines off the campus (where there would be hella cash to be made) and they dog us with bogus money making schemes like the computer lab fee.

We've got signs going up mocking concern for our sexuality, attacking date rape and promoting gay support groups. Meanwhile, you have to somehow get to the West side of Erie to get an STD or an AIDS test. We have bucks pouring into an "Award Winning Speaker Series" that students don't attend while we have a library that is as well stocked as the average bookmobile. It doesn't make sense.

The weightroom was redone, but without a decent squat rack, freeweights (dumbbells) over 50 pounds or even a few belts. The place is an embarrassment to the athletic department. I'm really tired of cringing every time I see Dobbins menu for the day.

I'm sick of seeing "nerds" on the brink of suicide because there is nothing for them here. It's only a

continuation of high school for them and they can't start their own fraternity or anything.

This in mind, perhaps someone should run the S.P.C. who knows how to throw a party and is in touch with those in fraternities. They could set up an "S.P.C. house" off campus (of course, a good time is not to be found with Behrend cops around) where fraternities will show them

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partying that they may not have experienced otherwise.

I don't understand these R.A.s and campus cops that are stricter than most parents. Not to mention the excess of guys who suddenly think they're cool and worth something the minute they've got Greek letters on their backs.

I've got people next door who challenge people to fights. When they realize they can't possibly win, they start

saying "I could have fifty brothers down here." Crying to your big brother because you found a fist in your face went out of practice for most of us in third grade.

Why would anyone waste money to have a musically lame Christian band come in and harass us all about Jesus when we could get a good local band for little or nothing that just wants to have a good time and get some exposure?

Why doesn't the Blue Bus run on Mondays? Do parking tickets fall out of the sky? Why doesn't the Back Room or the Rub desk give out change? Why is it called the Rub desk? Why don't they sell stamps at the mail room? Moreover, why didn't they sell \$.4 stamps when the price jumped?

A lot of things in the world and at little Behrend bug me, folks, and I know plenty bugs all of you.

But no one makes any noise about anything around here, no one writes letters to the editor giving their piece of mind. Come on, this ain't high school, if you've got something to bitch about,

scrawl down whatever you beef is and bring it to *The Collegian* office. People go on and on about how boring this paper is and how this sucks and that sucks. A lot of us have the same complaints, but we've got to voice them before anything's done.

Look, stop practicing for the real world and stop letting everything go by only grumbling to yourself or a friend. Although the college and some teachers know us as Mr. 207-45-9825 or Ms. 205-67-5934 we ought to try to make some sort of difference.

Yeah, pretty soon we're all going to be out in the real world, and yeah, it'll be near impossible for us to make changes in the world. But this place is so small, your grumbings will be heard if you start airing them.

What am I thinking? Life at Behrend won't ever change because none of us give a funk about this place.

Never mind, forget it.

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# Parades, heroes: enough already

by Mike Royko

They're getting up there in years, the World War II vets. But they're still my choice as this century's most remarkable generation of men.

Most came of age in the Great Depression. Because of hard times everywhere, men who had the brains to be physicists or engineers were happy to get jobs as apprentice toolmakers or carpenters. Or digging ditches, if that's all there was.

Then they won the biggest, bloodiest war in the history of this planet. And when it was over, they came back and went right to work making this country the most powerful industrial and economic force in the world.

Recently I wrote about how a few of them felt about the homecoming hoopla that followed the abrupt ending of the Gulf War. They were generally amused when they compared the TV coverage of festive airport reunion scenes with their own quiet arrivals.

That column brought a small flood of mail from other WW II vets, sharing their memories. None begrudge the Gulf War troops their due. But some are skeptical about flag-waving politicians; others think the word "hero" is being tossed around too freely; and most have wry, amused memories of their own

homecomings.

So I thought I'd share some of their views.

An Indiana man, who preferred that his name not be used, said: "I was in the Pacific for three years. Took part in the fight for Iwo and some other islands. Came home on a stinking ship and hot bus. My mom made me dinner. Now a town near where I live is planning a big parade for one of the local boys who was in the desert. He was there three months and they sent him home because he has a kidney infection. Hey, come on!"

A physician, David Berner, of Condon, Mont., took note of a proposal by a congressman that all Gulf War troops be given a \$10,000 bonus. Berner fired off a letter to the congressman, and sent me a copy.

"As a combat infantryman (New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Luzon), I've decided to join you in the orgy of euphoria engulfing the nation. Admittedly, this war was a pushover and most of the troops saw no combat, experienced little danger, and weren't 'over there' very long, as wars go, but that shouldn't detract from their all being 'heroes' in the eyes of the multitudes. Some may feel that the genuine heroes of the world are belittled by such a mass anointment, but they're obviously soreheads.

"Anyway, your idea to break the bank on behalf of the Gulf

vets should logically apply to us who served before -- generally longer, bloodier and with less media and public adoration. Your idea for a \$10,000 bonus sounds swell, and I would like mine in one lump sum -- with interest, of course, dating from December 1945. Furthermore, though I witnessed ample gore and brutality in my two years



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overseas, I haven't yet needed 'readjustment counseling,' which I know is obligatory for all inconveniences. But I'd like Congress to send me a lot of money for the counseling I'll doubtless need in my old age.

"I confess that I would be embarrassed to accept this money. You see, I never really thought of myself as just another

in that endless series of poor slobbs paying the repetitive penalty for failure of national or tribal leaders.

"However, I heartily join the bandwagon. I will accept your payola, I'm practicing a hero's swagger, and I'm eagerly looking forward to some sort of maladjustment."

Agree or disagree, you have to concede that Doc Berner knows how to write a zinger.

Jacquelyn Jefferson, of Hinsdale, Ill., says of her husband: "He remembers only one conversation after his return from the war. He met a close friend in a neighborhood bar and asked him where he'd served. The friend told him and asked the same question, adding: 'Did you see any s---?' My husband said: 'Yeah, some. How about you?' The friend said, 'Yeah, me, too.'" And that was the total extent of his discussion of his war experiences."

That's another quality I've seen of the WW II generation. They were doers, not talkers.

Another homecoming memory, from David Dander, of Tiffin, Ohio: "Had four and a half years, most of it in the Pacific. Coming back, it was 21 days on a troop ship. Then five days on a train to Pittsburgh. My older brother, who survived his destroyer being blown up on D-Day, picked me up at the train

station at 2 a.m. But that was OK. I hate parades, anyway."

Ken Morris, of Council Bluffs, Iowa: "Thank goodness the desert war was over quickly and with few losses. But all this euphoria has a movie atmosphere. I was in WW II and Korea. Two of my brothers were killed in WW II and buried at sea. They called it shark feeding. I don't think some of the people putting up yellow ribbons and waving flags could tell you much about the Bataan Death March or Iwo Jima. I don't think they know about the reality of war and how bad it can really be."

Maybe Jim Hill, of Arkansas, sums up the feelings of his generation best: "I was attached to Patton's Third Army. I seldom talk about the war, the freezing days and nights, the fatigue, the fear, the dirt, mud and the smell of dead bodies. There was no big thankfulness for being back and alive. Our welcome was seen in the smiling, joyous faces of our parents, brothers, sisters and sweethearts or wives. We didn't need parades."

Maybe Jim Hill didn't need parades. But today's politicians surely do.

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