

Opinion

Editorial

Tripping with Jack Kerouac

Forty years ago, a little-known novelist named Jack Kerouac strolled into a publisher's office with a 100-foot long manuscript under his arm. The paper, a total of about 120,000 words culled from a three-week writing binge, was called *On the Road*, and it would soon send a generation of backpack-toting teens out onto the highways of America.

On the Road documented Kerouac's cross-country jaunts with his pill-popping pal Neal Cassady - rides in cramped cars, frigid truck beds and empty train freight cars. But for Kerouac, the vehicle was not important; it was the search that kept him moving. He wasn't sure where he was going or what he would find, but he knew something better was out there.

For many people, that search continues today. The Beat Generation Kerouac inspired may have gotten regular jobs and started families, but another generation has adopted the search - by shouldering their backpacks and heading into college classrooms.

Each of us here at Behrend is searching for something - whether that be a thorough education, a simple degree, a future spouse, or another all-night party.

But what are the chances of finding what we're looking for? According to recent bestseller charts which list *Final Exit*, a do-it-yourself suicide manual as number one, we may be running out of highways to explore.

To date, orders for *Final Exit* have topped 250,000. True, many of those readers may simply be supporting their belief in the right to die. But how many will actually use the book to end the search they have given up on?

It's a shame that we needed a book like *On the Road* to unleash our minds and set us on the path to something better. But it's even more depressing to think that so many are using a book like *Final Exit* instead of paying the next toll.

The Collegian

Published weekly by the students of Behrend College, Erie, PA

Editor
Todd J. Irwin

Advisor
Dr. Mike Simmons

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

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 standing 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.

Postal Information: *The Collegian* (814 898-6488) is published weekly by the students of the Behrend College; Reed Union Building, Station Road, Erie, Pa 16563.

News Editor
Mark Owens

Features Editor
Robb Frederick

Entertainment Editor
Christi Luden

Sports Editor
Greg Geibel

MIKE LUCKOVICH ATLANTA CONSTITUTION



Letter from the Editor

Help carry on the tradition

Here it is. The very first edition of *The Collegian* this year. This is a special year for *The Collegian*, an anniversary of sorts. Forty years ago the very first Behrend student newspaper hit the campus.

That's forty years of budding student journalists providing their peers, here at Behrend, with "All the news we have." Forty years of students reporting, interviewing, writing, taking photos and editing for this newspaper. And forty years of layout, advertisement sales and design, business management and editorial decision making.

I'm sure many things run quite differently from when the newsprint was pounded out on typewriters and a hundred issues were more than enough to supply the entire student body.

The basics have remained the same though. Accuracy and fairness in print are still the guidelines we adhere to at *The Collegian*.

This is also an anniversary for me too, sort of. This semester will be my fourth as editor of this publication, and my seventh semester on staff. Most of the editorial staff has been here as long as I have, and although it may seem like we've been here forever, we haven't.

More importantly, we won't be here

much longer. Four of the five editors graduate in May (O.K. - we're supposed to graduate in May), and as much as we'd like to stay here forever and continue to serve as the editorial staff, we've all decided to move on.

But before we go, we need to pass on the newspapering skills we've learned here to a new generation of budding journalists.

We're looking for everyone who is interested in any aspect of running a newspaper to come meet us and find out what *The Collegian* is all about. You don't have to be a communication major or even a writer. We need people to sell ads, take pictures, do layout, and a slew of other various jobs.

If you look around at the other student organizations on campus, you won't find one that is as exciting or rewarding as *The Collegian*. I've been extremely lucky to be blessed with a very talented staff (Just ask them, they'll tell you). Make no mistake, we are the professionals on campus.

Come to one of our meetings on Thursdays at 6:10 p.m. in Turnbull 203 and make up your own mind.

The Collegian is heading into its next forty years with a full head of steam, join us for the ride.

How about some mail?

If you would like to voice your views on an issue, why not write a Letter to the Editor?

The Collegian encourages letters on news coverage, editorial content or University affairs.

Letters should be typewritten, double-spaced and signed by no more than two persons.

Letters should be no longer than 400 words and 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. All submitted letters become property

of *The Collegian*.

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.