

THE COUNTERWEIGHT

Providing the missing ingredients in your balanced education

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Read This; It's Important!

By Allison Kasic '05

Most college students equate "social security" with being on a list at a registered frat party. Others associate Social Security with the vague acronym FICA that appears on their paychecks. It seems like Social Security is something to worry about in the future—what possible effects could it have on us now? The answer is many effects, which will have lasting consequences. The Social Security system is, quite simply, going broke. By 2015 the program will begin running deficits and by 2037—approximately nine years before you and I retire—the system will collapse.

The problem with the system is that it has adopted a pay-as-you-go mentality. The system uses revenues from current workers to pay for today's retirees. As the number of retirees increases relative to the number of taxpayers, the burden on workers increases. In 1950 there were 16 taxpayers for every retiree. Now that ratio is down to 3.4 to 1, and

A Cure for Inequality

By Aaron Hanlon '04

A modest proposal, if you will: it is imperative that we bring about drastic reform, for we as a nation have been committing atrocities against equality since the beginning of our existence. Perhaps it has been our American values and our self-serving, capitalist drive that have continually struck down the pillar of equality, that essential facet of the foundation of human happiness. Perhaps it has been our overflowing freedoms and

by 2030 it is expected to drop to 2.1 to 1. Add in the fact that the life span of the average American is increasing, and it is obvious why the system is failing. This declining worker-to-retiree ratio is one of the factors that have caused the Social Security payroll tax to be increased from 3% to 12.4% over the past 50 years.

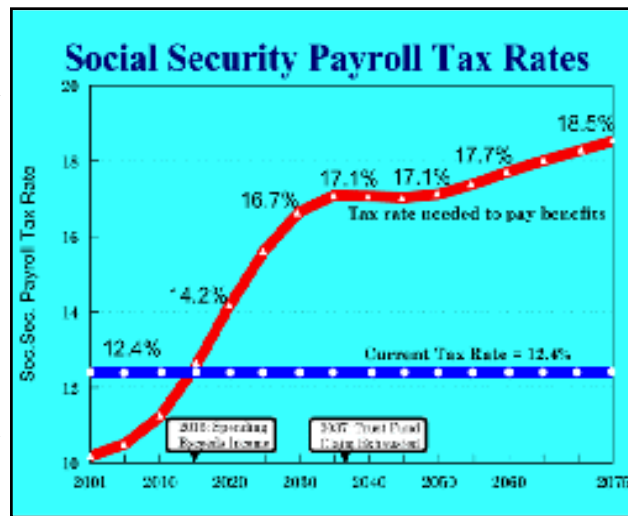
In order to cover the benefits promised to its recipients, the system will have to raise taxes, decrease benefits, or invest government money in the stock market, all of which are unattractive options. But fear not, because George W. Bush's principles

for reform do not allow for any of the above-mentioned changes to be made. Instead, the final report issued by the President's Commission to Strengthen Social Security has proposed three ideas for reform, all involving partial privatization through personal retirement accounts (PRAs).

See "SOCIAL SECURITY" on page 15.

lack of adequate governmental social control that have drowned out equality in our society and created the insidious disparity between haves and have-nots that has plagued us for generations. Whatever the problem may be, I humbly offer solutions for the improvement of American society through the establishment of equality.

See "EQUALITY" on page 14.



This will be the last mass-mailed Counterweight... see page 10.

READERS' THOUGHTS

The positive side...

Tom and Charles,

I wanted to thank you guys for putting out *The Counterweight*. I NEVER read anything they throw in my mailbox because it usually isn't very interesting, but your newsletter caught my eye. I guess I have always known I am conservative but I didn't really know what that meant, and I didn't have the facts to back up my beliefs. So I read the whole thing as a way to take a break from studying... as strange as that may sound, but I do anything for a study break. Anyways, it was great to see a group of hard working students provide our campus with opinions and information to counteract the liberal voices that are all around us all the time.

Normally, I would think I might be slightly evil for not being interested in the latest liberal crusade on campus, but now your group has helped me see I am not alone in my conservative beliefs! I wanted to let you know you did a great job with *The Counterweight*. You addressed others opinions in addition to expressing your own—something I rarely see any liberal groups on campus doing, which I thought was very classy. I am interested in being in the club and also writing for the newsletter... please let me know any information so I can get involved next semester! Thank you and good luck on your exams!

Kieren Detweiler '04

The negative... (unedited)

Hmm the COUNTERweight was definitely a break from reality and I didn't enjoy the reading

it seems to only appeal to a certain elect majority that not everyone belongs to although ya guys did bring up a few points, like the Living wage article which I did agree with

but some other issues are just like seriously awful since they just don't apply to life outside of "Bucknell"

Ayman Billah '02

And some selected quotations

I thought it was an embarrassment to the Bucknell Community.

My recollections are favorable.

I can't believe BSG funded such a load of crap. I think I'm going to ask for funding to write a newsletter for the endangered purple platypus.

As one of the (few) conservatives on the faculty, I was excited to see the newsletter.

I have never read something so closed minded in my life.

Paper has never before had the extreme displeasure of acting as a medium for such a narrow-minded, gut-wrenchingly anti-progressive, medieval social agenda. At points I felt like vomiting in revulsion. I do, however, respect that you are contributing to a much needed politically active climate on campus.

It was interesting, and, if I were not a liberal/radical I might consider joining.

It was well written and informative. Although I imagine that any conservative

editorial on this campus will receive a lot of criticism, the *Counterweight* was interesting and thought provoking. I will look forward to the next issue.

Atrocious

...I'd never known what exactly conservatives stand for.... I took the test online and a few more ones I found in various places on the internet, and it seems like I'm leaning towards conservatism. When are your meetings? I'd like to attend and see what you're all about.

I am liberal, but I think I could have done a better job arguing your points of views.

I thought you did a good job. It was nice to get the other side of the story on some issues, especially support for firearms.

After skimming and quickly recycling your newsletter, it became apparent to me that you all were in many of your articles simply arguing for the sake of argument. That is, you chose the opposite side of common sense simply for the shock value... Pretty pathetic.

The newsletter was great. It's about time that

fellow students open other's eyes, not only to events in our world today, but in addition to the majority of liberalism in education. When are people going to realize that our country was founded with the idea of freedom, and not with government intervention and other hindrances. Students need to realize they're only seeing the "liberal" side of events happening before our eyes. You guys are awesome. Keep up the good work!

My political ideology is of moderate to extreme left, however, I read your newsletter with objectivity... by and large, with the exception of a few articles I enjoyed the newsletter and applaud your attempt to make your voices heard.

I really liked to have an alternative viewpoint on campus. The paper helped me feel less weird that I am under 65 and have some conservative leanings. Keep the papers coming!

I thought it sucked.

It's good to see a balance being made on campus. I agree, it seems everyone here is liberal. It makes me sick. Keep writing good articles and best wishes to all.

NEWSBRIEFS

Another one bites the dust

That's right... break out the Queen CDs. Our Bucknell wrestlers have now held their last home meet, coming one step closer to joining the long, sad list of college wrestling programs cut because of Title IX. Thankfully, the **National Wrestling Coaches' Association**, which filed a lawsuit to force a reconsideration of Title IX, has done what the University refused to--that is, stand up for the BU wrestlers. **See page 6 for a column on this topic.**

Incumbent protection

The awful Shays-Meehan campaign finance "reform" bill passed the House of Representatives in a frantic late-night session last month. **Tom Daschle's** Senate is set to take it up next, and **President Bush** says he will sign it if it reaches his desk. Apparently none of them, the president included, noticed that preventing any citizens' group from speaking out about a candidate 60 days or less before an election violates the First Amendment. Shameful and self-serving.



The Senate Plurality Leader
(newsmax.com photo)

Binladenwhere

Yeslam Binladin, half-brother of **Osama bin Laden**, is launching a clothing line bearing the family name (which he, obviously, spells differently.) His lawyer says, "The name is one of the most famous names in the world." Yeah, we wonder why!

Does Teddy ever quit?

Sen. **Ted "Chappaquiddick" Kennedy** (D-Mass.), who was recently seen at a party wearing a Peter Pan outfit, made himself the first Senate Democrat to speak out in favor of "postponing" parts of the \$1.35 trillion tax cut passed in 2001. Two problems: 12 of Ted's Democratic colleagues voted for the tax cuts and, more importantly, rolling back a tax cut during a recession simply makes no economic sense.

Miss Cleo HAS to be real!

Florida attorney general **Dave Aronberg** has filed a lawsuit to try and prove that famous TV psychic **Miss Cleo** is not the Jamaican shaman she claims to be. He must need a hobby. 'Nuff said.

Saying what you mean

Controversy has erupted over **President Bush** referring to Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as the "axis of evil" in his State of the Union address. Apparently it's making people uncomfortable that when Dubya talks, he actually says something, unlike his predecessor. This is a president who knows the definitions of "is," "sex," and "evil." Notably, the criticism has focused on the "axis" terminology and on possibly upsetting supposedly-warming relations with Iranian moderates and North Korea, but not on the point the president was trying to make, which is that the three terrorist-sponsoring regimes in question are, in fact, evil. Interesting. These must be the same bedwetters who got all in a tizzy about **Ronald Reagan** correctly characterizing the USSR as an "evil empire" back in the day.

Walking the walk

On a related note, it seems that the Bush Administration is ready to go into Iraq and topple **Saddam Hussein**, even if our European "friends" aren't game. It's just a shame **the first President Bush** and current **Secretary of State Colin Powell** didn't bother taking him out ten years ago.



His days are numbered
(AP photo)

The "R" word

There's been an uproar on campus regarding race relations. Students have been treated to a flurry of emails from **Associate Dean of Students Richard Ferraro** and other administrators, regarding two white students who dressed up as **Venus and Serena Williams** and an Asian student who was taigated from the SV Mall to the Mods. We have two questions: would anybody have cared if two black students dressed up as

Anna Kournikova and **Monica Seles**, and is it a "possible bias incident" every time someone who happens to be a minority gets tailed? (Last time we checked, it's pretty difficult to tell if a student is white or Asian when you're driving behind him.) Bigotry should not be tolerated, but castigating the two students who costumed themselves seems like hypersensitive, groundless, public humiliation of two Bucknellians who didn't deserve it. And, to borrow the title of one of **William Shakespeare's** plays, the "Possible bias incident" email is really *Much Ado About Nothing*. This will surely result in the Conservatives Club being labeled "racist," but we're not, and it needs saying: the University is jumping to conclusions and doing all of us a disservice in the process. The more the administration clamors on about our supposedly racist campus, the more race actually becomes an issue, and the further we move away from being a colorblind society, which should be the ideal.

And it gets worse

In response to the just-mentioned racial issues, several radical faculty members have proposed the implementation of an arbitrary speech and behavior code at the University. This atrocious idea was floated both at Ferraro's forum and on the faculty listserv, and it has been implemented at other schools like Bucknell. What is it, open season on free speech? **Check out page 5 to see another way that the University has gone overboard with political correctness.**

Let's hear it for vouchers

The Supreme Court has heard a case on Cincinnati's school vouchers program. As an article in the last issue of *The Counterweight* explained, vouchers are a no-brainer. There is no good reason that politicians should force poor students to stay in horrible schools where they will never learn anything--but they do so anyway. The reason? The deep pockets and inability to take criticism of organizations such as the National Educators' Association.

—Compiled by Charles Mitchell '05

CAMPUS

“1 in 4” Stat is Bogus

By Emily Rokicki '05

It's undeniable that rape is one of the most vicious and inexcusable crimes in the world. Sadly, it is still a serious problem on college campuses. However, I was surprised by last month's campus-wide email concerning the formation of the One in Four Society. “One in four college women experiences rape,” read the email announcing the formation of the club. If this statistic is true, it means 25% of the female population here at Bucknell has or will be raped during their four undergraduate years. That would be nothing short of startling. But in actuality, the “one in four” statistic is a myth, propagated by women's studies departments on just about every college campus in the country, including our own.

Where did this inaccurate statistic come from? It came from a study sponsored several years ago by that world-renowned bastion of the scientific establishment, *Ms. Magazine*. To get the numbers they wanted, those who conducted the study counted among the rape victims women who had no

memory of a rape and women who were still dating their “attackers” as the study was being conducted. In fact, 73% of the women counted in the study had no memory of a rape. If my math is correct, and those who



As this guy could tell you, “1 in 4” is obviously “fuzzy math.”
(AP photo)

had no memory of an attack are removed, the percentage in the study drops from about 25% to about 6% of all college women. Now I'm not trying to say that this new statistic is somehow more palatable—but, while the

crime of rape remains barbaric, the use of fallacious “shock statistics” as an attempt to raise awareness remains dubious.

Why is this fake statistic still held as fact? Because it fits the needs of women's studies departments across the country. To get the attention of college students, especially the skeptical ones, these departments like to be shocking. They don't find it effective enough to present the problem as it actually exists; they need to sensationalize it. They think that if campus communities knew about the actual study, students would be less likely to get involved in trying to prevent rape on college campuses.

Hopefully these facts disturb you as they disturbed me. If you want to learn more about the cult of college feminist theory and its frailties, visit the Independent Women's Forum (IWF) website. The IWF is a non-partisan, women's group founded to provide a counterbalance to the popular feminist movement. They have made a top ten list of the most common myths promulgated by women's studies departments. Check it out at <http://www.iwf.org/news/010417.shtml>.

Closed-minded Conservatives?

By Tom Goodman '05

Nowadays, the idea that conservatives are a coalition of mindless, brainwashed conformists is increasing in popularity, particularly among college students. It is becoming nearly impossible for conservatives to voice their views on most campuses without accusation of being racist, closed-minded homophobes. One of the goals of *The Counterweight* is, in fact, to make the political stance on campus less one-sided and to encourage political diversity among students and faculty.

A recent article in *The Breeze*, the student newspaper of James Madison University, quotes the president of the College Democrats at that institution as having said, “The Democratic Party doesn't require members to agree with every detail of their platform. Unlike more conservative parties, we are an open tent party and therefore allow our members to make up their own minds” (Check

out <http://www.thebreeze.org/archives/10.4.01/opinion/letters.shtml> to see for yourself). This is a great example of the sort of political ignorance that so often pervades college campuses. No political party, particularly the Republican party, expects all of its members to agree 100% with its entire platform. However, students are being exposed to the idea that liberal ideology is the only acceptable political choice because it is more “accepting” of other beliefs and principles. They claim that since conservatives hold different points of view than they do on various issues, conservatives must be closed-minded. This is incredibly hypocritical. Liberals are no more willing to accept conservative principles than vice-versa. People within each ideology aim to make society better; their differences come in how to do it.

I would argue that liberals play more of a conformist role than conservatives do sim-

ply because many liberals decide to accept their party's social ideas at face value without considering their political and economic implications. For example, there have been movements on many college campuses in response to the war on terrorism, claiming that U.S. involvement in Afghanistan is no more morally justified than the attacks themselves. Bill Clinton has delivered speeches claiming that the United States itself is partially to blame for the attacks of September 11th. I was disgusted when I first heard this, as should any proud American. Are we to tell the families of the victims of the September 11th attacks that the terrorists are not the ones to blame? Is this what liberals call being open minded? If so, then we would be doing no better than throwing our hands up and surrendering to the enemy.

When students arrive at a university at the beginning of their freshman year, most do

See “CLOSED-MINDED” on page 15.

Some Sensitivities Seem too Salty to Swallow

By J.J. Cutuli '04 – Guest columnist

When I was first approached to contribute to this publication, it was because one particular piece of my writing was well received. I was told that it was funny but, more importantly, also “logical.” This is probably because I place the utmost importance in finding consistency and reasonability in everything. When I encounter a situation lacking in one of these areas, which is quite often, I like to make the absurdity overwhelmingly apparent. Absurdity is funny. I should also note that my stances are not meant to adhere to any particular political demarcation, since, more often than not, they themselves defy any one constant rationale. At times I find that one stance or another is consistently intelligent, rational, and is part of a political agenda. In general, however, this is purely a coincidence. Now on to the good stuff...

Last semester, I came across a policy at Bucknell that seemed like it was intelligent and prudent, but turned out to be an exercise in ridiculousness. This past November I had the honor of serving as the president of the University's Psychology Club. Naturally, we are always looking for new members and new perspectives, so I sent out a simple email to the campus-wide email list. The email consisted of four parts. First, the introduction was designed to attract people to the meeting (and hopefully make some smile):

“Have you ever wondered why people do what they do? Do you have any interest at all in psychology? Do you find yourself up late at night drenched in a cold sweat wondering ‘What’s the best way to teach someone something?’” Or perhaps you like to do things to monkeys (in the name of science that is). Do you like puppies?* Do you like cookies?*

Next came the body, which listed the details of the organization and the meeting time, location etc. Then, after a picture of a lovable alien robot disguised as a puppy eating a cupcake, there was an unnecessary but enjoyable disclaimer to the last two asterisked questions of the introduction:

“*Neither puppies nor cookies will be served at the meeting. At least not this one.”

So I sent the email. The next morning I received this from ISR:

JJ Cutuli,

You posted the message below to the moderated list: campus

We will gladly post your message but, first must ask you to remove the reference at the bottom that says: *Neither puppies nor cookies will be served at the meeting. At least not this one.*

I think your message is very cute but, due to the large number of users that are reading this list, we need to be careful not to offend anyone.

I'm afraid a reference of this type could be taken wrong by some animal lovers.

Please remove the ‘eating puppy’ reference and resend your message to the list for posting.

Thanks very much for your understanding and cooperation in this matter!



The infamous puppy picture

I do support the reviewing of campus-wide emails (college students do have a reputation, you know), but this attempt at censorship was absurd. Have we become this sensitive and overprotective of University members that we cannot trust them to think for themselves and take my two sentences in jest? Furthermore, why would it offend animal lovers if they inferred that we would not be eating animals at the meeting. Wouldn't it be more worrisome if they inferred the opposite? Bothered by this apparent aberration of common sense and lack of confidence in the cognitive abilities of the Bucknell community, I sent this response:

Hello “Postmaster,”

I believe that I have complied with your concerns. The comment at the end of my message was not meant to be an offensive one, nor even an important one, so I have deleted it. To be fair, however, I never made any reference to eating a puppy. Your quotation marks imply that you have quoted something that is in the original message, which is not the case here.

Furthermore, I appreciate any attempt to ensure that individuals are not unnecessarily offended. For this reason, and no other I continue. I have seen that individuals often become upset when their cultural heritage is derided, whether that ridicule is intentional or not. Suppose someone said

to me, “I love cows. They are the most sacred creatures in the world. I want to make sure that nobody ever harms a hair on their precious, cowy heads!” Does this mean that I should put the concept of “eating a cheeseburger” completely out of my mind? Of course not, for people actually eat cheeseburgers! In fact, I, myself, love cheeseburgers! It follows that I would be doing them a service if I were to point out that people engage in such an atrocity, as the cow activist would see it, because it introduces them to their opposition and provides the opportunity to be most effective in their efforts. Now suppose I am from mainland China...or perhaps you already get my point.

Also, I know from personal experience how frustrating and downright offensive it can be when individuals claim to understand your intention in writing (put differently, what you mean by [something]), fail in that understanding due to inadequate evidence or reasoning, and then condemn you based on their misunderstanding. To illustrate: Dogs are served at my home every night at dinnertime. My motherwho prepares the meal, says that they prefer Alpo to Mighty Dog. If I did not write the second sentence, what would I be trying to express with the first? If you, perhaps, thought of a more disagreeable scenario than dinnertime *for* the dogs, would that be the fault of myself, the words, or your own inclination towards the disagreeable?

Along these lines, if you are to continue your current practice of shielding the student body from unnecessary thought, I would suggest you hire those most inclined towards the disagreeable. You see, your interpretation of “‘eating puppies’” from “puppies...will [not] be served at the meeting. At least not this one” would not be the most offensive to the animal rights activist who is more interested in being offended than considering what the words could mean. I would think that the possibility that we planned to serve puppies, *in the sense of a game of tennis*, would be more offensive.

I will leave you with this, and please consider it. I continue to hold the position that puppies will not be served at tomorrow's psych club meeting, but I reserve the right to serve them at future meetings. If any puppies happen to be present, I will not be providing them food or other attention tomorrow, but that does not mean that I won't at next week's meeting. I simply have nothing to give them right now!

Thank you for your attention and consideration to this letter. I do not mean to be hard on you, I simply prefer the idea of people thinking through things. I thank you for your service to the email system (God knows I get too much of it as it is!)

Sincerely (at times),
JJ Cutuli

I would not be writing this article if the “Postmaster” responded to my points in an appropriate way, supporting the enactment of their policies. He (she? it?) did nothing of the sort. Instead of defending their stance and demonstrating some justification of their attempted censorship, they did not reply at all and sent out my original email, “serving

See “PC” on page 14.

Title IX

By Stephen Graham '03

Title IX has occupied the spotlight at Bucknell ever since the athletics cuts were made last year. The University claims Title IX as the reason behind its decision. Insofar as Title IX is the law, I believe the University did what it had to do. However, I also believe the current interpretation of Title IX is flawed.

History

Despite its recent popularity, the real story behind Title IX is rarely seen. The truth is, Title IX isn't even the real problem. It's the interpretation, and the regulations formed on the basis of that interpretation, that make all the difference.

Title IX was passed as part of the Educational Amendments Act in 1972. It reads, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." And that is Title IX, in its entirety. In 1974, a second piece of legislation, the Javits Amendment, was adopted as a result of early controversy regarding intercollegiate athletics. This amendment required "with respect to intercollegiate athletics activities, reasonable provisions considering the nature of particular sports."

Regulations were adopted in 1975, but they were not very precise. In 1979, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) issued a Title IX Policy Interpretation, which addressed the problems of collegiate athletics more specifically. This is the origin of the rules we use today. Compliance with Title IX meant (and still means) passing any one of three tests. Here they are:

Providing participation opportunities for women and men that are substantially proportionate to their respective rates of enrollment of full-time undergraduate students

Demonstrating a history and continuing practice of program expansion for the underrepresented sex

Fully and effectively accommodating the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex;

This is what all the hoopla is about. Note that this was issued by the OCR but was

never specifically voted on by Congress. Its support comes only from the Javits Amendment, which demanded "reasonable provisions". This interpretation did not reach its full importance until 1988, when Congress passed a law requiring that the entirety of any federally-funded institution—including the athletics department—had to comply with Title IX. Two new interpretations have since been issued, but many people believe that these guidelines are still unsatisfactory, and that the only clear way of satisfying Title IX is to satisfy test 1 of the three-part test.

The Problem

It seems to me that any school of significant size will work toward eventually satisfying test one of the three-part test—that is, it will strive to have athletics opportunities proportionate to enrollment size. No school of significant size could hope to pass test three, which requires full accommodation of the underrepresented sex. Nor can a school continue to demonstrate a history of growth year after year (test two)—it makes no fiscal sense.

The problem is, test one makes no sense. It states that universities must provide opportunities proportionate to the rate of enrollment. But why should it be so? To show the flaw in this method, let's look at a totally unrelated hypothetical situation. Currently, we have roughly 3600 students at Bucknell. Suppose now that, for whatever reason, the University decided to allow 3600 additional students to enroll next year. Further suppose that, for whatever reason, all of these students are humanities majors—there isn't one engineer among them. Bucknell would obviously need more facilities to accommodate all these people. But how many more engineering facilities would the University need? None, obviously, since there are no engineers among the 3600 additional students.

Now back to the original problem. Suppose our current population has roughly equal amounts of men and women (it was 51% men to 49% women last year). What per-

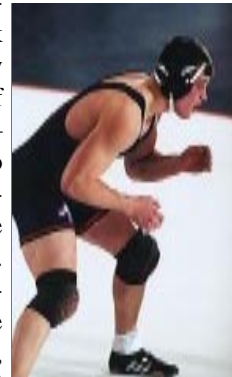
centage of athletic opportunities should be available for men, and what percentage for women? The first choice might seem to be 50% of each. But really, as with the engineering example, we need to know what percentage of the population will be using the facilities. It stands to reason that opportunities should be proportionate to interest—otherwise it will be more difficult for one of the sexes to participate. So if, for example, 70% of men wanted to participate in athletics—and, therefore, 30% of women did—70% of the opportunities, not 50%, would rightfully belong to men. It makes no sense to judge an athletic program merely on the basis of percentage of enrollment.

Bucknell's Stance

So how does our University feel about all of this? The January 25, 2002 edition of *The Bucknellian* featured an article entitled "Lawsuit challenges Title IX." It reported on the National Wrestling Coaches Association's recent lawsuit, in which the NWCA is attempting to change the proportionality clause to mean "proportional to interest" rather than "proportional to enrollment". But Athletic Director John Hardt issued a written statement saying that the "position expressed in the lawsuit by the named plaintiffs does not reflect the position of the University regarding Title IX or related gender equity issues."

I find Bucknell's lack of support for the lawsuit disturbing. To me, it says that the administration is not willing to stand up against the irrational thinking that pervades test one of the three-part test. Perhaps the administrators fear being labeled bigots, or perhaps they truly subscribe to the politically-correct position despite its lack of logic. President Rogers himself said, in the email sent to students soon after the cuts were made, that he "deeply regret[s] the need to make the decision" to cut wrestling and reclassify men's crew. So where does the regret part come in?

If this makes you mad, send an email to President Rogers or John Hardt. Let the administration know what you think. Believe it or not, they actually listen to such emails and even respond. Better still, write your Congressional representatives. Let them know how you feel. Those people are in office for a reason—to serve *you*.



Brian Falciglia
(bucknellbison.com)

OUTSIDE THE BUBBLE

Ballistic Missile Defense

By Jason Goelitz '04

The Horror Story

Within seconds, NORAD knows that it's coming. Within minutes, the President knows that it's coming. And within half an hour, every American still alive knows that it's coming. Or that it came.

And that's the end of the story. A major US city has just been hit by an ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) armed with a nuclear, chemical, or biological warhead. Millions of innocent Americans are dead or dying, and there's nothing we can do. Think 9/11 all over again—instead of twin towers we have a city; instead of thousands of lives we have millions.

The Threat

Though the Cold War may have ended, the threat of an ICBM attack is greater today than ever before. Russia still has around 5,200 nukes, and just one of its many nuclear subs could send 64 of them our way. China has roughly 20 nukes capable of reaching us, most of which are pointed directly at us. North Korea, Iraq, Iran, India, Pakistan, and a myriad of other third-world countries are hard at work developing ICBMs, and most of them already (or soon will) have nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons to use with those missiles.

In fact, North Korea already has a multi-stage rocket capable of reaching Alaska and Hawaii—11 years earlier than our intelligence forces predicted! Additionally, North Korea has almost completed the development of a missile which could reach the mainland US. Though our "intelligence community" claims that we have at least another 10 years before we have to worry about this new missile, its track record isn't exactly spotless. And besides: if it takes us 10 years to develop a defense, and it takes them 10 years before they can attack us, shouldn't we start working on that defense now, to prevent them from attacking us then? Iran and Iraq, while far behind North Ko-

rea, are also advancing quickly—but if Russia, China, or North Korea decides to sell key pieces of technology, their efforts would be sped up considerably.

The Problem

So what's the big deal, anyway? Everyone knows that if someone shoots a nuke at us, we'll shoot a few thousand right back at them! It'd be suicide to attack the US, right?

**Visit our website @
www.orgs.bucknell.edu/conservatives**

There are a few problems with this line of thought. First of all,

are we sure that our president will shoot back? Clinton, for instance, publicly announced that, if fired upon, he would not give the order to return fire. Doesn't this rather complicate the whole 'deterrence' thing? Secondly, how do we know that the people attacking us care about dying? It seems to me that there have been numerous attacks lately, both on the US and in other areas such as Israel, where terrorists have thoughtlessly sacrificed their own lives to inflict harm upon their enemy. If they don't care about dying, then what kind of a deterrent is the threat of death?



The guy who started it all

Furthermore, imagine the impact upon US foreign policy that even a handful of ICBMs could have. For example, think of China deciding to invade Taiwan...and the US having to stay out of the way due to Chinese threats to use nukes. Or picture Iraq, Iran, or North Korea making demands backed by the threat of nuclear attack. Can we afford to let these hostile nations dictate US foreign policy? But would we really have any choice, with millions of American lives at stake?

And this is where the Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) program comes in to

play. The idea is to develop a system that will be able to shoot down a number of ICBMs, by hitting them with other missiles before they reach their targets. Notice that no one is trying to shoot down a few thousand ICBMs, as would be necessary if the Russians attacked—we're banking on the assumption that Russia doesn't want to destroy all life on earth. Rather, the BMD is geared towards defending ourselves from countries such as China, North Korea, or Iraq, or from terrorists who get their hands on an ICBM. We're worried about countries that might decide to shoot at us regardless of the repercussions.

The Current Status

The mainstream media would have you believe that the BMD program is a disaster...failure after failure, with no end in sight! Billions of dollars have gone down the drain already, and that crazy Bush wants to spend more!

Well, this isn't true at all. The two latest tests, in late January and early February, were both successful. In the January test, hitting the missile wasn't even a goal; it was just a shakedown test for all the components involved. Much to everyone's surprise, the interceptor nailed the target missile, resulting in a kill!

The bottom line is that this interceptor technology is new and unproven, and it's going to be a while before all the kinks get worked out. It's going to take time to improve the accuracy, the response time, and the intelligence of these systems. And it's going to take money. But there have already been successes, and there will continue to be more successes.

The question here is not whether or not America needs a ballistic missile defense program. The real question is how long America can survive without one.

For more information, check out <http://www.acq.osd.mil/bmdo/bmdolink/pdf/power.pdf>.

Education “Reform”

By Michael Boland '03

Our schools are not as good as we would like them to be; that much is clear. When American voters are asked which issues matter most to them, education is consistently near the top of the list. What exactly that means is unclear; we just know that we want to do something about it. President Bush had an innovative solution: Why don't we spend more money on it? From this idea sprang forth the “Leave No Child Behind” Act of 2001. It's a bad bill, and it won't do squat.

There is ample evidence that the public is right to be concerned about its schools. Using the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) as a measure of an American student's basic educational achievement, student performance has shown little improvement since the '70s. Whether measured at the 4th, 8th, or 12th grade level, student proficiency has remained steady against these large increases in per student spending. On a scale of 0 to 500, 17-year-olds have increased a mere three points (from 285 to 288) on the reading exam since 1971. Nine- and 13-year-olds showed similar gains of 4 points apiece in that same time period. The figures are slightly better for younger students, as nine- and 13-year-olds registered 13 and 10 point improvements, respectively. However, performance on the standardized NAEP science test has fallen from 305 to 295 among 17-year-olds with negligible increases in the scaled scores of nine and 13-year-olds. These stable test scores would not be so troubling were it not for the marked increase in social resources it has taken to maintain them.

According to the Department of Education's Digest of Education Statistics, the U.S. Department of Education spent over \$27 billion on various educational programs in the year 2000. Combined federal, state, and local spending on K-12 education exceeded \$360 billion in the school year 1999-2000. It is no surprise that spending has increased in the recent past. What is startling is the amount of the increase. In constant 1999 dollars, the public spent just over \$182 billion on K-12 education in 1970. Thus, the \$360 billion figure represents a 42% increase in total expenditures, and an increase from \$3,367 to \$6,584 in education spend-

ing per pupil.

Meanwhile, student to teacher ratios in primary and secondary educational settings have fallen, from roughly 22:1 in 1971 to just over 15:1 in 1999. Perhaps most impressively, the ratio of students to computers—a measure of student access to that panacea, technology—has fallen from roughly 63:1 in 1984 to less than 6:1.

In light of these numbers, it is hard to make the case that America's educational slowdown has not gotten the political attention it deserves. We are already spending the money and making the investments that politicians often pledge to make. As education researchers Dr. Kirk Johnson and Krista Kafer put it, “If America could spend its way out of [its] education malaise, it would have done so.”

That's not to say that there's a negative relationship between spending and student performance; there simply is no identifiable relationship. As Kafer and Johnson point out, Connecticut students are the highest NAEP performers on average, and Connecticut spends the 4th most per student for education. Massachusetts is 7th in expenditures and 4th in achievement. On the other hand, the District of Columbia spends more per student than all but two states, is dead last in NAEP achievement, and is 49th in average SAT scores, according to ETS. Montana, middle of the pack at 25th in education expenditures, ranks 2nd in overall NAEP performance.

No one is saying that education should not get adequate funding. What they are saying is that there is substantial evidence that there are diminishing marginal returns to education spending, and that the time has come for more creative solutions.

All indications are that the president and his people are not up to the task.

The problem is not just that President Bush

gave congressional liberals far too much license with his bipartisan “Leave No Child Behind” Act. What is so objectionable is the surrender of principle that went with it. A handful of congressional Republicans and the White House sold out true education reforms, such as vouchers, for the sake of passing a “bipartisan” bill. Bush ran as a “compassionate conservative,” and he desperately wants to be known as a caring man. But his education bill dodged the difficult questions of structural reform and blindly and inexcusably ceded to liberals the moral high

ground on education. Most notably, he accepted the liberal premise that compassion can and must be measured by the size of The Check. But that is suicide. Apply that principle across the board, and the conservative agenda is obsolete.

Some say that half a loaf is better than none and that Bush did what he

had to do, okaying the hefty increase in education spending because it allows him to claim that he has “done something” about education—and has made himself more electable in 2004. However, such a stance agrees, essentially, that one can measure how much somebody is “for” education by the amount that he agrees to spend on it. But a bounce in Bush's approval ratings will not, by itself, improve our schools. By passing off more of the same unproven education policies as “reform,” he has done America's students and their taxpaying parents a great disservice.

An old proverb: “Idiot (n.): one who does the same thing over and over, expecting different results.” Conservatives have spent the better part of three years trying to convince the world that Bush is not a dummy... and this is the thanks they get.

For more information, check out <http://www.heritage.org/library/keyissues/education/federal-funding.html> or <http://nces.ed.gov/>.



Sen. Ted Kennedy... Bush's new buddy? (AP)

Economic Stimulus, Daschle Obstructionism

By Michael Gorman '02

The economic stimulus bill has finally been put to death in the Senate after weeks of debate, and the finger pointing has begun. Republicans are blaming Senate Majority leader Tom Daschle and the Democrats for being obstructionists, while the Democrats are blaming Republicans for pandering to big businesses and the wealthy while the common man suffers. Aside from all the bickering, the real question is; does it really matter? Is the American economy worse off after the death of the economic stimulus bill? Simply put, no.

Current economic data is showing signs that the U.S. economy is beginning to come out of the shallow recession we have been experiencing. Both the Federal Reserve and the G-7 board of industrialized nations have commented that the U.S. economy and the world economy seem to be coming out of recession. Now, Congress was able to extend unemployment benefits to thirty-nine weeks, an extension of thirteen weeks. However, the most controversial issues of increased tax cuts for the Republicans and increased spending for the Democrats could not be resolved, as nei-

ther side could gain the 60 votes needed to force a vote on the bill. The White House is claiming that the cost of not passing the Bush stimulus plan will be measured in human factors. Glenn Hubbard told MSNBC that the Bush economic stimulus bill would have created 300,000 jobs. In fact, Bush has been working vigorously to prove that his plan would help the common worker in these difficult times. This could be true, or it could simply be political self-defense. Bush is currently fending off attacks on domestic policy by the Democrats who have begun calling this the "Bush recession." The assertion is clearly ridiculous since economists

now place the start of the recession at March 2001, a mere three months after Bush took office. Thus, the economy was ailing and headed towards recession well before Bush took office. Nevertheless, it has forced the otherwise popular wartime President to take up a defensive position on economic policy.

The reason the economy does not need an economic stimulus bill is quite simple. The markets, more often than not, are faster than the legislative body. By the time Congress gets done with the debates, negotiations, and political posturing, the economy is usually on the upswing. This time delay is even

helping to lengthen the coming economic expansion rather than bickering about inconsequential short-term stimuli. Granted, there is a possibility of having what is known as a "double-dip" recession. In such a scenario, the economy would move downward again later in the year. However, a leading global economist, Kurt Karl, told MSNBC that he believes the more likely path will be a slow recovery throughout 2002 with modest prediction of 3% growth in 2003. If Congress were to get involved, it is quite possible they would only mess things up rather than help the economy.

Now that I have opined on the death of the economic stimulus package, I want to take a moment to discuss its demise. First, let me express, upfront, my distaste for Senate Majority leader Tom Daschle. There are (believe it or not) Democrats in Congress who honestly want to get something done in Washington for the good of the people and are willing to compromise... Daschle, however, is not one of them. His behavior thus far (including, but not limited to, the stimulus bill) has been inexcusable. There are currently fifty bills sitting on the Majority Leaders desk waiting for his approval to be bring them to the floor for debate. But he will not let them out!

Now, I have no problem with him disagreeing with laws that the bills would

create; go ahead and debate them, filibuster, take your case to the public, whatever! But, whatever you do, don't simply sit on these bills and prevent them from coming to the floor for debate and a vote!

Though he may have saved Washington (and the rest of the country) from an unnecessary and nasty debate over Bush's economic stimulus bill, his method of doing so was uncalled for and unacceptable. Daschle can spout about bipartisanship all he wants, but as long as he sits on fifty bills, his words and promises hold no meaning.



greater after September 11th. The current crisis in foreign policy has drawn attention (rightfully so) away from domestic policies. Therefore, an economic debate that was taking place last fall was put on hiatus until only several weeks ago. If the government were to go forward with an economic stimulus plan (from either party) it would be overkill. They would be trying to revive a patient that was already recovering. What Congress needs to focus on now are initiatives that would promote the long-term growth of the economy rather than worrying about short-term fixes. That way, Congress could, for once, be ahead of the curve,

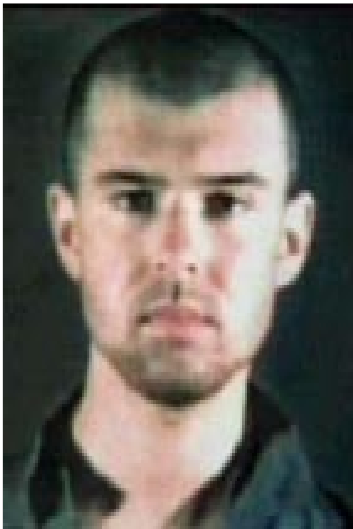
EDITORIALS

In a time when sex doesn't mean sex, and perjury doesn't mean perjury (Are you listening, Mr. Clinton?), a new word has been brought to everyone's attention that apparently needs clarification. This word is treason. I am, of course, talking about the John Walker Lindh case. The American Heritage Dictionary defines treason as, "...the betrayal of one's own country by waging war against it or by consciously or purposely aiding its enemies." Interesting.

For those of you who may not know, John Walker Lindh is an American who was captured in Afghanistan, found fighting for the other side. Walker, 20, became a Muslim in his teens, and began studying the teachings of Islam heavily, eventually traveling to Pakistan and Yemen to further his understanding of his new religion. He joined Osama bin Laden's terrorist organization, al Qaeda, and was sent to the front lines in Afghanistan to fight for the Taliban. He was captured last November, disheveled and disgusting, hiding underground with other armed members of the Taliban. He was taken into custody, and was eventually transferred to the United States to await trial. The Bush administration has decided not to charge Walker with treason, which carries with it the penalty of death. At this time Walker is charged with, "conspiracy to kill U.S. citizens abroad, providing material support and resources to designated foreign terrorist organizations and engaging in prohibited transactions with the Taliban." This isn't treason?

Formally charging an American citizen with treason is very difficult, and requires a long, complicated legal process, involving a number of witnesses to each act of treason. Even the lesser charges against Walker, though, still carry a life sentence in jail, however, and this is an easier case for the Justice Department to win. It is clear to me why the

Justice Department chose this course of action. What is not clear to me is why some people, especially his father, defend Walker's actions. It sickens me, and I think we are making a complete mockery of our judicial system. But I guess since people get away with all kinds of crimes these days (Condit, O.J., how's it going, guys?), it seems sadly appropriate that Walker's actions are considered defensible. I think it's disgusting.



No longer disheveled, but still disgusting (AP)

The moment he picked up an AK-47 in opposition to our country, John Walker allied himself with an evil, deranged enemy that willingly sacrificed the lives of thousands to meet its own sick ends. The images are surprisingly absent from the media these days, but the fact remains that this country watched commercial airliners destroy two buildings full of innocent people. This university was hit hard with the losses of friends,

family, and coworkers. Hundreds of firefighters gave their lives trying to save people from the burning wreckage. When the World Trade Center finally collapsed on top of the rescue workers, crushing them to death, bin Laden and his supporters cheered as though they were watching their favorite soccer team score a goal. This is what John Walker has decided is important to him, and these are the types of people he feels are worth supporting. He has made the United States his enemy, and yet we are treating him as a victim, a poor, misguided youth who needs taking care of. Why?

Some would preach compassion for John Walker. Where is the compassion for the children that now have to grow up fatherless because of what Walker supported? Is he going to personally explain to these children that it was America's fault their daddy had to jump out of a burning building from

See "TRAITOR" on page 13.

THE COUNTERWEIGHT

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**THE BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY
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Disclaimer

The views expressed herein are solely those of the respective authors. They do not necessarily reflect the opinions of any other club members, the Conservatives Club at large, or Bucknell University. Especially Bucknell University.

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This is the final issue of The Counterweight that will be sent to all students' campus mailboxes. Following this issue, a mailing list will be constructed according to students' expressed preferences regarding receiving or not receiving The Counterweight.

Any member of the campus community who would like to be on the mailing list for The Counterweight and is not, or who is on the mailing list and would like to be removed, should send a request to Charles Mitchell at Box C1514 or cmitchel@bucknell.edu.

Any person who is not a member of the campus community and would like to be added to or removed from the mailing list for The Counterweight should send a request to the Bucknell University Conservatives Club, P.O. Box 141, Lewisburg, PA 17837.

Club Information

The Conservatives Club holds meetings on every-other Thursday night at 8PM in the Faculty Lounge, LC 240. All are welcome.

Any correspondence regarding the club should be mailed to P.O. Box 141, Lewisburg, PA 17837.

The Bucknell Conservatives are online at: <http://www.orgs.bucknell.edu/conservatives>

Gun Safety: Fact vs. Fiction

By Adam Hersperger '05

Did you know that law-abiding citizens who carry concealed handguns are safety hazards and menaces to society? Did you also know that gun owners are actually just child killers? I was previously unaware of such "facts", so it's a good thing that agencies such as the Violence Policy Center, Handgun Control Inc., and other anti-gun groups are making Americans aware of such information. Anti-gun groups even back up such facts with some pretty convincing statistics. Here is one more question for the reader: should the average American take these facts and arguments at face value?

Close examination of many of the arguments being made by gun opponents reveal striking irregularities concerning their claims regarding gun safety. For example, many gun control advocates claim that 13 kids are killed by guns every day in America. However, this statistic is very misleading because it includes people ages 19 and under. This "fact" claims that 18 and 19 year old adults are actually kids! As Steven Milloy reported in the February 2002 issue of America's First Freedom, these 13 "kids" killed each day also include those that died from lawful police shootings or from gang-related shootings. Actual data from the National Center for Health Statistics for 1997 suggests that if kids were considered anyone 14 years old and younger, fewer than two kids per day were killed by guns. However, this statistic still includes all types of gun related deaths.

John Lott shined some light on this issue in his book *More Guns, Less Crime*. Lott closely studied the effects of carrying concealed handguns, and the information he gathered has stood up against the attacks of many anti-gun agencies. In 1995, there were a total of 1,400 accidental firearm deaths in the entire United States. A relatively small portion of these involved children: 30 deaths involved children up to 4 years of age and 170 more deaths involved 5 to 14 year olds. In that same year, 2,900 children died in motor-vehicle crashes and 950 children lost their lives from drowning. More children

die in bicycle accidents each year than die from all types of firearm accidents. So where are the attempts to outlaw cars, swimming pools, and bikes?

The claims being made by gun opponents that guns and the law-abiding citizens who carry them are not safe are simply not based in truth. People who obtain permits in order to be allowed to carry concealed handguns for protection and security are not a safety hazard to the public. For example, Lott reported that in Virginia, not a single permit-holder has been involved in a violent crime. Also, after Nevada's first year



The best home security system out there

of having a concealed carry law, law enforcement officials throughout the state could not document one fatality that resulted from irresponsible gun use by someone who had obtained a permit under the new law. Similarly, in South Carolina, only one person who has received a pistol permit since 1989 has been indicted on a felony charge, which was unrelated to the permitted gun.

Anti-gun groups have also stated that in the heat of the moment, such as in an incident of road rage, people who carry concealed handguns are unable to make safe and competent decisions. However, of the 33 states that now have non-discretionary concealed handgun laws, some of them decades old, there exists only one recorded incident of a permitted handgun being used in a shooting following a traffic accident. The incident in question involved self-defense. Also, many

national surveys report that 98% of the time that people use guns defensively, they merely have to brandish the handgun to stop an attack from occurring. This suggests that split-second decisions about actually firing a handgun rarely need to be made.

Preventing law-abiding citizens from carrying handguns does not end violence; instead, it would merely make victims more vulnerable to attack. I suspect that those who are in favor of stricter gun control have probably never been threatened by violence and most likely have been misled by deceptive statistics. Many of the so-called "facts" being released by anti-gun agencies are purely fiction.

I am fully aware that, while attacking some of the rhetoric being issued by anti-gun groups, I am also using statistics to back up my arguments. So why should the reader believe my arguments any more than those of gun opponents? Because the statistics being used in this article were taken from carefully researched and reliable sources. In *More Guns, Less Crime*, for example, John Lott examined over 54,000 observations across all 3,000 U.S. counties over a period of 18 years and has taken into consideration a range of other factors never accounted for in previous "guns vs. crime" studies.

Lott used all the available data on guns in his study, which was the most extensive such study ever done. However, as Lott pointed out in his book, anti-gun groups frequently select data from certain places and times in order to bolster their arguments, while excluding other data that would actually disprove their conclusions.

Opinions and arguments should only be formed after hearing both sides of the debate and examining the legitimacy of the "facts" involved. I hope this article will at least make people think twice before claiming that law-abiding citizens who carry concealed handguns or gun owners in general are dangerous and cannot be trusted.

Did you know that gun owners are actually beneficial members of society? Did you also know that allowing law-abiding citizens to carry concealed handguns will save lives? Probably not, but it's a fact.

JUNK SCIENCE

The Secondhand Smokescreen

By Tom Elliott '03

At the beginning of last semester, University administration implemented a new policy designed to protect students' health and safety: banning smoking in all University buildings. The probability of buildings catching on fire from smoldering cigarettes remains highly debatable, and the health aspect is also peculiar. Personal responsibility should guide students' decisions of whether or not to be healthy and not smoke—which the school says it's not trying to do. Second-hand smoke is the health threat that it is attempting to combat. However, the policy's merits are based on mere junk science.

This has become just another incident in the worldwide crusade against the dangers of second-hand smoke. The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared June 3rd "World No-Tobacco Day." Last year's theme was second-hand smoke, as the poster for the event read, "Secondhand Smoke Kills."

It also read, "Second-hand smoke is a real and significant threat to public health. Supported by two decades of evidence, the scientific community now agrees that there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke... The evidence is in, let us act on it."

This seems curious, as its own research into the subject matter suggests quite the opposite. The website for the day lists three "Comprehensive Reports on Passive Smoking by Authoritative Scientific Bodies" as evidence. These are the 1986 reports from the Surgeon General and National Research Council and the 1993 report from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. There are also two late-1990s reports from the California EPA, however, these reports merely adopted the conclusions of the federal EPA, which will be discussed later.

First, the Surgeon General's. The 1986 re-

ports concluded secondhand smoke was a risk factor for lung cancer. Curiously, of the 13 studies reviewed, seven showed no link between secondhand smoke and lung cancer. In the realm of statistics, this sort of rift is exactly what one would expect if no true link existed. The report was inconclusive, which is what motivated the EPA to move in and see if it could dig up anything.

They did just that. By 1993, thirty-three studies had been completed studying the possible link. Over 80% of these evidenced that no such link existed, including the largest study. The EPA reviewed 31 of these and unsurprisingly omitted the results from two of the reports that indicated no linkage



exists. Their conclusion estimated that 3,000 lung cancer deaths a year are the product of secondhand smoke.

The anti-tobacco activists celebrated.

Fortunately, the party was short lived. In 1998, on an appeal by the tobacco industry, U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Osteen, of the Middle District of North Carolina overturned the report. He ruled that the EPA had manipulated statistics in assessing the risks of passive smoke.

Commenting on the decision, Michael Fumento, science advisor to the Atlantic

Legal Foundation, argued in a July 22 Washington Times op-ed that the EPA report didn't "use the gold standard in epidemiology, the 95 percent confidence interval." According to Fumento, "Essentially, [the EPA] moved the goal post to the three-yard line because the football had fallen two yards short of a touchdown. There's a technical scientific term for this kind of action--dishonesty."

The WHO conducted its own study the same year to see what it could find. The study produced no evidence that any link existed.

The WHO clearly didn't consider its study a "comprehensive report" by an "authoritative scientific body" since the findings weren't copasetic towards their agenda—consequently going unmentioned on their website.

The wrath of secondhand smoke extended further than non-existent lung cancer. The WHO claims that secondhand smoke causes between 35,000-62,000 deaths from heart disease annually.

But Chicago Hospital health studies chairman Dr. John Bailar, a man who is ostensibly not pro-tobacco, has dismissed the link between secondhand smoke and heart disease. He cited the poor quality of study data and an apparent researcher bias.

Another WHO claim is that "Second-hand smoke also causes and aggravates asthma and other breathing problems, particularly in children. It is also an important cause of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)."

An article on that same subject by Steve Milloy, who publishes the Junkscience.com website, refutes the charge: "...the researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention examining data from the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey reported in January's Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine there

See "JUNKSCIENCE" on page 13.

TRAITOR – from page 10

the 128th floor when a maniac rammed it with a jumbo jet? Would someone like to explain to me why this man, who condones, and picked up arms in support of, the violence of September 11th deserves any of the same rights afforded me, an active, voting citizen of this country, and proponent of democracy and freedom? Last year, while Walker was in Afghanistan, “consciously or purposely aiding [America’s] enemies” and, “waging war against [America],” I was “paying my taxes.”

Marin County, California, where Walker is from, could be described as wealthy, white, and liberal. I attended high school in Marin, as did George Lucas’s daughter, and the son of the president of Levi-Strauss & Co. I’m not exactly sobbing over the fact that poor John Walker was forced to grow up there. Walker was easily able to choose the life he now leads. He chose to become an Islamic militant, his choice nurtured by both of his parents, and he was supported through each decision, including his trips abroad. He then chose to leave his schooling to go to the mountains, and then chose to pick up a weapon and fight for people who hate his home, his family, and their way of life. In an e-mail to his mother, he once posed the question, “What has America ever done for anybody?” Well, Johnny, America granted you the unwavering right to choose that religion you wanted to know so much about. It also gave you the freedom to enjoy that religion, enjoy talking about and practicing it freely, and enjoy the ability to travel outside the country to see and learn of other things. This country also gave your parents the freedom and right to be successful enough to live in Marin County and send you to private school at home and abroad to pursue your interests. Sounds like it certainly did something for somebody.

John Walker Lindh may have been born in this country, making him a U.S. citizen at birth, but he is a traitor, pure and simple. He turned his back on his country, his home, and his family, committing treason, and thereby forfeiting any rights as an American. This white boy from Marin changed his name, adopted a fake Middle Eastern accent, and moved to the desert. This is all fine, and he is allowed to make those decisions, but when we caught him, he should

have been left in the desert, treated as any other member of the Taliban army, for that is what he is. He should have been handed over to the Northern Alliance after he was discovered, to be dealt with as a war criminal under their jurisdiction. Now that we have him in our custody, however, I do not understand why he is being treated any differently than those already detained in Cuba. He has made it clear where his loyalty lies, and he should reap the consequences of that loyalty. In my opinion, he should be transferred to Guantanamo Bay where he belongs, to be reunited with his compatriots, and locked in a cage. If transportation is an issue, I am sure there are a few surviving members of the FDNY that wouldn’t mind escorting Mr. Walker down there. Do we really need re-clarification of what treason is? John Walker Lindh has been quite the visual aid, as far as I am concerned.

As for the redefinition of treason, I’m fine with the current meaning. After all, if it looks like a duck, and quacks like a duck...

For more information, check out <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,43138,00.html>.

JUNKSCIENCE – from page 12

was no association between secondhand smoke and asthma among 4,500 children aged four to 16 years of age.

“No one knows what causes SIDS...Wake Forest University researchers [recently] reported that it may be a genetic deficiency.”

He explains that the lack of a particular enzyme, one that stops fatty acid accumulations that can have a toxic effect, most likely causes SIDS.

Despite the lack of actual scientific evidence, the WHO will undoubtedly press on in this campaign against second-hand smoke.

Everyone now knows smoking is bad for one’s health, and the administration says that this latest ban wasn’t an attempt to stop people from smoking because smokers can still go outside. Presumably, the policy was meant to combat the ill effects of second hand smoke. However, banning smoking because it gives your friends lung cancer is ridiculous. Science considered, this seems to represent yet another University regulation that is little more than an unwarranted slap to individual student liberties.

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Accuracy in Academia

PC – from page 5

puppies” comment and all! This leaves one of two inferences that can be made: either I have convinced them of the illogic of their ways or they never truly believed that the policy served any worthwhile purpose.

Assumedly, such policies are meant to intercede and shield those individuals on campus that, for whatever reason, cannot deal with my comments themselves. Such action results in two injustices. First, it deprives the allegedly offended parties from furthering their cause through debate and refinement of concept with members of differing opinion (whom the Postmaster considers to be me). Also, it deprives me of the opportunities to change my views (if necessary) once confronted with the offended’s stance (if my comments did, indeed, offend anyone). In short, preventing two parties from knowing of the other’s existence and of their views avoids conflict, but also impedes intellectual progress. Please do not let this occur if you ever happen to encounter it. Logic takes care of itself, good ideas will hold up to criticism.

In case you were wondering, after the email went out, I did receive many individual responses. All of these emails were very supportive of the club and none expressed even the slightest bit of offense. One person, in fact, stated that her interest in psychology was only marginal, but she attended the meeting anyway because she loved the picture of the alien robot puppy eating a cupcake. Delicious!

EQUALITY – from page 1

To rid the country of inequality, we must eliminate certain differences that facilitate advantage. Among these inauspicious differences are the various degrees of education, work ethic, and merit. It is within the confines of these three factors of competition that individuals separate themselves from other individuals and gain advantage. Suppression of this harmful, advantage-yielding competition is in the best interests of the country, as equality will lead to more happiness than will man’s natural inclination to attain merit through hard work.

Just as a weed is exterminated most effectively by the destruction of its roots, inequality is best weeded out by attacking its influence on those who are the youngest and thereby most impressionable. Because the concept of merit is introduced to children

long before work ethic and formal education, we will start with merit. It is commonplace to condition young children to behave properly by rewarding their good behavior with toys, candy, or other privileges, showing them that they will be rewarded for the favorable things they do in life. This practice encourages the notion that, if one does more positive things, he will attain more, and thus gain an advantage.

To eliminate this ideology and promote equality, it is in our best interest to treat all of our children equally, regardless of their behavior. After school visitation to the local retirement

home or another equally charitable endeavor is as deserving of a fifty percent allowance increase or an extra chocolate chip cookie in your child’s bagged lunch as is a rampage of vandalism. Likewise, the best player on your child’s little league team should not play an inning more than the worst. A homerun is no more favorable than a strikeout, as its contribution to the well being of the team is offset by its tendency to promote envy and competition. The value of this ideology does not limit itself to the teaching of young children. Rather, it is also very applicable to adults in the working world. If hard working, successful employees are paid the same as the lazy, defiant ones, there will be no incentive for damaging, equality-threatening competition.

Of course, unequal merit is not the only factor contributing to inequality. It is the difference in the degree of each person’s pursuit of that merit that allows for it to be unequal. For this reason, limits should be placed on the amount of work that each person is allowed to do over a given period of time. This tactic has already been proven successful in Sweden, where weekly work

hours are limited by law. With this type of limitation in place, it will be impossible for one to gain an advantage over another and interrupt the status of equality by working more than another.

Lastly, the opportunity for advantage through education can be taken away by several simple adjustments that can be made to our

educational system. To prevent competition and inequality in the classroom, all students should automatically receive a C+ for their academic efforts, or for their lack thereof. This will not only create an environ-

ment of equality in schools, but it will also allow for equal access to jobs and institutions of higher education, as grade-based judgments will not be made. Also, students of all levels (and all other members of society as well) should be required to wear uniforms, as more or less desirable clothing can often signify higher or lower social class.

Clearly, all of these adjustments would be somewhat difficult to implement without changing other aspects of our lives. For this reason, I close with the keystone of my argument, which enables my entire formula for equality to work successfully. We must put an end to the commercialization and commodification that present us with so many opportunities to gain advantage over others and compete for this advantage. We must tear down the institutions that promote such diseases. We must become subsistence farmers and produce only what we need so that we may all be equal and thereby equally happy. For if we are unable to do these things, we have but one heart-breaking alternative: we must accept no more and no less than what we earn for ourselves, and dismiss the utopian ideal of socioeconomic equality. May God save us all.

A Random Cartoon



CLOSED-MINDED – from page 4

not have an outright intention of being indoctrinated into the liberal mindset. However, the fact remains that the faculty at most American universities is composed of predominantly liberal professors, especially in the humanities and social sciences departments. There is certainly nothing wrong with this, but the fact that some of these professors try to impose their own political views on their students presents a major problem. Students, in attending course after course with a liberal bias, all too often accept the liberal points of view which are presented without making up their own minds about the issues. Students begin to believe that the liberal ideology is “correct” and that conservatives are selfish, greedy, closed-minded conformists. Contrary to what these college departments would like to believe, this is not a way to expand students’ horizons and allow them to be open-minded. By presenting them with one set of beliefs, implied to be “correct,” colleges are attempting to create conformists who base their political ideas on what they hear and not necessarily on what they believe. Critics of the previous issue of *The Counterweight* were quick to point out “faults” in conservative ideology, and therefore our newsletter, yet were unwilling or unable to critique any specific conservative opinions. I am certainly not suggesting that all college professors are liberal and attempt to impose their views on their students, or that students who lean towards the left have gotten there from liberal bias in their various courses. However, the bias does exert a great deal of influence on those who are, in most respects, politically neutral.

Sometimes, realizing that a bias even exists may also present a challenge. For example, according to a recent survey of college professors conducted by the Luntz Research Center for the Study of Popular Culture, 71% did not believe that the news coverage of social and political issues presents a liberal bias. I would respectfully urge that 71% to watch the CBS Evening News, particularly around elections, or, better yet, read Bernard Goldberg’s bestselling book *Bias*. I would urge Bucknell students to read the results of the Luntz survey, which is accessible at <http://www.frontpagemag.com/guestcolumnists2002/ivyleagueprof-results01-09-02.htm>. You will find that the results are interesting, and in some cases,

rather surprising.

When attending a class with a political bias, students should actively think about what is being presented and not simply accept it as being correct. Be open-minded. Realize that opinions are being presented, and it is not your obligation to agree with them. If you do agree, that’s great. But molding one’s belief system based solely on what others around them think is a dangerous and closed-minded thing to do.

SOCIAL SECURITY – from page 1

“Proposal B” from the Commission would allow workers to invest four percent of their Social Security tax into PRAs, with a ceiling of \$1,000 a year. The account would be personally owned and controlled by the worker through an established framework with the aid of major investment firms and backed up by a guaranteed safety net funded by general revenues. The safety net could ensure that no more workers retire in poverty. When a person retires, the account would replace part of the retirement benefits of Social Security. This plan would have a benefits floor by 2018, guaranteeing low-income workers benefits equal to 120% of the poverty line.

Opening a PRA would be entirely voluntary. If a worker decided that it was too risky, his or her benefits would not be affected in any way. PRAs would allow individuals to receive greater retirement benefits and accumulate more wealth, would remove burdens on the system, and would make the system solvent. Additionally, PRAs would spur economic growth by increasing capital investment through increased savings which would result in more jobs, increased productivity, higher wages, and faster growth. In the long run, the reform would also mean lower taxes and less real government debt. This would also increase economic growth, through more jobs and higher wages.

The current recession has given critics of reform the chance to complain that the markets are too risky to be used as retirement safety nets, but these critics fail to see the big picture. In the long run the risk is not that extreme. Over the past 75 years, the stock market has had an average return of eight percent a year. Right now the rate of return offered by the Social Security system is less than two percent a year with some

groups, such as African-Americans, actually receiving negative real return rates. Even with a safer portfolio, consisting of half stocks and half bonds, the historical average return is still 5.5%, which greatly outperforms the current Social Security system.

The time has come for reform. PRAs have broad public support. The benefits of allowing them range from restoring the solvency of the system to boosting the economy as a whole. All workers would benefit, especially lower-income and minority workers, against whom the system currently discriminates. The bottom line is that with reform, people would be making more money for their retirement and Americans would have ownership over their retirement security.

For more information, visit www.socialsecurity.org.

PENIS – from page 16

Politics did, in fact, come into play. At one point of the play it was explained how blow-up dolls were illegal in several states. Meanwhile, many of these states had the death penalty as well. This seemingly obvious contradiction mostly just confused most on-lookers.

Towards the end of this undoubtedly important piece of art, a 6-year-old was interviewed and several questions were posed to gauge his personality towards his pee-pee producer. His answers astounded, “It would wear a cape. It would smell like...pee I guess, EWW! Mommy told me not to talk about my privates anymore.” It’s clearly outrageous that parents are encouraging this kind of subtlety about their children’s penises.

“I used to wonder whether or not it was normal to think about girls as much as I do,” said playgoer John Iacofano ’03. He continued, “this work really made me more comfortable in my sexuality. Now I know it’s not unusual to want to hook up with as many girls as humanly possible.”

“The Penis Monologues” continues to impress, so make sure you get caught up in the hype!

THE FINAL WORD

By Tom Elliott '03, Charles Mitchell '05, and Dominic Puccio '03

The Penis Monologues

Ah yes, the glorious penis! An exciting new play is taking college campuses, theatres and Broadway by storm. The Penis Monologues does the unthinkable and finally makes it okay for people to become more comfortable with using the word penis.

"I was always fairly certain that my wang was the temple of my body, but this play has liberated me in ways unexplainable. I now have no fear in talking up the glories of my dong to others, females especially," said Eric Silvestri '03 upon seeing the new smash hit.

This wonderful play was written by a group of right-wing extremists right here at Bucknell who initially were concerned with the vulgarity and content of the immensely popular "Vagina Monologues," but quickly realized that in doing so they were being anti-progressive and adhering to medieval-era social mores. They then decided to write their own play, because if men and women are to be considered equal, surely a play celebrating penises and heterosexual sex is just as welcome as one celebrating vaginas and lesbian sex... right? In order to do so, rather than being original, they simply adapted features of the Vagina Monologues to that purpose.

There are several important political and social implications underlying the play that are conveyed through the various monologues, such as "What My Penis Would Wear." In this fascinating scene, various members of the production cast explain what their shlong would wear if it were personified. Occasionally, actors played the roles of other celebrities to keep it interesting.

For instance, Bill Clinton's johnson would don a beret. A white glove would adorn Michael Jackson. Pee Wee Herman's frank and beans would be glorified by an incredibly small red bow tie, and he would make sure it was seen as often as possible. John Bobbit's apparatus would suffice with just a Band-Aid. Bill Gates said that the idea of dressing up his sausage was ridiculous, but added that it did currently have Internet access.

In another artistically-savvy segment, entitled "My Angry Penis," each actor speaks on behalf of his member. Here, it

'03 unashamedly admits his little guy smells like a baseball diamond. Charles Mitchell '05 is unembarrassed to explain how his mini-me has the manly and reassuring odor of a pickup truck. Tom Elliott '03 claims his one-eyed monster to possess the aroma of an enchanted forest.

In, "The Little Wee-Wee That Could," play participants tell a striking narrative about one boy's journey towards sexual liberation. At the tender age of 13, the troubled young boy had the misfortune of having his mother walking in on him while he was experimenting sexually in an individual manner. This greatly scarred him and he promptly vowed to never touch "it" again. This tragedy soon turned into triumph, as the once-misguided youth found romance with his 24-year-old English teacher at the age of 16.

The boy was invited to her house for a special tutoring session--his parents were thrilled. "Sure, she was my English teacher, but she was also a beauty. Surprisingly, we didn't discuss English much, although we did cover some other important fields, such as biology and chemistry," he said. The tutoring sessions soon became habitual. "It was great," the teenager confided.

The play was also used as a forum for propagating pertinent penis factoids. For instance, it was revealed that men don't have periods, which implies that they are, in fact, the superior gender. The penis also possesses half (HALF!) the amount of nerve endings than its rival, the clitoris, which is OK because sex, apparently, still feels amazing.

See "PENIS" on page 15.



Some of the performers ponder their pieces.

was speculated that condoms and testicular exams must be the horrid inventions of women in order to demoralize, inflict pain on, and subjugate the male sex. Zippers on pants are obviously the creation of women, intended to occasionally "catch one" in the barbaric booby-trap. Sure, many women say they prefer the look of briefs over boxers, but this play explains that this is only because they subversively desire men to eventually become sterile.

In one very dramatic scene, men announce the smells they believe their respective dillyhooos to radiate. Dominic Puccio