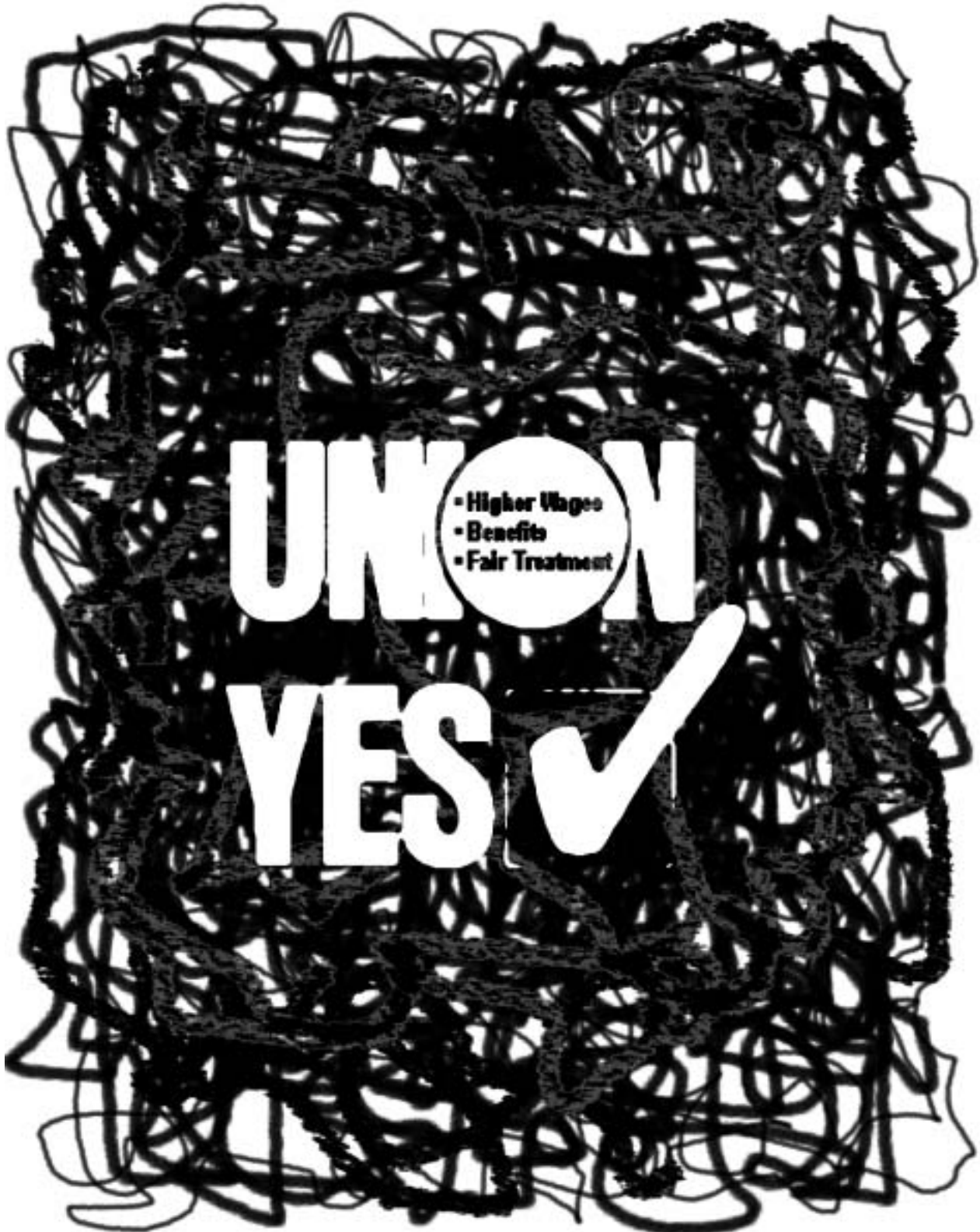


# the catalyst

*(kat' ə-list) n., an agent that provokes change*



The BCEJ has dedicated its efforts to the living wage campaign for two years now.

## DO YOU WANT TO SPEAK OUT?

TO ENDORSE THE PETITION, ALONGSIDE MANY SUCH AS Howard Zinn, Noam Chomsky, Ralph Nader, Ani Difranco, and over 1300 Bucknell staff, students, alumni, and faculty, simply send us an email. <ckeffer@bucknell.edu>

IF YOU WANT TO SEND INFORMATION REGARDING unfair labor practices at Bucknell, we rigorously protect anonymity. Other comments are welcome and requested; email <ckeffer@bucknell.edu>, or write us at our mailbox, B2915. For more information, meeting times, or past issues, please check us out: <<http://www.orgs.bucknell.edu/catalyst>>

**the catalyst** is a collective product of all members of BCEJ/PULSE and is published by the Catalyst Editorial Board:

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**Special thanks to** the hordes of faculty who are at our beck and call to support everything we ever do, say, write, create, draw, build, compose, or stencil--as long as it is liberal.

**PLEASE SEND US YOUR IDEAS, ILLUSTRATIONS, PHOTOGRAPHS, POETRY AND PROSE!**

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# Will

# it

Last year Bucknell faculty members voted to support immediate implementation of a \$9 living wage for all support staff on campus. Despite the pressing need to pay employees an adequate wage, the administration at Bucknell has yet to follow through. Given the lukewarm response from administration, it may be time for students, workers, community members, local politicians and faith groups to come together in a larger campaign to improve the conditions and pay of campus employees.

One effective way to organize workers and gain workers rights is to form a union. Although unions often have a stigma attached to them, they can be extremely beneficial to workers. Unions provide stability and structure in the workplace. Union members work together with their union and their employer to create a contract which will ensure each employee fair and equal treatment. In the process, unions gain workers a much greater voice in the day-to-day operations in the workplace.

There is lots of evidence to show that unions really work. On average, union workers earn 26% more than nonunion workers, and are more likely to receive healthcare and pension benefits than those without a union. While 48% of union members have worked with the same employer for 10 or more years, only 22% of non-union workers can say the same. This suggests that, for union members, job satisfaction is high, pay is better, benefits are better, there is better access to fair grievance procedures, and there is greater job security.

Unfortunately unions don't just happen. People have to get involved. It is often a scary proposition for workers to act alone. In the past, as the Catalyst has documented extensively, workers on the Bucknell campus have faced

intimidation and been discouraged by the administration from showing interest in unions. This is not unique to Bucknell. In fact, private sector employers use numerous techniques in an attempt to deter workers from joining a union. This, of course, is the best evidence that a union benefits workers while limiting

the power of employers – something bosses hate. While these threats against unions are real, it is time for Bucknell as a community to face the administration in solidarity. Workers are protected by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) which says that employers are not

# take a union?

allowed to punish or discriminate against any worker because of union activity or support.

If workers, students and community members work together, we have the potential to challenge the inadequate pay and unfair working conditions for service employees at Bucknell. It would be nice if the administration would pay people a living wage and provide a fair labor committee to insure that workers get treated fairly. But if the administration is not willing to provide its workers with these basic human rights on its own, we as a community need to consider an alternative

approach. Unions may be the answer. ◀

### *How a union could help Bucknell workers*

*Unions raise the wages and improve benefits.*

*Unions raise wages the most for low- and middle-wage workers.*

*Unions protect their members from unfair treatment by bosses and give employees a safe outlet for grievances.*

*Unions are associated with greater job security, productivity, and job satisfaction.*

# ! Don for Congress!

## *Dr. Stechshulte to run for a seat in the House of Representatives*

As a well-known and dedicated physician and member of the Bucknell community, Dr. Stechshulte has always been there for us as a student body. Now it is our time to give him our full support as he branches out for a new adventure, campaigning for a political office. For those of you who don't know Dr. Stechshulte, and those who want to know more, we interviewed the new candidate hopeful to gain insight on what he's all about.

issues. America is losing jobs from companies choosing to move overseas for cheaper labor. I think the government should re-examine NAFTA, CAFTA, and some other organizations that have not turned out how they were supposed to. I guess my main issues besides health care would be labor and the environment. It shouldn't be "Who can we exploit most for profit?" Economy should serve humanity; not humanity serving the economy as it is now.

power, waste, etc. With the technology available the government could easily, with little change, cause a groundswell of making ideas a reality. One of my friends has told me this quote, "Make no decision without considering all of the children of all of the species over all of time," and I believe that you need to get involved to get your voices heard.

### *What motivated you to run for Congress?*

**Dr. Stechshulte:** The main reason is just the lack of choice. This district has only had one choice (Sherwood) for the previous two elections. I'm just an interested citizen who is frustrated that no one has any other options, and no one was stepping up to the plate. There is a time when enough is enough, and since I have kids your age and grandchildren as well, I believe that there are some necessary changes that need to be made so that the next generations won't have to pay for our mistakes.

### *What is your campaign strategy?*

**D:** I just think it's time to have a political voice for the people of this state. Pennsylvania has lost 130,000 jobs since the Bush administration came into office. As far as strategy, it is hard for me to go around and ask for

### *What else can you tell us about Dr. Stechshulte as a person?*

**D:** I'm most proud of being a husband, father, and grandfather. All of my concerns center around those relationships. What will the world be like for my granddaughter Emma? I want to look back on my life and honestly say, "I did everything I thought I could do to make the world better". I'm only one person, and this is a sort of crazy thing to do, but enough is enough. There needs to be a choice, and no one else is offering the direction I hope our country would want to go in. Thomas Jefferson's words of the right to "life, liberty and a pursuit of happiness" aren't being effectively put into action. As it is, we are denying a full life to some, and I want to try to help.

### *What political positions have you held previously?*

**D:** I was on the Lewisburg School Board.

### *What is your platform?*

**D:** My main priority is health care. Why is the United States one of the only developed nations that still does not provide health care for all? It isn't right that 40 million Americans are not insured, and tens of millions more are under insured. One half of all citizens that file for bankruptcy do so because of medical payments. The United States spends \$1.6 trillion in health care, which could translate into \$5,600 for each citizen, but many people are not getting anything.

### *What other priorities will you bring to Congress, if elected?*

**D:** Well, I don't have a checklist going into this, but I have a general direction that I would see our country heading toward. I am for a bottom-up approach, not top-down. Family problems and issues should be spotlighted as well as economic

money for my campaign. This may sound naïve, but I would love to run a campaign on *ideas* so people could give their political donations elsewhere and just give me their vote. I think it will be important for me to spread the word that there is a choice. I'd like to think of this as a candidacy of hope and let people know that there are other options than waging war on third world countries. But my number one issue right now is to get 1,000 petition signatures in the next week to get on the ballot.

### *How can Bucknellians help?*

**D:** REGISTER. VOTE. LOOK AT THE ISSUES. Actually compare the candidates and become aware and concerned about issues. These will impact you more than you think, and it will be your generation that will pay off the deficit, not me. Not only financially, but you will pay – nuclear

### *What advice could you give us?*

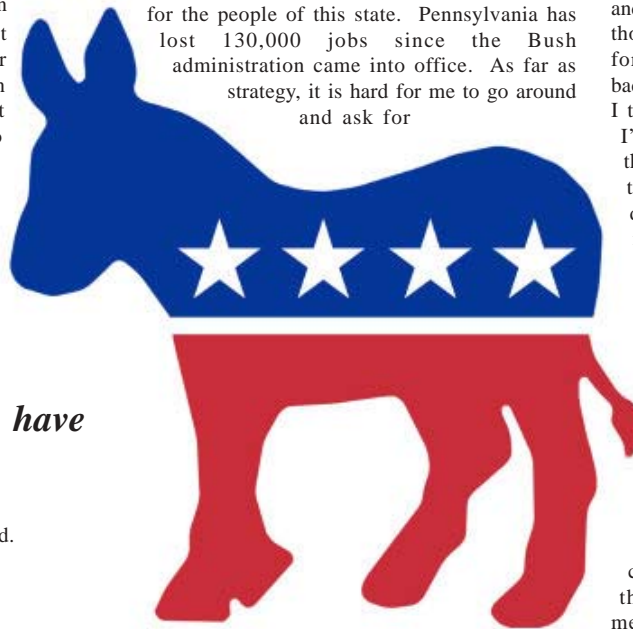
**D:** Strive to be honest and forthright always. As a physician I've had to deal with terrible things. Telling someone they have cancer, for example, is one of the most difficult things I've had to do, but I have to give the message. A quality life is the ability to make choices. That's what BU is all about, getting a liberal arts education so you can pursue whatever your dreams may be. There is no dream that cannot be strived for.

### *If elected, would you be leaving Bucknell?*

**D:** This was a very difficult decision, but because being in Congress would be such a phenomenal challenge, I think I would. I am so concerned with where we are headed that I would be willing to leave so that I could make a change on the larger scale.

*Note: Dr. Stechshulte's answers have been paraphrased. They are not direct quotes.*

*Update: Dr. Stechshulte successfully gathered enough signatures and will be on the ballot in November.*



# All the President's Cars...

*Another case of misallocation of funds at Bucknell University*



The Catalyst Collective has been working for a living wage for Bucknell's support staff for three years and counting. The administration, in the meantime, continues to allege the simple fact that Bucknell University does not possess the necessary funds to implement a wage floor of \$9 per hour.

Now, I am not a financial guru, and I do not have access to messy innards of the University's financial archives, and so I cannot claim with *absolute* certainty that we have the means to provide a living wage. But, I do have eyes. And with these eyes I have the all-too-uncommon "superpower" to observe the everyday forms of wasteful and frivolous spending.

Because President Steffen Rogers, by virtue of his job description, is required to finagle funds and donations for this University, he is therefore assured a new car (at the University's expense) every so-many-miles. Although this may appear to be an unnecessary expense, especially when one's salary exceeds \$200,000, President Rogers asserts that his car is his "home on the road," and is essential for his activities. That is, it is his home away from home, the bill for which also happens to be paid by the University.

So in light of our current financial woes, you can understand how pleased I was to hear that President Rogers announced that he had decided to forgo the new vehicle he was scheduled to receive for the 2003-2004 academic year.

But unfortunately a nasty rumor surfaced that, in light of his decision to retire at the end of the 2003-2004 academic year, Rogers purchased a new car at the University's expense anyways.

So we at *The Catalyst* decided to do a little investigative reporting, a little sleuthing, Nancy Drew style. Having not only eyes, but noses as well, we smelled a story afoot.

When questioned about this discrepancy, President Rogers (after repeatedly rescheduling) stated that he had kept his promise for one year. His old car, however, was no longer reliable for distance traveling due to an unidentified electronic problem. You know what I would do if that happened? I would summon the "warranty fairy," who would then stick it to the dealership.

For his new vehicle the President chose a black sports utility vehicle, the same model of car he previously owned. However it might seem a bit suspicious that the new car is virtually indistinguishable from the old one. We didn't have time to ask his favorite color, but perhaps it is black—you know, the color of *being devious*. Not my choice of color, but to each his own.

Except when it is not his own. It is the University's. I am somewhat skeptical of his intentions, just as I am curious as to why he would purchase the exact same type of car that had previously troubled him with "unidentified electronic problems." Even if it were only a harmless proclivity for black SUVs, we might want to consider another issue.

We have been informed that President Rogers, after claiming that his car was unsafe to drive, purchased *the very same vehicle* from the University. That is to say, he currently has two black SUVs, one that is funded by University money, and one with electronic problems, which he has purchased from the University.

Now, I'm no logician either, but it seems to me that, in light of the financial situation, President Rogers' purchase *kind of undermines his promise not to!*

I can't speak for the students and the faculty on this recent expenditure, but I can say that I find it not only unacceptable but also reprehensible that University funds are spent in this manner, while they

say it is not feasible to allocate the funds for a living wage for University staff.

I am aware of the fact that \$30,000 could not possibly generate a living wage for the entire support staff. Although it may in fact appear otherwise, I am not naïve, and I do not believe this one-time expense in the name of inordinate and excessive luxury would increase staff salaries a noticeable amount.

Perhaps in this case the University could learn from the students a bit about being frugal. If I spent money with the same zeal that the University does, with expenditures such as this one (perhaps on a much smaller scale), in no time I would be completely broke—just as the University (apparently) is now!

With a bit of financial scrutiny here and a dash of reallocation of resources there, the University could provide for a living wage, thereby allowing *all* of the Bucknell extended family to provide for their families in no time! And without hiking tuition either!

I may sound cynical about the University's statement that it would seriously consider the 2002 faculty recommendation for the immediate implementation of the living wage, but I am not altogether disappointed. The administration has organized a committee to phase in the living wage and has created a system for worker complaints to be directed to those other than their own supervisors.

Although these are excellent recommendations in theory, they have not proven successful. Did you know that within the living wage committee, there is only one true living wage supporter? With lackluster support for progress, it is no wonder why it is taking so long.

The committee has decreased the time in which an individual must wait before receiving a living wage to four years, but unfortunately this only applies to full time Bucknell employees who would have normally come close to reaching a living wage salary in four years of employment anyways.

Despite these obvious flaws, the administration claims that the support staff is satisfied with this progress, as indicated by the decreased rate of turnover. So with this in mind, I present a challenge to all those who are reading this article and support a living wage for Bucknell workers: talk to the support staff. Talk to the custodial workers, to the dining services workers, etc.

Don't take the administration's statement as fact. Ask them the questions that the administration doesn't care to ask. Are they satisfied with these changes? Can they support their families? I guarantee you, the opinion of the staff will not align with that of the administration.

The support staff workers are not happy, and will not be until they get a living wage. It might not be coming their way—we all know of the tendency of some "higher ups" to break promises. ◀

see?

At a time when the Bush administration is finally feeling the repercussions of its self-serving war on Iraq, and its controversial signing of a privatization of Medicare bill, it's is easy to see how the administration is now beginning to feel a bit uneasy about its prospects of staying in office...

These days, certain Democratic nominees for president are being criticized for not having enough experience in the international relations arena. What is less known is that our own President, to whom we attribute the largest defense budget compared to all other countries *combined* was quoted in his election campaign as saying "I'm not going to play like I've been a person who's spent hours involved with foreign policy."

He also promised to cut back on "nation-building" projects (do the words *Afghanistan* and *Iraq* bring anything to mind?) as well as international economic aid (currently, the US spends only one tenth of one percent of its budget on foreign aid).

Needless to say, September 11th rocked the administration and the nation. Within a year, Bush, who had said that United States should be "humble," declared a war on Iraq.

Bush assured the public that Iraq, under the rule of Saddam Hussein, was verifiably linked to terrorist groups. He stated in his State of the Union address in 2003 that Iraq was trying to obtain enriched uranium in Africa.

In his National Security doctrine, Bush reserved the right to launch a pre-emptive attack on any state posing a threat to the United States and would do so with or without the consent or approval from the United Nations or our closest allies.

Recently, David Kay, Washington's chief weapons inspector resigned, but not before declaring that Iraq had no significant stockpiles of chemical or biological weapons before the brazen attack began in March.

Now Bush is even being criticized by his own party because of his flawed statements concerning Iraq. It is now obvious to everyone that Iraq did not have the means to be a threat to the United States. Besides showing the world that the United States can do whatever it wants, whenever it wants, the Bush administration has shown even our closest allies that it will disregard any international treaties it does not see fit for U.S. interests.

Among some of the treaties the administration rejected were the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention, the nuclear weapons Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the International Criminal Court,

# The George W. Bush Years: Memoirs of a Failed Presidency

the convention on banning landmines, the U.N. conference on small arms, and the Kyoto accord on global warming.

After first attracting the world's sympathy for the United States after September 11<sup>th</sup>, the Bush administration managed to turn the tides of resentment toward the U.S. once again, displayed in a March 2003 Pew Research Center for the People and Press poll of comparisons of foreign attitudes toward the U.S. and the Bush administration in July 2002 and March 2003. The "unfavorable" opinion of the U.S. in Britain went from 16% to 40%, in Germany from 35% to 71%, in Russia from 33% to 69%, and Turkey from 55% to 84%.

On Monday, February 1, Bush submitted a \$2.4 trillion budget. Staying true to the Bush Doctrine, there is a call for an increase in military spending of \$26.5 billion to \$401.7 billion. Besides this increase, the new budget also calls for a cut in domestic spending (could we expect any less?) and claims that it will reduce the deficit. Which, we will remember, was incurred by Bush's tax cuts—or rather, tax shifts from the rich to the poor—over the past three years.

There is no surprise that social programs like Medicare have already seen a decline with the new Medicare bill targeted to strengthen the private medical industry, signed on December 8, 2003. The new bill, offering drug benefits and private health plans to the elderly and disabled people is now estimated to cost \$530 billion over 10 years, or one-third more than the price proposed when

Congress passed the legislation, which has infuriated both Republicans and Democrats. The increase in cost goes to the number of Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in maintenance organizations and other private health plans as well as an increase in Medicare payments to private health plans. When it comes down to it, these private plans will cost more money than the traditional fee-for-service Medicare program.

While Bush continues to support his agenda the majority of the world is suffering from it. The tax cuts enacted by this administration have gained him popularity from the rich of our country by shifting the tax burden from the wealthy to the middle and lower classes of society. By eliminating taxes on investment income (almost all paid by the wealthy), he is creating the need for a consumption or sales tax (paid by the middle and lower class) instead of an income tax.

By creating the Clear Skies Initiative in February 2002, Bush undermined the Clean Air Act of the 1970s, created to limit harmful emissions from oil refineries, power plants, and other industrial facilities.

Compared to the Clean Air Act, it at least doubled emissions of harmful chemicals such as sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, and mercury.

Even his proposal of \$15 billion in 2003 towards combating AIDS has proven to be solely for Bush and his special interests. Of the \$15 billion, \$10 billion was new money while \$5 billion had already been allocated for AIDS relief. Only \$450 million was spent in the first year. Only twelve African countries plus Haiti and Guyana were included; 36 African countries, some of which were the most affected by AIDS, were not included under the plan.

The Christian right, which Bush prioritized ahead of AIDS prevention, succeeded when, in January 2002, Bush eliminated funding of the United Nations Population Fund. This successful program working for HIV prevention and family planning was cut off from U.S. funds because it may have funded or advocated abortion. The citizens of the United States have to make a decision in this pivotal election year.

Will we continue to watch the Bush administration make these demands of our nation? Do we want the rest of the world to continue to disapprove of our actions, or should we make a change in the way we deal with foreign affairs?

I think we'd be fortunate if George W. Bush could join the ranks of the "forgettable presidents," along with James Garfield, Chester Arthur, and Grover Cleveland, but in reality "Dubya's" name will live in infamy, so to speak, as the man who seriously disenfranchised us, our children, and our children's children, while squandering the good will of the world. ◀

# FREE TRADE

## Good for People

## or for Trade?

Free trade: it's a phrase we often hear talked about on the news and by our politicians. It's commonly touted as the hope for the future and is seen as a benevolent byproduct of globalization. Free trade brings nations closer together, promotes growth and reduces poverty in third world countries, creates a stronger and more vibrant global economy, ensures fair and even trading among countries, and provides better protection for the environment. *Or at least that's what we're led to believe.*

Free trade is a brainchild of the neoliberal school of economic thought that mandates that the best and fastest way to build up the global economy is to leave economic progress exclusively in the hands of the world market. This approach sounds great in theory, but in reality is deeply flawed. In today's marketplace, free trade is used as a tool by rich, powerful countries (such as the United States and the European Union) to promote their economic interests abroad, often taking advantage of third world countries.

Third world countries are characterized by a weak economy, which means that these countries have a much smaller resource base from which to work. This lack of a good resource base, in turn, creates weak governments that are easily preyed upon by the rich, developed countries eager to expand their spheres of economic influence, and to find areas of cheap offshore manufacturing for multinational corporations (MNCs).

Free trade regulations allow these MNCs to come into third world countries where they take advantage of the cheap labor prices by paying their workers, on average \$1/day (which, incidentally, isn't even enough to allow the workers to feed themselves, let alone their children). In addition, the lax environmental and resource protection laws in these same countries allow the MNCs to use insecticides, herbicides, fertilizers, and other chemicals that are illegal in the U.S. because of their health risks, discharge toxic substances into

the ground, air, and water, and devastate the natural resource base with unsustainable deforestation, agriculture, and mining. Not surprisingly, multinational corporations are lobbying hard for more free trade agreements in order to get access to a greater number of third world countries which they can use for their own profit.

One of these trade agreements was the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, that was passed in 1994 under the Clinton Administration. NAFTA is an agreement between the United States, Canada, and Mexico that mandates 'free trade' between the three countries. You may be asking yourself, well, if it allows free trade between three neighboring countries it's a good thing right? **WRONG**

There are some interesting inequalities built into NAFTA that you won't hear about from our government or on the news. Although NAFTA stands for the North American Free Trade

comply with these changes. An example of this occurred in 1999. Under Chapter 12 of NAFTA, which regulates cross-border trade between the three countries, trucking industries in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico were given cross-border access to all parts of the aforementioned countries. However, due to extensive lobbying by the Brotherhood of Teamsters, a powerful American union, Mexican truckers were denied access to the United States by our government who cited 'safety concerns' as its reason for not allowing the truckers into the U.S. Doesn't exactly sound like *Free Trade*, does it?

In addition to the legal asymmetries inherent in NAFTA, the agricultural problems it has created are enormous. Under NAFTA, the protection for agricultural products that exists for most countries was removed, and agriculture was left to the mercy of the market. Historically speaking, the way most countries' economies have grown after World War II was through small-scale agriculture in the private sector. Additionally, almost no country, even developed countries, has ever left its agricultural sector to the mercy of the market. Food production is the base of a country's economy and subsistence, and is simply too important and fragile to be placed in such a situation; yet this is exactly what was done under NAFTA.

One must wonder why the U.S. would want to liberalize the agricultural sector in such a way. The answer is quite simple: *food surpluses*. Since 1989 the U.S. has boasted the world's largest surplus of food. According to the United States Dairy Association, in 1989 the U.S. had 86.1 of the 121.9 million tons of the world's corn that could not be sold, 15.4 of the 18.2 million tons of the world's sorghum, and 5.9 of the 30.6 million tons of barley.

The U.S. government needed a way to get rid of the huge surplus, and decided the best way was to open the markets of other countries to U.S. agricultural products. A problem arises, however, when the Mexican economy is flooded with heavily subsidized U.S. crops, putting the small, poor, rural Mexican farmers out of business who cannot compete against the cheap crops from the U.S. Incidentally, the U.S. government granted an average of \$21,000 in subsidies to each full-time farmer in 1999 versus the Mexican government's \$1000



*Agreement*, this is only the case in the U.S.; in Mexico NAFTA is a treaty (as the Spanish name for NAFTA implies) meaning that it constitutes supreme law – above Mexico's federal laws. What this means is that the U.S. can make changes to NAFTA as it sees fit, and Mexico, because it is bound by law, must

# Fairness in a Free Market

Do you know what Fair Trade means? You may have realized that Fair Trade products, from coffee to t-shirts, are more expensive when sold right next to their competitors in the store. Actually, that is probably why you did not choose to purchase the fair trade item over the generic. Hopefully,

this abbreviated explanation of the fair trade market will encourage you to choose the Fair Trade product next time you are in the store and inspire you to seek out the small fair trade symbol on your everyday purchases.

Unfortunately, the way that the free market operates,

there is no consideration of the people involved in production and prices are determined by traditional laws of supply and demand. A Fair Trade certified product ensures the purchaser that the laborers that worked to plant, grow, and/or put together that item were paid enough money to not only meet the cost of production but to meet their basic needs as well. According to Oxfam, last year the free market price for a pound of coffee was between \$.20-\$.30, which is less than the cost to the farmer to grow it; the Fair Trade price was \$1.26 per pound. That \$1 per pound is the difference between a family losing their land and dying of starvation and the possibility of sustaining the business to support a family.

Cooperatives are another way that communities have begun to combat the free market's disregard for laborers and producers. The most important difference between a cooperative and a generic company is that the former has no "boss" to make decisions based on his/her personal profit.

Instead, the workers own the production means and make decisions to benefit the whole. While this does not necessarily guarantee that the employees are making a living wage all the time, it does ensure that they are receiving the maximum benefit from their hard work possible. The cooperative set-up, fortunately for you the consumer, does not usually entail a higher cost for the end product.

Though the explanation of the Fair Trade market and cooperatives presented here is basic, there is a wealth of information available to expand your horizons, including the histories of those countries' citizens who are most affected by the free market. Meanwhile, here at Bucknell, it has been made easier for you to help make a difference. The Bucknell Brigade group that travels to Nicaragua was instrumental in establishing and supporting a Fair Trade coffee market connection and a women's sewing cooperative; the fruits of those labors are available for purchase here on campus. The Fair Trade and cooperative markets everywhere could use your support. Educating yourself and others is the first step, but action must ensue for the world to change for the better. ◀

according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Because of the imbalance in subsidies, U.S. corn can be sold in Mexico for \$151/ton, whereas Mexican corn costs \$249/ton. This price difference has resulted in the complete collapse of the rural Mexican agricultural economy – resulting in the loss of countless jobs, creating poverty and starvation in many rural areas.

One of the major reasons that Mexico agreed to NAFTA was because they were promised unmatched economic growth and prosperity. In reality, however, under NAFTA, Mexico has experienced the lowest growth rates in GDP per capita in its *entire modern history*. Furthermore, even this poor growth came at an extreme cost to the environment and natural resources of Mexico. When the economic growth of a country is calculated against the cost of the growth, from damage done to the environment and from resource use, you arrive at a figure called the Ecological Gross Domestic Product.

Under NAFTA, Mexico has experienced an Ecological Gross Domestic Product of -4.22% per capita (according to the Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática - INEGI), signifying that Mexico's natural resources are being used and the environment is being deteriorated at an unprecedented rate. In 1993, before NAFTA was ratified, both the U.S. and Mexican Presidents widely asserted that NAFTA would enhance Mexico's ability to address environmental problems – specifically, that Mexico would have more resources accessible for environmental cleanup, raising environmental standards, and reducing possible environmental impacts from international trade and investment.

This has certainly not been the case in Mexico since NAFTA was ratified. Unfortunately, when the economy is left up to market forces, profit is the primary driver, and this often comes at a cost to the environment. Traditionally, government regulation and laws have been used to prevent environmental degradation, but NAFTA fails miserably in this regard. Another confounding factor is that, in order to compete with the comparably huge economies of Canada and the U.S., Mexico has used its weak environmental protection laws to increase its competitiveness. Again, NAFTA was supposed to prevent this, but it has not. According to INEGI, deterioration and contamination of the land, water, and air have worsened under NAFTA by 31.5%, 16.0%, and 18.3%, respectively.

Not only is NAFTA severely impacting the environment, agriculture, and economy of Mexico, but millions of Mexicans are without jobs as a result of NAFTA economic strategy. According to INEGI, under NAFTA (from 1993-2000), over 6.2 million jobs were created, while the working class grew by over 10 million, which resulted in a 40% deficit of over 3.9 million jobs. In addition, the jobs that do exist are very low paying (often under the legal minimum), and workers lack any sort of benefits.

Clearly this neoliberal model of 'free trade' that is currently in use is simply disastrous for other countries, and if we ever hope to form a strong global economy where poverty is actively combated and the majority of people have good quality jobs, then we must move away from such a devastating model of international trade and economic thought.



SWEATER-MAKERS

Think this problem starts and ends with NAFTA? Think again. The Bush Administration has been actively pursuing their goal of a Free Trade of the Americas Agreement, which fortunately has been stalled by strong resistance in South America. However, under intense pressure by the Bush Administration, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Costa Rica are being coerced into signing the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) which will most certainly have a devastating effect on these countries' economies, environments and social situations. The social, economic, and environmental implications of the proposed CAFTA will be discussed in a follow-up article appearing in the next issue of The Catalyst. ▶

# A Word on Free Speech

*How much does free speech matter when you don't have enough to eat?*

Some (bad) press has been introduced on our campus crying out for free speech as a basic human right. The “speech code,” or anti-harassment policy that is one step Bucknell has taken to ensure the protection of those commonly discriminated against is now decried as oppression—as another way the University wishes to derail our freedoms and deny intelligent discourse in our glory of academia.

Funny how full criticism of the University is allowed without attempts to suppress it. Interesting also how national news forums have been held, letters to campus publications, local, state and national newspapers have somehow been alerted to this travesty of civil rights, and demonstrations have been conducted on campus grounds. Isn't it strange how we have no free speech at Bucknell?

All this talk about rights of students at Bucknell and the freedom to say what you want is a more complex issue than what has been presented so far. Freedom of speech is nothing without the ability and comfort to be able to do so. Historically, those who have been persecuted and denied the opportunity

to express themselves have been individuals of vision or of controversy; of ideas radical beyond their times. Risk was taken in speaking out. Those bold enough to persevere have certainly had an impact, for better or for worse.

At Bucknell, history has indeed proven an accurate marker. When campus students shout out for their right to do so, I wonder if they include campus employees in their struggle. It would seem that for some, they can take their freedom of speech to the unemployment line. Freedom of speech when a job is at stake is not nearly so important as freedom from want and from poverty...or don't those count as human rights too? It would seem that some ardent struggles for freedom of speech as a basic human right fail to take into consideration the daily hardships of people who would likely agree with them, but have other battles to fight. Saying what you think and feel is a very human form of expression, but what about creating an environment where it is conducive to do so? Where you don't have to worry about losing your job for unionizing. When you can choose

the political affiliation that best matches your beliefs and don't have to worry about not being in the running for that promotion. When you don't have to be afraid of an eviction because you were laid off for “expressing yourself” and can't make the rent. When your kids are receiving adequate health care and food because you make a living wage. The ability to write that letter to the editor isn't nearly so urgent when you are making minimum wage and have a family to feed. There are priorities.

Unless freedom of speech is to be forever seen as a less important right when basic survival is at stake, the quest for personal freedom and expression should be synonymously seen as a fight for economic freedom. What is really important, after all? The right for anyone to publish a campus newspaper, or for the people taking care of them at their home away from home to make a decent living? The bottom line at Bucknell is that some of us have rights and some of us don't even come close. The Bucknell “family” is estranging its members. Let us then recognize the most basic of human rights. True freedom of speech will never be accomplished without the inclusion of all members of humanity—including the poor. There are more important rights than the right to whine and offend. ◀

## Alcoholism and Accountability

*It's time Bucknell students took a hard look at their alcohol dependence*

I went to an open forum a week ago to learn more about a presidential candidate. Shortly after the scholars asked their questions, the unthinkable happened. The topic of alcohol abuse presented itself. I don't know about the rest of us but I am beginning to think that the outside world is looking at Bucknell as a school for alcoholics. If you examine the January issue of the Bucknellian you'll see that the leading topic in the “Public Safety Logs” is none other than alcohol abuse. Though that seemed important to me I could not look past the front page and recognize one of the faces America has come to love. After reading and talking to students involved in planning “Chrysalis” I learned that James Brown's invitation is now being reviewed. It seemed as though the

university was holding him accountable for his image. I heard a leader say to his followers once, “If you are going to hold me accountable for my actions why can't I hold you accountable for yours.” If you were to see Steffen Rogers in the newspaper for Public drunkenness, I truly believe in my heart that you and your parents would have him out of here before the next day broke. There would be no way that you would give \$36,000 to an institution with that image. So, if that is true why can't he hold you accountable for your actions?

Accountability is an age old principle that achieves wonders for the quality of people, establishments and their image. Accountability is not hiding or covering

up sexual assault, public drunkenness or poor living wages for Bucknell service employees. Accountability is exposing those things and dealing with them as family. I hear people often say that there is nothing to do in Lewisburg so drinking is a necessity to have fun. If that truly is your excuse I question your morals and dedication to the Bucknell family. I know Coach Flannery and Coach Fedorjaka could use extra support at the basketball games. At the basketball games you can act wild, dance, dress up, meet new people and make our university look desirable. Oh yeah, the next time you have something to protest stand out in front of the Bison and tell whoever is running it that those people that serve us day in and day out are underpaid. ◀

# Sweat-X

## *Clothes with a conscience*

The Los Angeles Garment District is the largest center of apparel production in the nation. With its incessant stream of desperate illegal immigrants willing to work under any conditions, what more could a mass-producing manufacturer want? In a time when globalization is increasing the flight of companies to countries in which the government's last concern is protecting human rights such as Honduras, China, and Vietnam, the LA Garment district continues to grow.

Everyone is quite aware of the social injustices committed unto the people of the underdeveloped nations of the world by the ever-expanding multinational corporations. One thing you may not know is that these violations occur in our country as well, in the Los Angeles Garment District where both state and federal inspectors constantly find violations of wage, hour and safety laws at work sites. Before April of 2002 Anna Acevedo, a Salvadoran immigrant, was paid \$7.25 an hour in cash. On paper, it seems fine but, workers often received less. This says nothing of the fact that \$7.25 is nowhere near a living wage anywhere in Los Angeles.

Many people at Bucknell and around the country believe that there is no reason to fight for change. Why people do not choose to fight against this cause is baffling. Some people argue for the need for cheap labor in order for the company to continue expanding. Others choose not to fight because they do not believe one person can make a difference. On April 9, 2002, a tiny group of people who did believe took an enormous step in changing the character of clothing manufacturing forever by acting, not reacting. In the middle of the LA



Garment District lies a company that stands for "clothes with a conscience." Ben Cohen of Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream is the founder of Sweat-X clothing. Cohen is one man who believes he can make a difference, "We aim to put the lie to the myth that it's impossible to produce clothing at a competitive price and have a good quality of work life." After more than a year in operation, Sweat-X has proven to be quite the alternative.

Producing clothes to sell to college bookstores and high-end sports shops, Sweat-X is run by a former banker who took a 50% pay cut when joining the company. It is staffed by workers who earn \$8.50 an hour with benefits and

profit sharing. One of the workers is Anna Acevedo, the immigrant from El Salvador. The company was backed by \$1.5 million from Cohen's Hot Fudge Social Venture Fund. The company benefits from high productivity because all workers, whether they work the machines in the factory or manage the webpage, are part-owners of the business. It is a company rule that no manager can earn more than eight times the pay of the lowest paid production worker. All workers are unionized and represented by a union chosen by them all together: the Union of Needletrades, Industrials, and Textile Employees (UNITE!) which was founded in 1995 in a merger of the nation's two oldest apparel unions. At this time, you probably remain skeptical as to how this idealistic crusade could ever work, but this company was actually inspired by the Mondragon Industrial Cooperatives in the Basque Region of Spain which has operated successfully since the 1950s.

Cohen and his colleagues have created a social paradigm to quite possibly answer some of our questions on what to do about the exploitation of people in Los Angeles and even moreso all around the world. Although this is quite a step, everyone who is concerned must step in for what they believe. In 1998 a student organization, United States Against Sweatshops, was created "fighting for sweatshop-free working conditions and workers' rights." It has now accumulated 200 chapters on university campuses around the world, working to ensure that clothing bearing university logos is produced by companies offering a living wage and fair working conditions. Nobody deserves to live a life denied of his or her inherent rights. The truth remains that no matter how much one yells and screams about injustices, people will still run to Wal-Mart to purchase those cheap pairs of sweats or that package of three t-shirts produced in a country where workers are forced to work with limited bathroom breaks, without conversation among the workers, and no overtime despite the excessive hours required of them. Like Cohen, every person must feel like she can make a difference by joining organizations, being a conscious consumer and purchasing from companies such as Sweat X, or remaining knowledgeable about the issues at hand. ◀

# RESUMÉ

George W. Bush (Dubya)  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

## PAST WORK EXPERIENCE

- Ran for congress and lost.
- Produced a Hollywood slasher B movie.
- Bought an oil company, but couldn't find any oil in Texas; company went bankrupt shortly after I sold all my stock.
- Bought the Texas Rangers baseball team in a sweetheart deal that took land using taxpayer money.  
Biggest move: Traded Sammy Sosa to the Chicago White Sox.
- With father's help (and his name) was elected Governor of Texas.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN PREVIOUS POSITIONS

- Changed pollution laws for power and oil companies and made Texas the most polluted state in the Union.
- Replaced Los Angeles with Houston as the most smog-ridden city in America. Cut taxes and bankrupted the Texas government to the tune of billions in borrowed money.
- Set record for most executions by any governor in American history.
- Became president after losing the popular vote by over 500,000 votes, with the help of my father's appointments to the Supreme Court.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AS PRESIDENT

- Attacked and took over two countries.
- Spent the surplus and bankrupted the treasury.
- Shattered record for biggest annual deficit in history.
- Set economic record for most private bankruptcies filed in any 12-month period.
- Set all-time record for biggest drop in the history of the stock market.
- First president in decades to execute a federal prisoner.
- First president in U.S. history to enter office with a criminal record.
- First year in office set the all-time record for most days on vacation by any president in U.S. history.
- After taking the entire month of August off for vacation, presided over the worst security failure in U.S. history.
- Set the record for more campaign fundraising trips than any other president in U.S. history.
- In my first two years in office over 2 million Americans lost their job.
- Cut unemployment benefits for more out of work Americans than any president in U.S. history.
- Set the all-time record for most foreclosures in a 12-month period.
- Appointed more convicted criminals to administration positions than any president in U.S. history.
- Set the record for the least amount of press conferences than any president since the advent of television.
- Signed more laws and executive orders amending the Constitution than any president in U.S. history.
- Presided over the biggest energy crises in U.S. history and refused to intervene when corruption was revealed.
- Presided over the highest gasoline prices in U.S. history and refused to use the national reserves as past presidents have.
- Cut healthcare benefits for war veterans.
- Set the all-time record for most people worldwide to simultaneously take to the streets to protest me (15 million people), shattering the record for protest against any person in the history of mankind.
- Dissolved more international treaties than any president in U.S. history.
- My presidency is the most secretive and unaccountable of any in U.S. history.
- Members of my cabinet are the richest of any administration in U.S. history (the 'poorest' multimillionaire, Condoleezza Rice, has an Exxon oil tanker named after her).
- First president in U.S. history to have all 50 states of the Union simultaneously go bankrupt.
- Presided over the biggest corporate stock market fraud of any market in any country in the history of the world.
- First president in U.S. history to order a U.S. attack and military occupation of a sovereign nation.
- Created the largest government department bureaucracy in the history of the United States.
- Set the all-time record for biggest annual budget spending increases, more than any president in U.S. history.

- First president in U.S. history to have the United Nations remove the U.S. from the human rights commission.
- First president in U.S. history to have the United Nations remove the U.S. from the elections monitoring board.
- Removed more checks and balances, and had the least amount of congressional oversight of any presidential administration in U.S. history.
- Rendered the entire United Nations irrelevant.
- Withdrew from the World Court of Law.
- Refused to allow inspectors access to U.S. prisoners of war and by default no longer abided by the Geneva Conventions.
- First president in U.S. history to refuse United Nations election inspectors (during the 2002 U.S. elections).
- All-time U.S. (and world) record holder for most corporate campaign donations.
- My biggest lifetime campaign contributor presided over one of the largest corporate bankruptcy frauds in world history (Kenneth Lay, former CEO of Enron Corporation).
- Spent more money on polls and focus groups than any president in U.S. history.
- First president in U.S. history to unilaterally attack a sovereign nation against the will of the United Nations and the world community.
- First president to run and hide when the U.S. came under attack (and then lied saying the enemy had the code to Air Force 1).
- First U.S. president to establish a secret shadow government.
- Took the biggest world sympathy for the U.S. after 9/11, and in less than a year made the U.S. the most resented country in the world (possibly the biggest diplomatic failure in U.S. and world history).
- With a policy of 'disengagement' created the most hostile Israeli-Palestine relations in at least 30 years.
- First U.S. president in history to have a majority of the people of Europe (71%) view my presidency as the biggest threat to world peace and stability.
- First U.S. president in history to have the people of South Korea more threatened by the U.S. than their immediate neighbor, North Korea.
- Changed US policy to allow convicted criminals to be awarded government contracts.
- Set all-time record for number of administration appointees who violated U.S. law by not selling huge investments in corporations bidding for government contracts.
- Failed to fulfill my pledge to get Osama Bin Laden 'dead or alive.'
- Failed to capture the anthrax killer who tried to murder the leaders of our country at the United States Capital building. After 18 months I have no leads and zero suspects.
- In the 18 months following the 9/11 attacks I successfully prevented any public investigation into the biggest security failure in the history of the United States.
- Removed more freedoms and civil liberties for Americans than any other president in U.S. history.
- In a little over two years created the most divided country in decades, possibly the most divided the U.S. has ever been since the Civil War.
- Entered office with the strongest economy in U.S. history and in less than two years turned every single economic category heading straight down.

### **RECORDS AND REFERENCES**

- At least one conviction for drunk driving in Maine (Texas driving record has been erased and is not available).
- AWOL from National Guard and deserted the military during a time of war.
- Refused to take drug test or even answer any questions about drug use.
- All records of my tenure as governor of Texas have been spirited away to my father's library, sealed in secrecy and unavailable for public view.
- All records of any SEC investigations into my insider trading or bankrupt companies are sealed in secrecy and unavailable for public view.
- All minutes of meetings for any public corporation I served on the board are sealed in secrecy and unavailable for public view.
- Any records or minutes from meetings I (or my VP) attended regarding public energy policy are sealed in secrecy and unavailable for public review.
- For personal references please speak to my daddy or uncle James Baker (they can be reached at their offices of the Carlyle Group for war-profiteering).

*Source: Kelley Kramer*

# NEW SURVEY INDICATES BUCC MEMBERS OPPOSE THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE<sup>1</sup>

By Sasha List and Benedict Arnold<sup>2</sup>

SAN FRANCISCO—A new survey by the Catalyst proves conclusively that Bucknell University Conservatives Club (BUCC) members oppose the advancement of colored people, indicating that they are all probably hopelessly biased against all minorities.<sup>3</sup>

This phenomenon has been termed by researchers, “The Aryan Effect.” According to records of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) not a single BUCC supporter was a actually a member of the organization. Not one! Can you believe it? In other surveys, it was discovered that no BUCC members belonged to the US Institute of Peace, People for

the Ethical Treatment of Animals, and Earth First!, indicating additional biases against peace, animals, and the Earth.

Various interviews conducted to get responses to this startling news elicited some controversy, however. In one exchange, Professor Karl Marx argued, “Just because BUCC people aren’t members of the NAACP doesn’t mean they are biased against minorities. That would be like suggesting just because most faculty members aren’t Republicans that they are biased against conservatives. Now who would suggest something outrageous like that?”<sup>7</sup>

1. Note, this article is not true. It is satire, SA-TIRE. That means it’s intended only to poke fun at certain members of the BUCC who continue to say silly things about this campus and the people on it. However, the nasty letters we received from some slower BUCC members (let’s just call them “special”) in response to past satire indicates that we need to explain all our satire much more clearly to them.<sup>4</sup>
2. These are not real names. The first is a play on “socialist” and the second is the name of a traitor from the Revolutionary War. The names were chosen to lampoon the fact that some BUCC members like to label all of their critics “socialists” or “un-American.”
3. No survey was actually conducted. This is made up, although it might be true. Who knows.
4. We don’t really mean that they’re slow. And we certainly don’t think they’re special. It’s a joke.<sup>5</sup>
5. Yes we do.<sup>6</sup>
6. We’re just kidding.<sup>9</sup> No we don’t.
7. This is a not-so-subtle reference to the extremely silly BUCC faculty ideology survey, which was so badly done the first time that it had to be redone, and it’s still silly even after being redone.<sup>8</sup> This survey indicated a hopelessly leftist bias on college campuses (including Bucknell), and therefore a leftist plot (to take over the world?). Speaking of which, to join the mailing list for “Sinister Leftist Plot” (SLP) contact The Catalyst advisory board. Our meetings are at the stroke of midnight on the new moon. Bring a pint of blood or a dessert of some sort.
8. We don’t mean it was silly. What we really mean is that it was stupid and offensive.
9. *Or are we?*

## ADDENDUM:

Concerning the letters to the editors (which appear on Page 13), evidently Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Hanlon didn’t understand the deeper purpose of the Sasha List articles in the last Catalyst, articles to which I contributed substantially.

They were intended as a caricature – of both BUCC and a knee-jerk, left-wing response to BUCC. Witness the author’s name, a play on “socialist.” The very name itself was chosen because of the silly attacks from BUCC on all forms of government intervention (creeping socialism, ooh, scary) and virtually all professors on campus (democrats and socialists and commies, oh my!). What has become apparent is (1) members of the BUCC don’t actually know what socialism is, they just like to use the word to call people names; and (2) since anyone who disagrees with them is an unpatriotic socialist anyway, it doesn’t matter who actually wrote the column because we’re so easily lumped together. So again, the moniker Sasha List was a play on words to point out some of the more absurd

attitudes of the BUCC towards professors and anti-war activists. The “views” were not intended to be taken literally. Rather, the purpose was to demonstrate the extent to which such caricatures are silly and offensive.

Why engage in such a caricature? As stated directly at in the Sasha List articles, this is exactly what writers for the Counterweight have done all too frequently to people they disagree with. According to one BUCC-sponsored talk, people on the left hate America. That is, of course, a ridiculous distortion and an overgeneralization. We might disagree with your vision of America, but that doesn’t mean we hate the country itself or the wonderful diversity of people that inhabit our country. Similarly, according to several articles in the Counterweight, Professors are hopelessly biased and your education is distorted because more professors are democrats than republicans. That is every bit as silly and offensive as anything in the Sasha List column.

-Geoff Schneider

# How Not to Take Everything Literally

And Other Observations

Rules and regulations for enjoyment of this publication:

**Incomplete Guide to Symbols and Metaphors**

light	=	knowledge
nose	=	peninsula
car	=	security
	=	wealth
	=	class
	=	boundless luxury
work	=	transcendental equivalent
pencil	=	phallus
pen	=	phallus
speech code	=	mother
George W. Bush	=	mortality
	=	rage
	=	cancer
university	=	mother
	=	knowledge
	=	'the Man'
living wage	=	hope
	=	emancipation
union	=	<del>communism</del>
	=	<del>world domination</del>
self	=	solipsism
cigar	=	cigar

1. Phonemes create words.
2. Words linked together create sentences.
3. Left to right, top to bottom.
4. Tylenol for headaches.

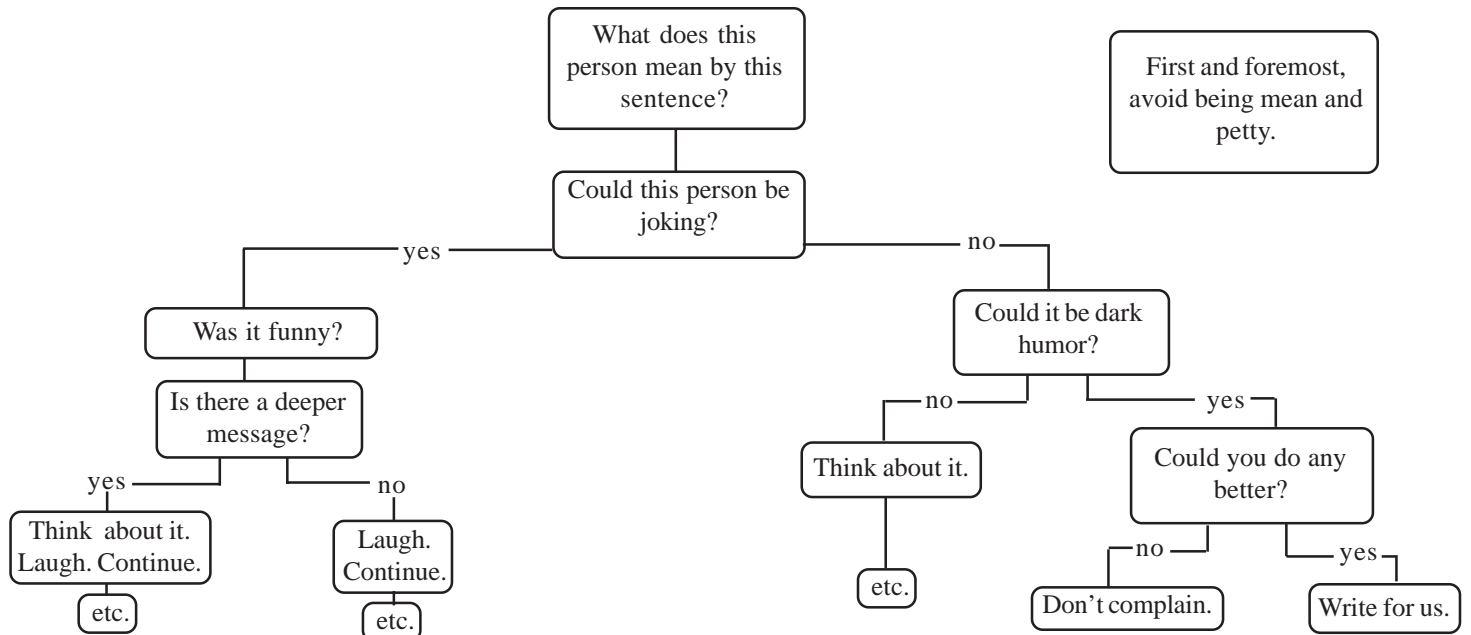
Now, this gets tricky:

5. Individual words have individual meanings, *BUT* sentences also have meanings. The meanings of the individual words together do not necessarily equate to the meaning of the sentence of the whole, as indicated by the following:

$$A + B + C = ABC? \text{ Not necessarily.}$$

6. *Tone* can sometimes be elusive, so we recommend following a procedure which can help you "get inside the head of the author." This is demonstrated in the following flow chart, which may be cut out and carried with you in your front pocket for easy access!

*Which brings us to...(turn page)*



First and foremost, avoid being mean and petty.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor(s):

While I do appreciate the shout out, it was certainly unnecessary.

I am well aware of my ability to call you out when you alienate the real people for whom you supposedly write. That said, I'm glad you were able to scrap something together, even if it is full of ad hominem and noticeably inferior to any other campus publication I have seen thus far.

Perhaps you should encourage the slew professors on your staff to help you out a little with layout and especially content.

Anyhow, I would like to address some points from Sacha List's page (I would cite a page number, but you don't have them). When Sacha lists (oh that works out nicely) several things that allegedly do not "conform to the conservative idea of what Pro-Americanism is,"

the first bullet states that "slavery was wrong...maybe we should do something to correct the consequences-that are still with us-of this horrible injustice."

Contrary to what you may think, conservatives do not think that one must be pro-slavery to be pro-American. I don't care if you criticize conservatives, but at least have the sense not to imply that conservatives favor slavery.

That is ridiculous, and you know it. Conservatives generally don't favor reparations for slavery. If that's your point, then make it without trying to call conservatives racists. Also, if the first amendment is "pesky" to you, then you are in the company of fascists more so than any conservative out there. Also, free speech for hate groups isn't a BUCC stance; it's a U.S. Supreme

Court stance. Lastly, athletes cannot be logically grouped with legacies and minority students in terms of admissions. Athletic ability is a talent just like scoring well on the SATs, or having good reading comprehension skills, or playing the violin. Athletic ability is merit. Skin color is not. Come to think of it, Sacha's whole page is full of logical inconsistencies and name-calling. Since I no longer work for the Counterweight, I would be glad to do an article on it for your next issue. I'd even do a poem.

best,

Aaron R. Hanlon

To the Editor:

Let me begin by saying that I applaud you and the BCEJ for publishing The Catalyst. As you might imagine, I am well acquainted with the difficulties of publishing an alternative campus paper, and I give you all the credit in the world for putting in the blood, sweat, and tears that it takes in order to make your voice heard. That said, when you make your voice heard, you need to do a better job making sure that your voice is telling the truth. Your publication sullied its a good name (and that of people like Josh Fisher, one of your staff members for whom I have an immense amount of personal respect) by publishing on page three some patently false and distorted claims regarding the beliefs of the Conservatives Club.

Worse yet, the person who made these claims did not have the decency or the courage to put his/her name on it; he/she operated under the pseudonym "Sacha List." What exactly I am referring to is the "Catalyst Infographic," which laid out two supposed BUCC stances on a particular issue and then offered the author's commentary. Your columnist has a right to his bigoted and backward comments, but your publication has a duty to its readers to make sure that things passed off as "BUCC stances" are, in fact, BUCC stances. You have failed in this duty, I am sorry to say, and in so doing allowed your columnist to comment on imaginary "BUCC stances."

First of all, the BUCC has no official stances. Any opinion expressed by a BUCC member, as The Counterweight clearly states in more than one place, is precisely that - the opinion of the member in question. Had your columnist done even the most elementary research on the BUCC,

he/she would have easily found this out. Even our "Staff Editorials" are signed by individual members who agree with them - they do not mean that, "The BUCC at large thinks this." As I have discussed with your former advisor, Professor Charles Sackrey, we specifically intend for a full diversity of opinion within the BUCC.

Worse yet, the "BUCC stances" in your publication are, in many cases, not even opinions expressed by BUCC members. If your columnist has some knowledge of such statements beyond mine, I'd love to hear it. In the meantime, I humbly suggest that your publication avoid accusing BUCC members of believing in, for example, "free speech for hate groups and for BUCC." This is a disgusting distortion of the position BUCC members have taken. Free speech is not "for" anyone, and we have never argued that it is. It's a basic human right - as Professor Alan Charles Kors, president of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, puts it, it is "a way of being human." Those of us who are fighting Bucknell's speech code believe in free speech foreveryone. One cannot, nor do we, believe in free speech for this group or that group. If you believe in it, you believe in giving it to everyone, period. Shame on you for allowing the pages of The Catalyst to insinuate otherwise. It is also inaccurate to assert, as your columnist did, that the BUCC does not believe peace protestors should have free speech. Rather, we used our free speech right to criticize the fact that "peace" protests were held after our troops were on the ground. Never did any of us call for those protestors to be censored in any way; we simply told them that we think they are wrong and that they should go home out of respect for our troops. They have the same

To the Editor:

We, the Incentive Committee for Dining Services, wish to respond to your recent article in the Catalyst, Vol.20 No.3.

We are merely a group of four hourly-waged employees trying to do something nice for our co-workers. Our hope is to help provide a more optimistic work climate. The Wooden Nickel Rewards Program was designed to promote this idea in an enjoyable way... encouraging employees to use sick days appropriately, and making them more aware of potential accidents.

We are not forcing anyone to participate in this program. They are free to pass their nickels along to a fellow worker, or simply ask that their name be taken off the list. It is not our intent to anger anyone; we are simply trying to encourage excitement and unity. We are definitely not "higher-up decision-makers." We do, however, have the General Manager of Dining Services approve our ideas.

We would encourage anyone to come and speak with us and to see what we are trying to accomplish. If you are interested in attending our next meeting, please don't hesitate to contact any one of the committee members.

The Incentive Committee,  
Kay Heimbach, Ken Lenig,  
Marian Estes, Cindy Berry

To the Incentive Committee:

*The Catalyst understands that the Wooden Nickel Reward Program was not necessarily initiated as a "higher up" administrative policy, and we mean no offense to the Incentive Committee. If we misdirected the reader into thinking the Wooden Nickel Rewards Program was such an administrative innovation, we regret doing so. We meant it in the rhetorical sense, "higher ups," "the Man" (just as we meant "administrator" to mean "one who administers things").*

*That having been said, Kay, was that a BMW I saw you driving? Miracle of German engineering, isn't it?*

*We firmly maintain that the Wooden Nickel Rewards Program is condescending. If you need further proof of this, reflect, as we have, on how the majority of the staff members in Dining Services perceive this program. In response to the article, "Wooden Nickel and Dimed: On Getting by at Bucknell University," we received many anonymous letters, emails, snail mail, and phone calls complimenting the article's tone and acuity.*

*Let us pose a few simple questions: is it wise to have staff members forego sick days--days when they should be at home recuperating--for that wooden nickel? Not that they would, try denying that there isn't pressure from the management to not take those sick days. Second, is it wise to motivate workers not to report accidents--accidents that may in fact require medical attention or even cause the worker to take*

*that sick day--for that wooden nickel? Probably not.*

*Since many "higher-ups" (remember, we mean that loosely) will never know first hand what it is like to work full days before going to a second job, then home, might we recommend "Nickel and Dimed: On (not) Getting by in America," from which this article got its namesake. Barbara Ehrenreich revealed that twelve million women were pushed into the labor market due to welfare reform, and other such programs, at wages less than half what is needed to pay the bills.*

*It's easy to talk in terms of theoretical abstractions (or wooden nickels for that matter) but the fact is that you can't get by on the wages that places such Bucknell pays, and these injustices are multiplied throughout our economic system. And until you rename it "The Daycare Rewards Program" or "The Health Care Rewards Program," we will continue to oppose it.*

*As Albert Einstein says, "The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." All we're saying is that they're not going to come, somehow, in the guise of wooden nickels either.*

*And as that is such, we therefore invite the members of the Incentive Committee and the management of Dining Services itself (hey, maybe the BUCC will come! It could be a party!) to attend one of our meetings and learn a bit about the Living Wage Campaign, because quite frankly, while wooden nickels are worth space in our "humor" section, they aren't worth our time.*

*The Catalyst Collective*

right to tell us they think we are wrong about a particular issue.

Your columnist's statements regarding affirmative action are similarly problematic. He/she accuses the BUCC of believing in "equal" treatment in admissions...except for legacies, athletes, and other groups we like." I know of no statement by BUCC members on this topic. We have brought in two speakers who have briefly addressed the issue of legacies, one in favor, one against. I would imagine that the breakdown within the BUCC membership is similar - some members, I know, argue that legacies and racial preferences are not comparable, as one is racial discrimination and one is not.

Others disagree, and that's fine. But the monolithic picture your columnist paints of BUCC members ("People named Coleman or Vaughan good, people darker than us bad") is overly simplistic and not based in fact. Finally, on the subject of foreign policy, your columnist accuses the BUCC of blindly supporting US foreign policy, including US actions in Saudi Arabia, Burma, Kuwait, and Equatorial Guinea. This accusation is apparently based on some BUCC members' support for the war in Iraq, which your columnist claims was based on our support for "freeing the Iraqi people from an oppressive dictator." But it does not follow that just because a person supports Operation Iraqi Freedom that he supports US policy in those other countries. I know of no statements by BUCC members on any of the other countries mentioned in the "Infographic" - how does your columnist know that we support what is going on there? (For instance, I personally disapprove of Bush's policy toward Saudi Arabia - but to be honest, I think there have been more important things to write about lately than Saudi Arabia.) Finally, it

is ridiculous to argue that the reason some of us supported the war in Iraq was "freeing the Iraqi people from an oppressive dictator." Certainly, this was a factor - for some, perhaps the overriding factor. But if you look at past Counterweight articles, I think it's clear that the risks Iraq posed to our security were paramount.

It deeply saddened me to see The Catalyst publish the above distortions and untruths regarding the BUCC. I hope that in the future your publication does a better job of living up to what it was under your predecessor as editor-in-chief, Mr. Fisher - that is, a publication that people like me could disagree with but still respect. You will deserve no one's respect if you continue publishing bogusness like the last issue's "Infographic."

I'm not going to sit here and tell you not to criticize the BUCC. Do so all you want - no group or individual should be exempt from criticism. Just stick to the facts; don't criticize us based on things we've never said. I can promise you that we will continue trying our hardest to do the same for you.

Cheers,  
Charles Mitchell

**GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?  
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