

Perspectives Page

EDITORIAL Power Of SGA

The bi-centennial, 1776 to 1976, our nation celebrates its 200th anniversary, our people and our leaders look at what we were then, what we are now, and predict what we'll be years from now.

Could our founding fathers have envisioned the United States as it is today? It's impossible to tell. We can conclude, though, with some degree of certainty, that one hope our founding fathers had was that the freedom, the voice our people have in the affairs of government, would never be silenced.

I'm not expressing my views as to whether or not we have accomplished and fulfilled the dreams our founding fathers had, but I'm drawing you down from the macro, and pinpointing your attention here to the Capitol Campus, the microcosm, specifically to our own Student Government Association.

Yes, by the way, we do have a Student Government. They meet every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m., where they make decisions that concern you.

For instance, they allocate, upon the recommendation of the Finance Committee, a branch of SGA, funds for all student clubs and organizations. Through their Social Affairs Committee, they "coordinate and recommend all co-curricular activities that are to be held on a campus wide scale." They tell us in "one comprehensive report," about the faculty, according to results compiled from faculty evaluation forms. SGA "initiates and directs programs of community relations and service to the people of the immediate area," through their Campus/Community Service Committee.

The list goes on to include such areas as: athletic awards; scholarships; and our representatives to Faculty Committees; virtually all areas that are of concern to students.

It's possible that some of the SGA members weren't aware of these duties. Whatever the case may be, it turns out that I happened to be present when the ballots were counted in the Spring election of last year.

Those elections decided who would fill the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch of SGA.

I wrote the news article concerning the election results. Here was the lead: "In what was described by pollster Todd Malpass as one of the best voter turnouts the S.G.A. has had in a while..."

That "best voter turnout in a while" amounted to: 315 voting for president; 288 voting for their choice of vice-president; the treasurer and secretary were unopposed. The number of ballots cast for Senior Senators, the representatives of each academic division, were even less.

Well, where is the voice of our people in the affairs of government. Draw your own conclusions, I'm running out of space.

The elections for the Junior Senators of each academic division are coming soon. The Reader will try to find all it can about the candidates. Why they want to be Senators (possibly because it looks good on transcripts), and what platform they have, if any. Maybe we can fulfill the dreams the founding fathers of the Capitol Campus Student Government had when they drew up their own constitution, by getting the people to vote.

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Marketable Skills After Happy Valley

A few months ago when my son was contemplating what area of study he should pursue starting his 1st year at the other branch campus at University Park, the conversation went something like this:

Father: "What do you want to study when you go to college?"

Son: "I'm not sure---I don't know."

Father: "Well-what are you most interested in?"

Son: "Basketball."

Father: "Be serious!"

Son: "Nothing in particular, lots of things in general."

Since from past experience in dealing with this young man I've learned not to give too much unrequested advice, I patiently waited for--

Son: "Well-what would you study if you were me?"---which occurred a little later in our conversation. My answer went something like this:

"If I were you, I think I would study in some area of the sciences, something like physics, chemistry, biology or engineering." His normal reply came quickly:

"Why?"

so I continued--

"Well, since sometime during the first twelve years the educational system has taught you to read, you should be able to learn just about any subject by reading the correct books. Relatively speaking, subjects like religion, history, sociology, philosophy, psychology, etc.... can be learned on your own with a little effort, or a lot of effort, depending on your interest. On the other hand, subjects like calculus, physics, machine design, thermodynamics, etc.... would be more difficult to master without the help of a teacher--or some powerful (more than interest) motivating force. Hence, why not pick an area of study that you would

probably have a smaller chance of mastering if left to yourself?"

I wasn't done yet, those "Why's?" are such a great opportunity for parents to pass on their vast wisdom--

"Besides that"---I continued--"Do you plan to live for any extended time beyond the normal four years of watching Joe Paterno's boys do their thing up there?"---after the expected "Yes" answer--

"Well, in that case, it would be nice to be able to do something, to have some marketable skills when you leave Happy Valley, so that you can continue to live in the grand style you've become accustomed. Since you're not independently wealthy, you will have to earn your living. Most current reports on the subject state that the science-engineering majors, and the business majors, will have the easiest time finding employment."

So far, having attempted in a very objective way to appeal to his practical side, and then to his self-interest (I don't plan to keep him in his old age--I'm hoping he will keep me), my final appeal would be to his humanitarian side. I continued--

"You know, the problems you and your generation will have to try to solve are going to be very difficult. Problems of too little energy, too many people, too little food, too much hatred, too much killing, etc....and those with problem-solving skills will probably be the only ones able to get close to solutions. What a great feeling you would have in knowing your efforts will allow the humanitarians to be free a little longer, the historians will have a little longer to write their books and not repeat their mistakes, the psychologists can train a few rats, the educators inspire a few more

minds, etc..."

Well, he picked physics, and at the last moment switched to engineering. (What did you expect after such convincing arguments?) The tremendous feeling of power one gets in guiding the lives of our youth is frightening! What does all this have to do with you?

You, being the Engineering Technology students here at Capitol Campus in particular. Encouragement! I know that it is going to be tough being in a lab when your non-engineering friends are out on the ball field or on the tennis courts. It's tough doing homework problems when your buddies are having a kegger, and it's tough getting a 2.67 GPA after all that work when your girl friend breezes to a 3.67. But, take heart, you, in most cases, will be finding employment at 10 to 15 thousand per year, and you in addition might have an opportunity to do something of value for your fellow man, even before you graduate. Only last year several senior MDET's designed and built a machine to aid the mentally and physically handicapped in their work, and several more designed and built an exercise machine for an artificial heart research project going on at the Hershey Medical Center.

Don't worry about all that talk about you being a narrow minded, specialized tool of the system. (It's true, but don't worry about it.) Studies have shown that graduates from the sciences and engineering programs read more books after graduation than those from the other curricula. So, if you wish, you too can become a good person, an educated person, and with lots of effort, you can become a good conversationalist at parties. What else is there?

W. K. Aungst
MDET Department

Letters: News Or Propaganda?

By Tim Adams

The First Amendment of the constitution states that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.

Apparently there is some question among students of how this applies to a campus newspaper. Regardless of the publication, small or large, wide circulation, or only within a campus community, these same principles of freedom of the press apply.

Some people who desired to make use of the paper by means of an interview, felt that they should be able to read the article before it was published. They said they only wanted to check content, however I am certain that this would have turned into censorship.

If students want propaganda

put into the paper, in the form of an advertisement for their group, they should pay for advertising space. If they want an informative perspective of their group without any bias, then they should grant an interview and trust the reporter to write a good and honest article.

I'm sure readers are not interested in reading a lot of good publicity every week about organizations' activities. The paper would become boring and would not necessitate having an unbiased publication.

In the future if students or organizations want information written about them by us in the paper, they should come down to the office prepared to leave the information up to the discretion of the writer. As for the paper, we will be just in all our articles, and should students have an honest difference of opinion and we are at fault, we will print a retraction.

PERCEPTION EXPERIMENT

Volunteers needed to participate in psychology-perception experiment. Both right and left handed, male and female students are needed.

Experiment will take one hour of your time at your convenience. Please sign up in C.C. Reader Office, W-129, or phone Jan Bachman, 717-766-2134.

Notable Quotes

"There are certain queer times and occasions in this strange mixed affair we call life when a man takes this whole universe for a vast practical joke, though the wit thereof he but dimly discerns, and more than suspects that the joke is at nobody's expense but his own."

"Ismael-Moby Dick"