

Perspectives Page

EDITORIAL Away With SGA

Joe Mahar, the new student government President, spent a lot of his time Tuesday walking around the halls of this school handing out dollar-bill-size fliers.

On this campaign strategem Joe asked you to vote for him. From what has been seen, by this observer, in most cases Joe did not ask you via the oral tradition, but by written word did he request your vote. This fact may be no big deal, but only served to make a person wonder why he couldn't say, "Hey, I'm running for SGA President, vote for me," or some derivation thereof, rather than using the written word.

Joe ran unopposed. Joe knew he was running unopposed. And Joe won unopposed except for the small number of write-ins that always show up in these elections. Sorry, but Mickey Mouse would not have been available for the position anyway.

Lets do away with the Student Government Association as it functions at the Capitol Campus. All of a sudden these newly elected officials, elected by no sizeable representation at all, are going to be in charge. They now will have psuedo-power.

Psuedo-power? Psuedo-power means they can do things as long as they don't upset the administrators. When that happens their operations stop.

Students don't care about what SGA does. Students don't know what the SGA does. This is true because SGA doesn't do anything. They allocate funds for clubs and organizations of the school, period. If the student government did such things as: Work to get the parking fee reduced; work out real evaluation questionnaires that ask questions about a profs ability to teach and somehow get these results in the hands of the students who'll take the courses; figure out how clubs and organizations should spend money, so not to cause confusion and ill-feelings among fellow students; in short, to do something, students would still not care about students government at this school. This is not a four year institution. It's in and out and good-bye, here.

Instead, those interested students should work on some sort of faculty, administrator, student, staff organization and see what comes up that students need be concerned about, just in case there is such a thing.

So, Joe Mahar, as your first executive decree, you should abolish the student government and go to work on the newspaper since the written word seems to be your form of communication. There must be something for you to do here.

Editors note: Mr. Mahar, you are welcome to reply to this statement.

Notable Quotes

There is a well worn adage that those who set out on a great enterprise would do well to count the cost. That is not always true. Some of the greatest enterprises in history have been carried out successfully simply because the people involved did not count the costs; therefore, the most instructive consideration is the cost of doing nothing.

Sir Thomas Haxley

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The Capitol Campus Reader is the school newspaper of Penn State's Capitol Campus. It is published by the students who attend this school. We of the Reader Staff try to accurately represent the voice of the students, and keep them informed as to current events and relevant issues. We are published on a weekly basis.

A person upset about the April Fool's issue and why

April 5, 1977

After reading this week's issue of the C.C. Reader, I felt compelled to register a complaint with someone or as many people as possible. Realizing that this was their April Fools' issue did not justify, in my mind, the sick perverted, and offensive "humor".

As a student at Capitol Campus since January 1975, I have been subject to the increased cost of education. Believing that the costs were valid did not make it easier to pay but at least made it reasonable. After seeing this week how some of that money is being spent enraged my sense of fairness.

I have no idea how much the weekly publication cost for the C.C. Reader is, but whatever it is was money wasted this week.

Aside from the monetary considerations, there is the unethical, unhumanitarian, and highly offensive subject material to be considered. I am not speaking as a moralist or puritan when I condemn the irresponsible actions of all those who contributed to that issue. On the contrary, I am speaking as a human being who believes that humor can be found in real life situations other than the tragedy of the 747 crash in the Canary Islands, the amputation of Totie Fields' leg or the unconscious state of Karen Quinlan. These are but a few of the sick examples that are dealt with in the April Fools' issue.

The language throughout the paper is also offensive and filled with sexist remarks. The paragraphs are replete with such words as "fuck," "balls," "ass," "assholes," "dildoes," etc.

As a student who has studied constitutional law, I am

a firm believer of the 1st Amendment right of freedom of the press. But the situation that a school newspaper operates under is an entirely different matter. First of all there is only one paper so therefore there is no freedom of choice as to reading that paper or another. Also, the paper is subsidized by the tuition of all the students and should therefore reflect the aggregate interest of the student body. In my opinion that issue reflected a very small minority of sick individuals with no ethics or sense of responsible journalism.

Recently, I have had the opportunity as a student intern in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to sit in on the Appropriation Hearings and

have heard Penn State University plead their case for their appropriation. I am not too sure that the legislators sitting on those Appropriation Committees would look very favorably on such waste of money for such an offensive purpose. Penn State needs to take this into consideration when allowing individuals such as those responsible for the April Fools' issue to do what they've done.

In conclusion, I am asking that as people in an educational system, we try to achieve high ideals and not lower ourselves and the University to such baseness.

Sincerely,
Christina M. Cox
Graduate Student

In Reply To The Above

An open letter to
Ms. Christina Cox (and others)
in reply, and to Bill Kane,
editor, C.C. Reader.

You write to Dr. McDermott with copies to Mr. Kane, Ms. McLeod, Dr. South and me in anger over the April 1 issue of the Reader. You write that the material was unethical, unhumanitarian, and highly offensive. You write that the "language throughout the paper is also offensive and filled with sexist remarks." I concur, at least in part. Offensive and sexist, yes. Unethical, not really.

You also write that as a student of constitutional law, you are a firm believer "of the 1st Amendment right of freedom of the press." I again concur. Then you add the dreaded "but." You follow that "but" with a string of arguments.

Constitutional guarantees are not needed to protect writers of mothers' day homilies. They are needed to protect writers of material that someone in authority might consider offensive or trashy. I might add that while I too, along with most of this community, consider the issue offensive, other activities trouble me more. I am, in fact, more troubled that a few individuals took upon themselves the task of destroying copies of the paper. And in all honesty, Ms. Cox, while I respect some of the arguments in your letter, I resent the fact that it was addressed to Dr. McDermott rather than to Mr. Kane, and that copies were sent to the other faculty and administrators indicated. That, combined with your "but," is an all too transparent request for prior censorship. Your references to the state legislature and the subsidy for the Reader represent a suggestion of intimidation that even many of our

legislators would find repugnant.

Be all that as it may, Ms. Cox's initial complaint is not without merit. A society which opposes external censorship expects its press to function within professional limits. And while the press is free of prior censorship, the community is free to respond as it sees fit. As we have already discussed privately, the April 1 issue was not as funny when it appeared as it had seemed when you wrote and assembled it. For most of your audience, it was simply not amusing, informative, interesting, or entertaining. It was simply gross. In short, as I suspect you now understand, it was just plain bad journalism.

Many on your staff, including you, know better. Your editorial of April 7 states that "not one" multi-media journalism student is on the Reader staff. That kind of statement, dear sir, is why I cautioned you (as a student in M-M 350), against any use of superlatives. Your staff listing below that editorial gives the names of two multi-media students, and of two other: including you, who have taken several M-M classes. That is not to say that the Reader reflects the M-M program's concept of good journalism. It is also not to say that many of us, for several reasons, would not prefer to see more M-M students involved. It is to say that since you chose to attend our classes, why don't you choose to pay a little more attention to what they teach?

My reply to you continues in the same vein. The constitution is a fragile document. It is all too susceptible of being "but"-ed to death. Read that venerable document. "Congress shall make no law... abridging the freedom... of the press." No exclusions. Learn from it.

The first amendment by
See Page 3

Another

Gentlemen:

The April 1, 1977, edition was saddening enough with its revolting and macabre sense of evil humor. Yet you chose to come back in the next edition with a defensive editorial. My sadness about your lack of good sense turned into anger.

The only way that the C.C. Reader can regain stature as a bona fide expression of press freedom is for you, Mr. Kane, to resign and apologize in writing to the readers of this paper on the front page of your last edition.

By way of a parallel, but less strongly worded version, I am letting the provost of this University know my feelings.

Sincerely,
Mark Lavin
Graduate Student
Public Administration