

Campus Commentary

Future Warnings of Culture Shock Will Be Heeded

By Joe Kupec

Beginning my Junior year has been an adjustment. When I moved here many of my friends warned me about the challenges that lay in wait. What they did not warn me about was the confusion and cultural clash that I would experience.

Penn State was true to form. When I showed up on August 27, I discovered that housing had "sort of" misplaced one of my housemates. There was no problem unless you consider the additional eighty dollar housing fee to make up for the absence of a fourth man a problem. Settling into the house on Jones Street was easy enough. Getting used to the sound of traffic and the regularly scheduled flights from Harrisburg International was another thing. I have learned something though. When you can't sell housing next to an airport the next best thing is to start a school. The captive population of students on campus will have to live in the housing despite the noise.

The opening lecture and

introduction of the Mechanical Engineering Faculty and Staff went well. The professors seemed like a real fun bunch of engineers. There was one problem though, during the course of the lecture each speaker referred to the campus by a different name. I have heard the school called Capitol Campus, Penn State Capitol, Capitol College and Penn State Harrisburg, Capitol College. The only monicker not used was TMI University, The Glow in The Dark School. Does this imply that the department or university as a whole has an identity problem in relation to the Commonwealth System?

I was prepared for the prospect of living within the fall-out zone of Three Mile Island. There are some risks inherent in pursuing a degree from Penn State. What caught me off guard was the water. Troy, one of my house mates, had warned me about it the first day I was here. Actually all he had said was not to drink it. Unbridled curiosity being one of my vices, I drew some from the kitchen tap and drank it there by discovering its

worst property, the taste.

Another surprise lay in store concerning the water supply. In one of the first lectures in my chemistry class our instructor, wishing to illuminate the concept of the solubility of chemical compounds, explained how the ground water of Middletown was contaminated with something called TCE. For those uninformed students TCE is in no way related to THC. The chemical in the water was used as a degreaser by the Air Force who had previously occupied the Airport and this campus. Prior to the concept of hazardous waste disposal this branch of the military disposed of their waste, TCE, in the traditional military solution for such problems, they buried it. The steel containers are rusting through and the TCE is leaking into the ground water.

Let this be a lesson to Penn State, the next time they go to buy a campus ready made better do a character reference on the previous tenant!

Not only is the water unfit to drink, one of the TCE disposal sites is somewhere under Meade

Heights.

Adjusting to Penn State University Capitol College, or whatever this place is called, has been one thing. Getting used to "Central Pennsylvania" is a whole nuther story. I am from the Allegheny Valley. For those of you whose geography does not extend beyond the Schuylkill River, that's north of Pittsburgh. Back Home was settled by a large number of immigrants from Eastern Europe who believed that one long trip in a life time was enough. Going to Pittsburgh, twenty miles down river, was like going to another country.

As you may imagine this kind of attitude leads to parochial thinking. Growing up in a bilingual community has its advantages until you move out of that community. I discovered this on my first trip to the Giant down in Middletown. At the deli I asked the girl who waited on me for a pound of Jumbo and a half pound of chipped chopped ham. She looked at me like I had three eyes and said, "I'm sorry sir, we don't have anything like that here." I

discovered that people here call their Jumbo German Bologna and Chipped Chopped Ham is pressed ham. There was another surprise over at the soft drinks when I asked the stock boy where the cold pop was. "Pop?" he said, "what's that?" I mumbled something about cold ginger ale and he pointed me down the aisle toward a cooler. When I was at the checkout I asked the clerk to put all of my groceries in one poke.

"You must be from outta town," she observed. I was beginning to wonder if there was a sign on my back proclaiming that fact.

Despite the cultural differences I am uncovering, the confusion surrounding the name of this venerable institution, bad water and the possibility of limited radioactive fallout I think that I am going to enjoy my two years here. Maybe by the time I graduate I will have developed a taste for the water and the dialect. Hopefully the faculty and administration will figure out the name of the school.

What's Up Doc?

A recent commission studying violence on TV stated that a child will see 17,000 murders by the time he is 18. It further stated that chief offender was cartoons which were exceedingly violent. They took extreme exception to a Donald Duck cartoon where he shoved golf balls down the throats of his three nephews after they had locked him in the closet.

This has emboldened other watchdog groups to come out with their proposals and demand justice. The Amateur Athletic

League has come out with evidence proving Popeye The Sailor has been taking anabolic steroids to improve his strength. The veteran sailor admitted that he had built up a tolerance to spinach over the years and was beginning to get the stuffings beat out of him by Bluto.

Other medical news finds Charlie Brown being diagnosed as having acromegaly, a disease characterized by a severe enlargement of the head. Brown is not expected to recover. This is the same disease which killed Betty Boop in 1954. The American Association for Unspeakable Body Parts has stated that Pinocchio was never circumcised as a youngster and that this could lead to infections in later life. His family is cooperating and a large pencil sharpener is being flown in to do the job.

The Feline Anti-Defamation League has protested the continued portrayal of cats as stupid and evil creatures. They

state that even an ignorant cat like Sylvester would realize after 25 years that it is a kangaroo he is fighting and not a giant mouse. The Sufferin' Succotash Foundation has urged that Daffy Duck and Porky Pig be given speech therapy.

Cynicism & Humor



Alan Pincus

The only hearty endorsement came from the United States Sadomasochism Foundation, which name Beep Beep, the roadrunner, as its man of the year. I personally thought the award should have gone to the coyote or the late, lamented Mr. Bill. Even the muppets were accused of fostering mixing of the races with their pig and frog romance. One religious group stated that after pig and frogs mate the next logical step would

be dogs and cats followed by the end of the world. It is evident that the only way to save society is to wipe out these cartoons and put on some good, wholesome Bible stories, like obliterating Sodom and Gomorrah or Job and his oozing boils. Only then can we be sure our children are not watching something vile.

Th-Th-That's All Folks



The Cycle

By Julie Larson

As if, to understand is the final revelation.
I emerge from my illusions,
(The result of elevated understanding)
To seek the cause of this disturbing intrusion.

Colliding with reality,
Reaching diagnosis,
Groping through confusion,
I, inward, turn my focus.

As if, to understand culminates within,
I look in, beyond the illusions,
Which taint and infect,
And make, of reality,
perversion.

Where's the Beef?

Experience In Dining Hall Angers Student

By Denise Reinas

Did you ever really look forward to a specific meal and couldn't wait to satisfy your hunger by sinking your teeth into the entre that you knew you were going to have for dinner? Oh what a wonderful feeling!

Well, on Friday September 19th, I had classes, appointments, and meetings all day. I was really looking forward to the pre-planned meal in the dining hall which consisted of fried fish, greenbeans, and noodles. I was starving. After my packed schedule, I finally arrived at the dining hall at 5:20 p.m. As I waited in line behind people who were already on their second helpings, I became hungrier and hungrier. Finally, when it was my turn to be served, I looked at the warming case only to find total emptiness. I asked the lady behind the case if there was any more fish, greenbeans, or noodles. She said "no." She then asked me what I wanted. I, in turn, said "I guess whatever you have." She then pushed a plate at me with a hamburger on it only. I was extremely disappointed because I truly can't stand hamburgers. I then proceeded to the salad bar, looking forward to a large salad for my meal. I got there only to find a lady taking everything away. At this point I was fuming with anger. I then knew I had to settle for the hamburger

I unwantingly bit into it, once again, only to find disappointment. It was full of raw ground beef in the center. At this point I no longer had an appetite. My meal was totally ruined by paid workers who wanted to rush out of the dining hall.

As far as I was informed, dinner was supposed to be served until 5:30 on Fridays. Is this what we, as students, pay up to \$850.00 a semester for? I feel that \$850.00 is a lot of money to pay only to receive lousy service.

After telling some of my friends about my rotten experience in the dining hall, I was informed by them that last year the students finally became so annoyed by the service there that a students versus employees forum was scheduled. At this forum students openly voiced their opinions and dislikes to the employees. For about three weeks after the forum, the service seemed much better. But after those 3 weeks, everything went back to the old unpleasant ways. Are we, the students, of any importance here?

I felt that it was necessary to inform the rest of the student body of my displeasing experience in the dining hall because if anyone else is having problems, maybe we could all get together and fight for our rights. Is the treatment we receive in the dining hall worth the trouble or the money? The treatment I experienced wasn't