

## Campus Commentary:

### Why College?--An Appeal To My Generation

By Frank C. Hollister, IV

During an in-class discussion last semester, this issue was brought up: Why do we go to college? My colleagues answered very quickly and quite positively--to start or further a career, to guarantee an acceptable income for themselves and their families. Practical and realistic reasons, but also very frightening.

The "Me" attitude did not end in the 1970s. In fact, it is "alive and kicking" well into the late '80s. Looking out for #1 has become a national pastime. Although "I" am important and achieving status and salary through gaining a baccalaureate or graduate degree (listen up May graduates!) is an acceptable road to travel, the road itself is not primary. What really is vital is the view from the highway.

Through the "higher education experience," I have met a wide range of people and absorbed a variety of ideas and perspectives. As a social science student, I have developed an awareness, an insight that I cherish deeply. Studying such diverse topics as

sociology, economics, politics, philosophy, and theology has enhanced my ability to learn.

Learning is the process of gaining knowledge and understanding. On the level of higher education, a natural consequence of my learning is the receipt of my Bachelor of Social Science degree and a better chance of gaining employment. This is important and rightly so, but it can't be all. Getting ahead is fine; getting nothing from the experience of a lifetime is absurd and self-destructive.

What my colleagues thoughtlessly failed to acknowledge was a simple concept--to learn for learning's sake. Is there anything inherently wrong with this idea? Have we, as students, become so alienated from the learning process that our level of absorption is only skin deep? Are the interviews and resumé more important? Have we turned our institutions of higher education into mere "vocational/technical" schools? Purpose: employment. Method: college. If this is so, then our generation and our children will ultimately lose out.

Although we have been labeled the "MTV generation" as we thrive on excitement and flash, my generation is a very serious group. Live Aid, the plight of farmers and the homeless in our own

country, and apartheid in South Africa are very real themes to us. There has been an outpouring of social activism on college campuses nationwide. My point: Getting a BMW and a Gold Card cannot be the only measure of our greatness. *If so, we are headed for moral and intellectual bankruptcy!*

To nurture and fulfill our God-given abilities of thought and reason, we must begin to take our educations much more seriously. It is imperative that we understand *and question* what is being taught; not to only "use" college as a means to an end (that end being the almighty dollar!). The years I've spent in college have opened my eyes to wonderful and radical ideas--from Marx to de Tocqueville, to an understanding of life behind the Iron Curtain and the Third World to a deeper appreciation of life in our own country. A lifetime of keeping up with the Jones's in utopian Suburbia washing my BMW could never replace the diversity of people and ideals I have encountered these past five years. Without the pursuit of knowledge and understanding--beginning in our youth--I am afraid, my friends, we are lost.

Must we live and breathe only in the "Age of Affluence"? Is life in an Age of Reason passé? The tunnel-vision of careerism and material possessions caused by a self-destroyed college experience is an abhorrent thought. As

the future social, political, and business leaders of the wealthiest country in the world, we can do better than accept these terms of existence. Do we have the right--as individuals or as a society--to deny ourselves thought and reason, to defer freedom of expression and understanding of ourselves for mere survival in the outer world?

Is the safety and security of bureaucratic paper-shuffling, which that "parchment" can easily get for us more appealing or important than obtaining a truly liberal education? If my generation has no higher aspirations than life as a Corporate Zombie then we will fail. Failing because of our laziness and perceived helplessness is not an appetizing dish. These years should be spent learning how to see, hear, and feel our world as well as make it better, not in isolating ourselves into the "pursuit of happiness" in some skyscraper. *This cost is too high.*

To grow we must retain our identity, our independence, and our souls. *Let us blossom not stagnate.* I want no part of life with a "Lost Generation."

Thank you for the enlightenment, Dr. Eisenstein. Happy Retirement! "Go in peace, stay strong."

## Unsound Mind- Unhealthy Body

Since I had an open elective this term I decided to take the course called Human Sexuality. I thought it would be a fairly easy course because I've been doing outside research on the subject for some time now.

I knew there was my thing and her thing and how much more could there be to understand. However, on the midterm there was incredibly involved material on all the little subparts of the male and female anatomy. I think I did poorly because it turns out some of my guesses were wrong. A female vulva is not a Swedish car and it turns out that scrotum is not the name of a rock group from Germany.

Having done so poorly on this test I decided to get my body in shape by

going to the aerobics class in the gym. I figured that I'd be getting healthy and at the same time I'd stand in the back of the class and be able to see all the women bend over and touch their toes. How bad could it be?

### Cynicism & Humor

By Alan Pincus

I didn't know that nobody just throws a pair of gym shorts on and does exercises nowadays. Everybody had on their color -coordinated leotards and

sweatsuits and I had my ratty shorts. Everyone had white socks and I had black ones. When the music started most people were pretty close to the beat and were in harmony in their movements. I had a certain perverse harmony too. When their right foot came forward it seemed I put in my left. When they touched their right side I touched my left. When they moved forward I went backward. When they touched their left toe I tried unsuccessfully to touch my right one.

Within five minutes all thoughts of women in tight leotards left my mind as I realized I was in a life and death battle to survive the sixty minutes. Although I wasn't doing the exact things that the instructor was doing, whatever I

was doing was causing my pain. The letters CPR flashed in front of my eyes as I ran in place for what seemed like six hours. Finally the music came to a stop and everybody cheered. I had made it. A certain sense of accomplishment came over me until the sadistic instructor said for everyone to take a one minute break before the second half hour.

The second half hour consisted of exercises done on the floor. I wasn't out of synch in these exercises as in the other ones. I knew exactly what I was supposed to do in pushups and touching my toes and in holding my arms out to the sides for seven hours. It's just that my body felt like it was fused together.

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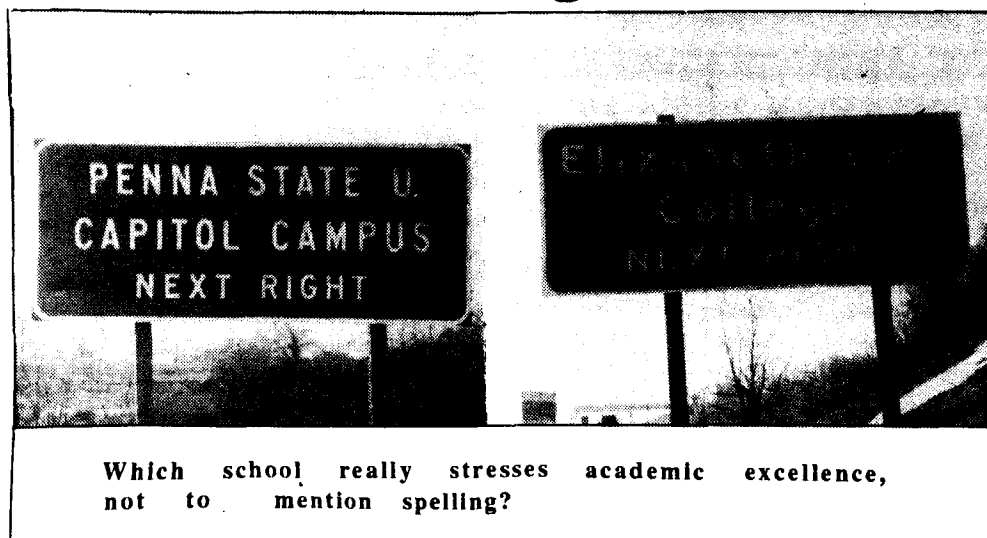
## First Impressions Are Lasting Ones

By Alan Foster/Faculty

I know this is petty. I also know I am the only one who is bothered by this problem. But those signs make us (the Penn State community) look like we do not care about how we are represented on the outside.

What signs? The directional signs as you approach the campus from Harrisburg. I mean for years I have wanted to correct, or burn the one that says, "Penna State U., Capitol Campus."

Who calls Penn State, Penna State U.? The directional signs around "the real" Penn State at University Park just say, "Penn State." Why can't we be just Penn State at Harrisburg? And then



Pictures by Alan Foster

the spelling of the word capitol, I mean, I could understand a gross error like that one if you went to a lesser institution like Pitt or Notre Dame, but not Penn State. Capitol refers to the building where the legislature meets. Think of it as an architectural term. The correct reference to our campus is, "Capital Campus." The university has made this change and we are now known as, "The Pennsylvania State University at Harrisburg, The Capital College."

For years I blamed PennDOT, but in checking I discovered they got their instructions from a knucklehead at our school. I did not find the person responsible.

It is a small thing, but since you never get a second chance to make a good first impression, these signs should be corrected as soon as possible.