

Letters to the Editor

Still Irked by Carrel Invasion

To The Editor:

The local Luddites of the intellect, the academic hoi-poli that haunt these not-so-hallowed halls have proved their courage. They have shown that they are not cowed by any concept of courtesy, limited by law or reached by reason. They lurch from out the library stacks to assert their right to that which is not theirs, to do as they please, to demonstrate their freedom from civility, intelligence and responsibility.

Library staffers have been forced to waste far too much time replacing a simple notice reserving a study carrel for graduate use. The notice is self-explanatory, but when it is not covered with unsyntactical insults, it is ripped from its place. I tried to explain in a previous letter why the space was reserved, but there was no effect.

A university is a community, and all communities are based on some civitas, some sense of relationship and a desire to cooperate for the common good. University communities particularly are dependent upon regard for others as a necessary condition of scholarship. It is almost impossible to conduct extensive research if the community will not respect the individual's right to a place to work and an atmosphere conducive to that work.

If the culprit read the notice and the letter and still feels entitled to deface or remove the reservation notice and seize space allocated to someone else, he plainly does not understand the functioning of civilization in general. He is especially out of place in academic civilization.

Perhaps I misunderstand the situation. Maybe Jack the Ripper cannot read the notice, and he or she destroys it only out of idle play. Maybe the letter made no difference because the vandal could not comprehend it.

That might reduce the guilt, but is any university a place for illiterates?

The last notice posted was different. It had a much more persistent glue than the others and it was completely covered with clear tape. To remove it must have taken a long time. Anyone with that much free time to waste cannot have any idea of what is required of a university student or of any person with an interest in the life of the mind. If he or she has that many moments to squander on so unproductive an activity, he or she does not belong in any institution of higher learning.

Perhaps the waste of that person's time does not matter much; I suspect it doesn't. It does matter, though, that professors waste their time with such an unsuitable student, that library staffers waste time replacing plain, simple notices, that other students waste time being expelled from working areas they would know are reserved if the notices were left alone, and that I waste time because I can't get to my carrel and seem compelled to write letters such as this one.

It is not worth the time of any competent member of the faculty, staff or student body to lie in wait to catch an insignificant twit peeling a reserved notice from a carrel. That low level

irritant probably never will be caught, therefore. That doesn't really matter, and, of course, neither does culprit; both the capture and the criminal are unimportant. I do wonder, though, just what he or she thinks--if any thinking occurs in that small mind--what is being accomplished by this odd, persistent display of self-indulgent petulance. It takes little intelligence to realize that if it is one's ambition to be a minor public nuisance, ambition easily is satisfied. Any of us could achieve that status, but most of us have better things to do.

Very Truly Yours,
Philip Clark

Library System's Policies Under Fire

To the Editor:

My complaint is with the policies of the library here on campus. When I first enrolled here, I was impressed with the size of the library, the quiet study areas, the reading room, the resources that were available to students and outside users. This first impression of a progressive resource library was correct, but the hassle to utilize its capabilities is more than I care to tolerate, so I go elsewhere.

My objections are few, but in speaking to other students, I feel justified in relating them to you and the student population. First, in order to leave the confines of the library, you must give your knapsack up to be searched, and this is without probable cause. Second, one must also pass through a detector, just in case the inspector did not completely do his/her task correctly. This is rather untrusting behavior on the part of a large campus library. I find it much easier to go to my local library, the local extension (Penn State) campus library, or utilize the M.S. Hershey Medical Center Library.

In order to access any one of these libraries, the only thing I had to do is fill out one card, with my name, address, and phone number. I do not have to fill out a detailed card, with the Library of Congress designation on it, for each book I wish to remove from the library. As anyone knows, if you need to take out more than one resource item, this is very time consuming. It must be done correctly and the proper attitude displayed. In order to finalize the operation, in your hand . . . please have ready the magic student ID/Bursar's card to verify your right to be on this campus and to utilize the library.

At the city library, I have a card that works in much the same way as a plastic bank card and the Penn State Hershey library allows me to take out any book, when I verbally confirm that I am an employee. This ease of use of other facilities encourages me not to use the Heindel Library and not to subject myself to involuntary search and seizure.

I feel that, if the Library wants

more active utilization of its capabilities, by the staff and the student body, it should be much more progressive. Not inhibitory, nor restrictive in its use of petty elementary school rules and regulations. The directors of the library should investigate and create the means to expedite the removal of these impediments. The majority of the student body is responsible and mature. Why not have a library that is of the same high quality and standards as the people that attempt to employ its wealth?

P. Moran

Bigotry & Racism

Dear Editor,

Regarding your article on "Hate, Bigotry & Racism," in the October 7 edition of the *Capital Times*, where did you get your information?

WHP News coverage of the Klan meeting in Ephrata on October 3 (incidentally, Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year) shows an interview of a black priest, member of the NAACP, at a counter demonstration in Ephrata during the same time that the Klan meeting was taking place.

While I am glad that the KKK meeting did not go unnoticed by the *Capital Times*, accurate commentaries about such events can only be made when accurate coverage has been given them.

Sincerely,
Deborah Sivia Gable

Her Juggling Act's Not as Hard as His

Dear Editor,

Just the other day I was complaining to a friend about my schedule. I was beginning to wonder how much longer I could keep juggling a family, a part time job and five classes. Then I read Gene Albano's letter to the editor, October 7, 1987, and started to feel guilty. I was shocked to learn of the difficulty the men of our campus were experiencing in the bathroom.

I do have a suggestion for those who need both hands to "do what comes naturally." Use a book bag to carry your books. When you go into the bathroom, fling it on your shoulder. Now if some of you are thrown off balance with something on your back, do what I do--throw the bag on the floor. (Contrary to the belief of some, most women do not put their books on their laps.)

I hope my suggestion will be helpful to those men of our campus with the juggling problem. I know one thing, the next time I'm wondering how I'm going to get a paper typed when my husband and two kids have come down with the flu, I'll remember those of you who have a harder juggling act than I.

Sincerely,
Carol Kilko

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