

Campus Commentary

An Open Apology To the Editor

By Mark Keisling

Dear Michele the editor:

I'm sorry. I know I said that I would have a column completed and in your hands by 8 a.m. today. I have failed. However, lest you think that I failed just for lack of anything interesting about which to write, let me explain.

It would be natural to think that after the four or five absurdities which I have written for the *Times*, that either I would be out of absurdities, or that I would have enough sense to just stop it. Wrongo.

See I got home last night and boy, was I stressed out. I think I need a hot tub. Anyway, I was stressed out to start with, but then I checked my phone messages, and the stress was magnified.

There were the usual messages. You know mom, dad, sis, the Supreme Court, Janet Jackson, etc. So nothing new there. But the last message was from Angie.

"Hi Mark, this is Angie. Just called to check in and see how you're doing. Bye."

Okay, I'm pretty sure I don't know anybody named Angie. Don't get me wrong. I've always wanted to, but I just don't. But, I figured I must. Why would a stranger call me. It confuses me enough when people I know call. It really looped me.

I thought and thought and thought, etc., and just couldn't think of any Angies. Annies, Andys, Amys and even a Randi, but no Angies. I started calling both of my friends. They had no clues, so I started calling strangers randomly from the book (phone, not little black). No one had any clues. Then I remembered that the Rolling Stones had a song called Angie. Maybe this was Mick's idea of humor. Nah, he never calls anymore. Sure, I hear from Bianca occasionally, but never Mick.

So I decided I better relax. And what better way to relax than with mathematics. So I started calculating Pi. Here's as far as I got:

3.1415926784936275859372541984756387289294857473
625464576868979800009843234557663524254657, etc.

And even though I didn't finish, I felt better. There's nothing like math to chill one out.

Calmed down somewhat, I went to get a soda from the refrigerator. My kitchen is kind of far from the phone, so I didn't hear the phone ring or the my machine answer it. And just as I got back to the phone, I heard her finishing her message and hang up. So I stayed up all night waiting for her to call back. Or maybe I stayed up all night trying to think of an excuse for why I have nothing interesting to write for this issue. I always get those confused.

Anyway, I'm sorry I couldn't get you a column by deadline. It's been hell. By the way, if you know anyone named Angie, have her call me. We'll
d o l u n c h

Dead Trees—a Cruel Joke

by Brian Smith

A picture is worth a thousand words someone once said. I have a few words to share about some particular pictures.

I'm referring to the paintings of dead trees which decorate the third floor hallways. The first time I looked upon these desolate paintings I felt unnerved.

Dead trees. What an image for a university: barren branches; fruitless trees of knowledge. I thought of a few reasons why there are dead trees painted on the walls.

Perchance these dead trees were painted on the walls after the nuclear accident at TMI, to serve as fitting reminder of how man's incompetence and lack of social responsibility degrade and ruin our environment. Such being the case, the paintings ought to have been labeled to identify their significance. Maybe we can learn something from the mistakes of others.

Perhaps the psychology department had these desolate depictions placed upon the walls as a study of man's fragile mind.

Imagine the conversation which took place in the meeting where this grand experiment was decided upon:

"Dr. Ima B. Downer begins: "Painting dead trees on the walls will effectively subdue the subjects. It is well known that the students attending classes on the third floor have their heads in the clouds. Dead trees is just what we need to bring them back to earth."

"Excuse me," replied Ratch A. Nale, "but aren't we overlooking the potentially harmful subconscious thought patterns associated with subliminal experimentation? An experiment such as this could adversely affect the grades of students taking classes on the third floor."

"Precisely my point," Downer retorted, "the psych students take classes on the first floor and if their grades are higher, the department looks good. I say we vote."

You can plainly see that Ratch A. Nale lost the vote even though he had Bett R. Jugement on his side.

Suddenly light bulbs lit up my brain. These trees are not a reminder of TMI. Nor are they part of a hair-brained psychology experiment. They are trees

of knowledge. They are barren because it's winter.

Come the first thaw of spring the SGA and the administration will sneak through darkened halls late at night and paint tiny buds on those barren branches. The buds will be so subtly painted that at first no one notices. But as spring progresses, those tiny buds will turn into sprouting leaves. While the sun warms our hearts and spirits, the sap of learning begins to flow.

The trees blossom and bloom throughout the spring semester. Branches of the trees grow into the classrooms. From behind the leaves red vested robins and skirted hummingbirds sing lectures to their unborn young. In passing time young minds are fertilized, soon to crack their shells and emerge to the safety of the trees.

Throughout summer months the trees of knowledge are full of life. From the nests we hear hungry voices chirping "feed me." Bees begin to gather round the trees. They light softly upon nectar sweet blossoms. Knowingly they pollinate the trees to make them fruitful.

Come fall the trees will be adorned with fruit. The trees of knowledge provide sustenance for all mankind, and man sets aside a day for thanksgiving.

The young birds nearly developed will test their wings and fly. They'll fly away, taking with them the lessons of the trees. They'll gather in various parts of the world. They'll find other birds just learned in the art of flying. They'll find a way of living that's right for them. And they'll find love.

Finally winter winds whisper an icy chill about the trees. The leaves change color and slowly drop. Listlessly, silently, the leaves descend. Once again the trees become barren. And I am sad.

Listlessly, silently, the tears descend.

These are not trees of knowledge painted upon the walls. They are but a cruel and chilling joke. Won't someone please take them away.

Attention All Capital Times Staff Members.....

The next staff meeting will be Thurs., Feb. 25, at 1:00 p.m. in W-129.

Topics for discussion include: Deadlines, format for submission of articles, policy, next assignments, officer positions for next semester, and production schedules.

This will be a very important meeting and your attendance is strongly urged. If you cannot come to the meeting please see Michele Hart sometime on the 25th or 26th.

If you would like to join the staff this would be a good meeting for you to attend also.

The campus commentary page gives the college community a chance to let their voices be heard. Submissions should be type, double-spaced, and limited to 500 words. Copy can be handed in at the Capital Times Office or placed in our mailbox in Room 216.