

Editorial Comment

Words.

Words can build up or destroy. Words are the tools by which the act of sharing is carried out. Words might just be the most powerful weapon we have against each other. But they can and should be used for good. We have the choice.

Mercy is just such a word. I almost never hear the term mercy employed today, except in regard to someone's death--the "compassionate" termination of someone's life in order to end suffering.

But "mercy killing," as some would define it, seems to involve more than the bed-ridden terminally ill.

Think of those Florida folks cheering a murderer's recent execution.

Other than these examples, though, we seem to use the word only when convenient for our purposes.

The point behind the word mercy goes beyond merely keeping it tucked away inside one's collection of vocabulary words, only to be pulled out on certain occasions when its use works to our benefit.

Mercy is not just a word, it's not just a behavior, it's not just an attitude. It has to be a lifestyle.

While mercy is too rarely used to describe day-to-day human relations, "damn" is heard regularly.

When I say "damn," I intend to bring down the furious curse of heaven on someone or something.

Imagine the arrogance involved in thinking we can actually damn someone: the creator of the cosmos stops in his tracks, ceases his activity, and causes someone to pop out of existence just because we think they're driving too slowly on the freeway.

And a damning spirit can become a lifestyle, too.

Groups of black students at University Park demonstrated against racism to remind all of us how far we have to go before we collectively make mercy central to our way-of-life.

David A. Blymire, Editor in chief

Letter's to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Over the past several years signs of racial and cultural intolerance have become a growing issue on college campuses throughout our country. Last August the first black fraternity house at the University of Mississippi was destroyed by arson. Closer to home, several racial incidents in State College set off demonstrations by African-American students at the Penn State University Park campus.

The Retention Committee of Penn State Harrisburg, founded to facilitate the educational goals of students, feels that the Penn State community should be commended for their support of the recent organized demonstrations in protest of racial incidents. Penn State stands united against racism and bigotry.

The University seeks to address existing environmental problems at State College. President Jordan has joined with community leaders in State College in issuing a letter to the local community condemning "acts, which tarnish our community and frighten those who are the targets of bigotry and racism." The University has committed to implementing a required orientation program for all new freshmen at University Park this fall which will deal with cultural diversity and the university environment. Soon there will be a hot line set up for the parents of students who have concerns about environmental issues. These are only several of the many actions being taken by the University to increase the understanding of diversity.

The Committee feels that it is important to confirm to the Harrisburg community that Penn State Harrisburg stands united against racism and bigotry. We are concerned for our current and future minority students and also for the impact that these incidents might have on our community. Penn State is committed to making quality education an option for all Pennsylvanians. The University has an obligation to maintain an environment conducive to fostering respect among various cultures represented in the University community. The absence of diversity, whether it be cultural or racial, robs us of a wealth of experience that broadens and strengthens our understanding. Penn State Harrisburg genuinely seeks to embrace diversity. We realize that a community narrowly defined will remain narrow-minded.

The Retention Committee at Penn State Harrisburg encourages students of all races and cultures to join the Capital College community. To these students we pledge our support.

Donald Holtsman, Chair
Capital College Retention Committee

Walgren lecture rescheduled

Congressman Doug Walgren will speak on Governmental Responsibility in the Technological Environment on March 26, 1989 at 4:00 p.m. in the Gallery Lounge.

He will focus on the importance of adopting a moral and ethical philosophy for future technologists before they participate in the decision making process in the professional world.

A respected national figure, he is one of the most knowledgeable and influential members of Congress in matters of technology.

Walgren is a member of the House Science, Space and Technology Committee.

He chairs the Subcommittee on Science, Research and Technology.

PENNSTATE Harrisburg The Capital College

Samuel C. Florman
THE INDIVIDUAL ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ENGINEER AND TECHNOLOGIST

March 13, 1989
7:30 pm, Gallery Lounge, Olmsted Building

The GTE Lectureship Program at Penn State Harrisburg is designed to involve future technologists in discussions and situations that show them the benefit of adopting a moral and ethical philosophy before they participate in the decision-making tasks of the professional world.

Samuel C. Florman is a practicing engineer and vice-president of Kreisler Borg Florman Construction in Scarsdale, New York. He received both a B.A. and a Civil Engineering degree from Dartmouth and later obtained an M.A. in English literature from Columbia. The author of more than 100 articles, Florman is a noted authority on the relationship between technology and human values. A recurrent theme in his list of books, which includes *Engineering and the Liberal Arts*, *The Existential Pleasures of Engineering*, and *The Civilized Engineer*, is Florman's belief that "those who enjoy the benefits of technology must accept responsibility for its consequences."

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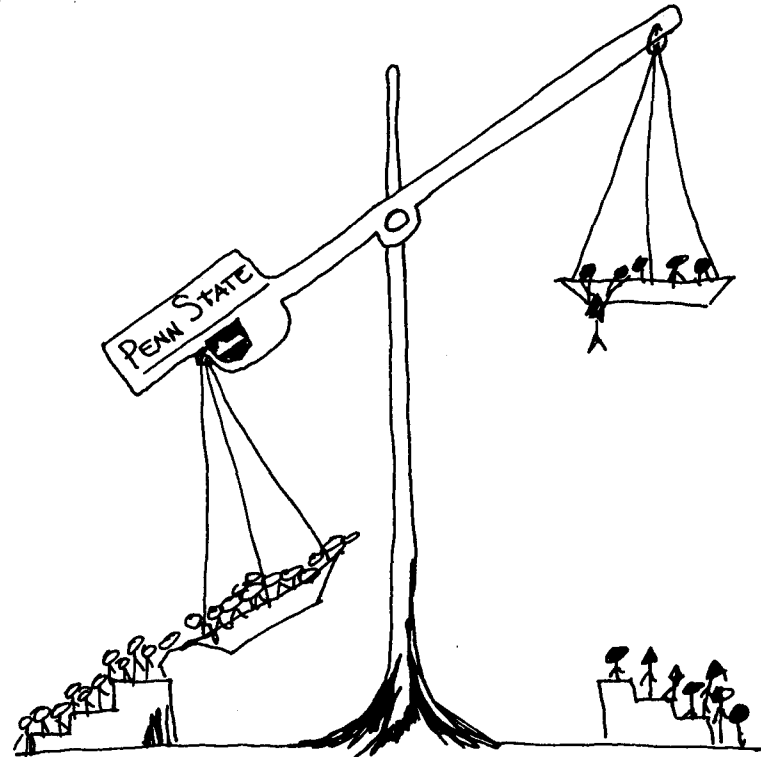
GTE

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