

PSH Heindel Library conditions abhorrent

After sitting through two open forum discussions on the library, I've come to terms with a few of the facts of what being a student at Penn State Harrisburg is all about. Okay, so it was more like being slapped in the face by the cold, metallic glove of reality. Now I know.

Probably the most disheartening fact I learned is that the things I pay for, and are as a result of my payment owed to me, still elude me. In an idealistic mind, Penn State violates every notion of what is "right" or "just." Not being deeply theoretical, but being extensively simplistic. Meaning: I pay the same tuition as any "in-state" resident attending University Park, therefore, I am equally entitled to anything and everything the U.P. student receives.

But after sitting through the forums and listening to not just students, but faculty and library staff complain about the library's inadequacies I realized just how bad the situation is. And, now I know...I'll never get what I deserve. I am, as a student at the open forum put it, a second class citizen in the Penn State system. And that is wrong.

You can talk about state funding, university funding and fund raising, it doesn't change anything. **DO SOMETHING.** It's so aggravating to be told as a student to write to my legislator, the board of trustees or Joab Thomas himself. It's not my job. I have papers to write, exams to take, and a newspaper to oversee. I don't have time to sit down and draft letters to powerful people so their aides can have a good laugh. And I shouldn't have to, I'm not here to fight for what should indisputably be mine.

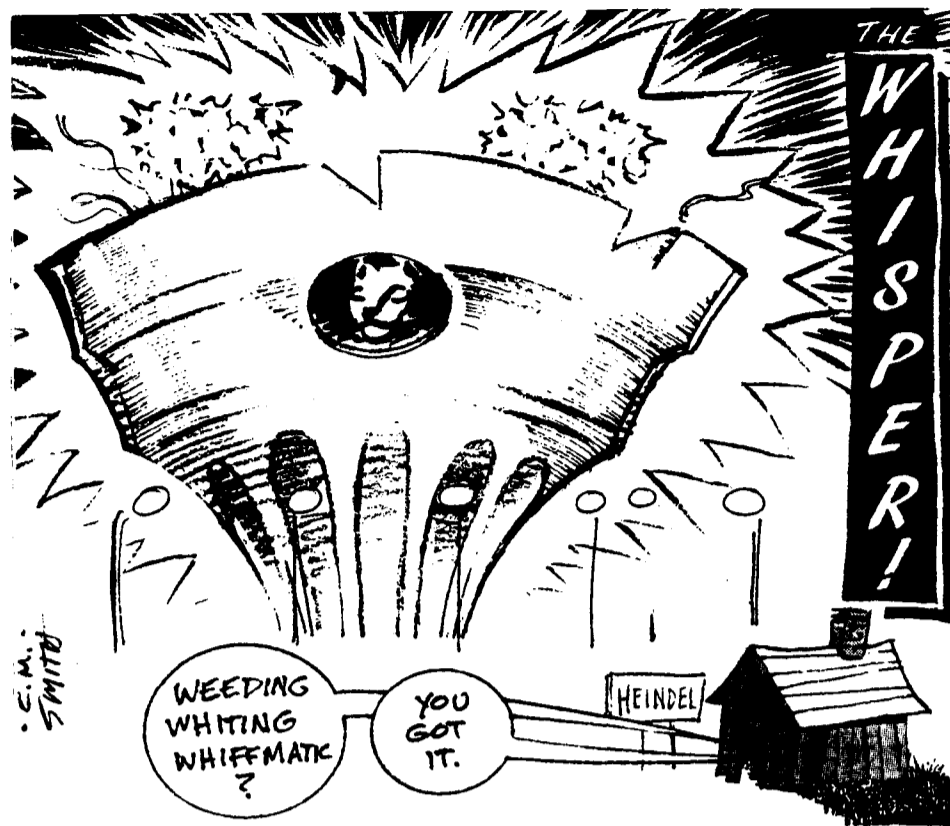
And am I immensely simplistic or do the administrators of the entire Penn State system just need to be smacked? Why is the answer so clear to me, and everyone's sitting back with their hands in their lap, saying "We're doing our best." To hell with the political processes and red tape. I paid for a decent library. I want it and I deserve it.

There's no doubt in my mind, or probably anyone else's, that Penn State has the money to fund the library project on its own. The money IS there, somewhere. It might be in the six-digit salaries of Thomas and Paterno, or perhaps on the feet of the football team. Or maybe, just maybe it's in that little expansion job Beaver Stadium underwent last summer, or the construction costs of the new sports convocation center. But those are just bare essentials, aren't they? And I'm quibbling over a library.

So what am I suggesting? Let's face it, the library expansion project will more than likely still be sitting in front of the same obstacles it now faces when I graduate in six months. Maybe it will be built in time for my children to use it. Maybe I'm being too optimistic. My concern is where the library is now and what can be done.

The demands of the Students For a Quality Library are not unreasonable. The organization is realistic about seeking changes to make the library more bearable immediately. They're not asking for a new building to be built tomorrow, rather, that a new attitude be formed about the conditions and improvements of the present library.

My hat's off to the members of the organization, for taking



the time to do the tedious, grunt work required. My advice to fellow students is to sign the group's petition. It might not do anything, but there's always hope.

And if anyone should find time to write Joab a letter, ask him if he really gives a damn about the students in his university. Or is he just in it for the money?

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Capital Times

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