

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK . . .

## Hey PSH, are you being served?

Does anybody else think that there are people who work here who are not particularly happy? Do you ever feel that some employees at Penn State are not really here to help you, but are instead on some bizarre mission to destroy?

Let me explain. As you are all well aware, we are paying to attend this institution. Our tuition goes to paying our professors, administrators, and scores of staff that we may or may not encounter. It also pays for buildings, such as alleged libraries, maintenance, research, and Main Campus football games.

So let me ask something. Why, if we are paying for this, are we being insulted? Time and time again I run into people who are supposed to be here to help answer questions and make our journey through this maze of bureaucracy a little smoother. Yet sometimes no amount of smiling, "pleases," or "thank you's" seem to break the nasty, condescending attitudes of those who only care about their paychecks.

In most establishments, if you feel you are being mistreated by personnel, you can go to the management and hope for some kind of resolution. This concept is called customer service. But at Penn State, even though we pay thousands of dollars to attend, this concept is alien.

How many of you in the process of figuring out scheduling, financial aid, and buying books have ever gotten the feeling you are talking to the Wizard of Oz? You know, . . . lots of smoke and lights to cover up the fact that a wimpy little man is the one in charge.

Sometimes trying to set up an appointment with someone is like trying to visit your local Congressman. They are really busy and their secretary's job is simply to get rid of you as fast as they can.

And then there is the police force. Imagine if you are visiting this campus to use the library. (I know that is a stretch of the imagination.) Parking is a major hassle. Instead of requiring visitors to register their cars and worrying about monitoring visitor parking, why not put in parking meters? By making parking on this campus so inconvenient they are discouraging the community to use its resources.

Am I the only one who thinks our campus police have gotten a little out of hand? I can think of several stories of people visiting campus having unpleasant run ins with a specific officer who is noted for being, in the words of the business office, "not very nice."

Even the Domino's pizza delivery person, who was bringing our pizza to our office, was on the verge of being ticketed for parking in front of the door. Meade Heights residents moving into their houses were ticketed for parking their cars on the grass while unpacking. I know the police have to enforce the regulations, but is there no place for logic on a day that is a special circumstance?

We pay \$40 per semester for the "fee-based vehicular registration program" to park here. Look around and tell me where you think the money is going. I feel it is bad policy to throw an unwanted "fee" on people and then turn around and resist showing us ASAP its benefit. All we get now is attitude from police enforcing the regulations, and more attitude from administrators who don't understand why we don't just forget about it.

To be fair, I don't want to make it seem that everyone here is a "bad witch." There are plenty of people here who are a tremendous help. It is easy to spot someone who has some enthusiasm. I think they deserve a compliment or two from their higher ups more often to let them know they are appreciated.

But the next time you take out your checkbook to pay for another Penn State charge, ask yourself if you really have any say as to how you expect to be treated in return. Are you paying for a service which should then require some customer satisfaction? Or are you giving your money to an administration that will treat you however they want to because their time is a privilege, not a necessity.

E. Mikael Hein



Editor-in-Chief

## Letters to the Editor: From the Mailbag

Is PSU higher education or a place to practice punting?

Dear Editor,

Every time I pick up a newspaper and read that Penn State has won yet another football game, I run out of the house and emit a defiant yell. And every time I see a Penn State game on the television, I turn it off and hide in the cellar. What ails me, at bottom, is fear; fear not that Penn State will lose, but fear that Penn State will win.

It is my belief, perhaps in error, that there is a disturbing correlation between athletic success and academic failure - in brief, that every time some oaf of a halfback scores a touchdown, my beloved Penn State drops another notch in the realm of academic merit. And every time a scrawny place kicker punts the ball through the uprights the same high end is achieved.

Treasonous? To be sure. Blasphemous? Even so. But it is surely no secret that

the best academic colleges in the country have the worst sports teams, and that the best teams typically belong to the worst schools.

I studied this proposition for three days, halting only for prayer and sleep, and have concluded that it is sound.

Is there a college or university to be found that is both academically and athletically superior? I rather doubt it. What about Dartmouth, Amherst, or Swarthmore? Hardly. Columbia, Johns Hopkins, or Princeton? An unequivocal no. Stanford, Yale, or Harvard? The quest becomes ridiculous.

Of course, this theory is not new, but it has been (more often than not) shoved under the table, especially on game day, and hence there is little record of it. Even the teachers at Penn State cherish it - at least privately - and rather hope that the quarterback stubs his toe. They long to be part of a school that

holds academic achievement in the highest regard. As it is, they have to settle for watching some chump parade around in a lion costume. And they must watch him, not only courteously, but even reverently, and with their mouths open.

Kelly Thomas  
Teaching & Curriculum



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## WHAT I HAVE TO SAY . . . FROM THE ASSISTANT EDITOR'S DESK

This year was no different than any other, even though my family and I were hundreds of miles away from home.

We all gathered around the television to watch the annual Miss America Pageant, with Regis and Kathie Lee hosting.

Like past years, my mother and I were critical of all the ladies competing for the crown, wondering how many ladies had a little "help" from "doctors." And, yes, like all other years, we both, um, were turned off by our own state's choice of women. (Is it me, or will Pennsylvania ever have a good "competing" contestant for the top ten finalists?)

One thing changed the pageant for me this year, though. Previously, I read about a host of excitement concerning Miss Alabama, Heather Whitestone. She is a truly lovely lady, overflowing with talent and grace.

Why the big fuss over Miss Alabama? Miss Whitestone is legally deaf, having lost complete hearing in one ear when she was an infant, and has only about five percent hearing in the other one.

She is also the first in the history of Miss America contestants to have a physical disability.

She is also the first in the history of Miss America's to have a physical disability.

Do you notice a trend? My mom and I sure did.

When looking at all the contestants introducing themselves to the television camera, I couldn't help thinking that Miss Alabama would win.

It's awful to say, yes, but sadly true.

Why?

I have two words for anyone arguing with me.

Affirmative action.

Don't get me wrong, in my opinion Miss Alabama deserved to win. She has all the grace, talent and beauty that every Miss America should have.

But did the judges see what I saw, or did they just see a young woman with a disability? Did they at all feel that if they didn't give her high marks that they would be discriminating against her?

I know, I know, I'm horrible for thinking this, but affirmative action has not only made me a cynic, but many of my friends and co-workers as well.

If I had a penny for everytime I heard the phrase, "The only reason they got the job is because of their . . . (sex, nationality, religion)" I'd be able to go to school free.

As a full-blooded Korean female, I can honestly say that I think affirmative action stinks. Too many times I've seen perfectly qualified people passed over for something because quotas needed to be filled.

What's my point I'm getting at?

Heather Whitestone won the pageant because, in my opinion, she was the perfect example of who Miss America should be. Her only obstacle to overcome as Miss America is affirmative action.

Because she does have a physical disability, she can't enjoy being crowned without skeptics, such as me, wondering whether or not she got the crown just because she is handicapped, and not because she was the most qualified contestant there.

Anne-Marie Miller



Assistant Editor/Production Manager

## NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY

On October 11th, 1994 BI-GLYAH is sponsoring a press conference and rally 1:00p.m. at the Capitol Rotunda Building

Keynote Speaker: Richard Tafel, former aid to Governor Weld of Massachusetts

These Issues Are Vital:

- \*A Statewide civil rights law that bans discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and education
- \*Banning discrimination in all schools
- \*Reactivating the Governor's Sexual Minority Advisory Committee and adding a Youth Subcommittee

*Editor's Note: I have personally included this information because I know that there are students here who need it. I know that it can be hard to come to terms with who you are. I have been there. Central Pennsylvania is not exactly an easy place to live when you are different than others. But there is hope. And you are not alone. - Erik*

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