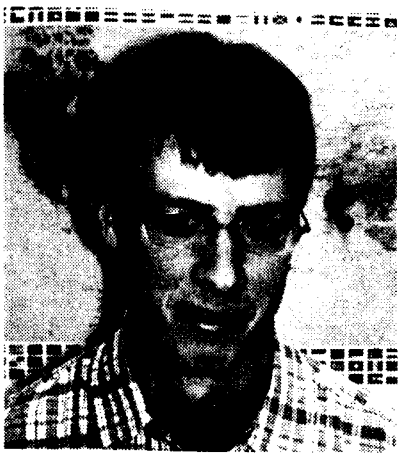


Steve Mayer spouts off



By Steven Mayer
Staff Reporter
slm379@psu.edu

He rode with the Hell's Angels, did almost every conceivable drug known to man, ran for local sheriff, had one of his greatest works made into a cult film, but on Feb. 20, American counter-culture hero and iconoclastic gonzo journalist, Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, committed suicide in his home in Woody Creek, Colorado.

It was around midnight when I first heard of his death, and I checked online just to make sure that what I was hearing was not just part of the general weirdness and absurdity that seemed to surround the man most of his life. Unfortunately, the news was not one of Thompson's outlandish antics nor another near-death experience, but a cold, hard truth.

As one of my favorite writers, Thompson's work peeled back the skin of America; he did

not suffer fools lightly when he dissected the political and cultural landscape, exposing the American Dream as nothing more than a facade espoused by paranoid fascists who always rise to the top in American society, particularly politics.

"Nixon was a barrel of laughs compared to this gang of thugs from the Halliburton petroleum organization who are running the White House today . . ." wrote Thompson for his national affairs column in Rolling Stone magazine a week before the election. "He [Nixon] was a crook and a creep and a gin-sot, but on some nights, when he would get hammered and wander around in the steets, he was fun to hang out with."

To fully understand Thompson's utter disgust with the current administration and put into context how low this country has sunk, you need to consider what else he wrote about Nixon. In one of his scathing instances of clarity and brutal honesty, Thompson had the privilege of writing the obituary of Richard M. Nixon, which appeared in Rolling Stone and also in his book *Better Than Sex: Confessions of a Political Junkie*.

"He was scum," Thompson succinctly wrote. "Let there be no mistake in the history books about that. Richard Nixon was a evil man--evil in every way that only those who believe in the physical reality of the Devil can understand it."

In a time when the media has become slavish and in many ways an extension of the government, Thompson's apocalyptic prose showed no mercy on the swine who run our institutions, and he was more than happy to let everyone know the truth.

While some claim the media and the journalist's role is to be objective, Thompson broke down all pretenses of objectivity; he called it what it was, probably revealing more truth in his observations than any

"Thompson's work peeled back the skin of America; he did not suffer fools lightly when he dissected the political and cultural landscape."

of his colleagues in the world of journalism and writing, and he had fun doing it.

In the same article/obituary about Nixon, Thompson explained, "Some people will say that words like scum and rotten are wrong for Objective Journalism--which is true, but they miss the point. It was the built-in blind spots of the Objective rules and dogma that allowed Nixon to slither into the White House in the first place. . . . You had to get Subjective to see Nixon clearly, and the shock of

recognition was often painful."

I remember last spring watching the media form a circle-jerk around the flag-draped coffin of Reagan as his corpse was being paraded around the country as if he were Abe Lincoln; and they tried to pass this vapid nonsense as news that lived up to their sacred "objective" standards!

Various newspapers surprisingly presented several sincere and appropriate articles about Thompson's life in recent days, but as usual, the television "news" worried more about missing white women and the hole in the pope's throat than offering cogent analysis of the life of one of the most interesting characters in modern times.

For me, Dr. Hunter S. Thompson was a visionary who portrayed American life and all its components in the most honest and accurate way possible; he never compromised his views for anyone, but instead forced his audience to look at the world around them, which eventually led to an astute understanding of just how sick of a world we live in. As an inimitable writer, he demonstrated that just one individual could change people's conceptions about the world around them with just the written word, and even in death, Thompson followed his own rules--on his own terms.

"Strike another match, go start anew

And it's all over now Baby Blue."

Smokers need to smoke on this



By Rodney Horton
SGA President
thyork2@yahoo.com

WE are Penn State, however WE can be insensitive. I have received several complaints about smokers blocking the ramp that disabled individuals use to get into the Olmsted Building. The ramp is a necessary tool for disabled individuals to come into the building, however the problem is the smokers. One gentleman in a wheelchair explained that when he attempts to come up to the ramp, individuals block the ramp and ignore his constant chants of "excuse me."

A lady who was pregnant told me that she had to use the ramp due to a hernia, and her journey was unpleasant and offensive. Some individuals refused to move out of her way, and when others moved out of her way, she had to endure a puff of their smoke. This second-hand smoke not only affected her, but it affected her baby.

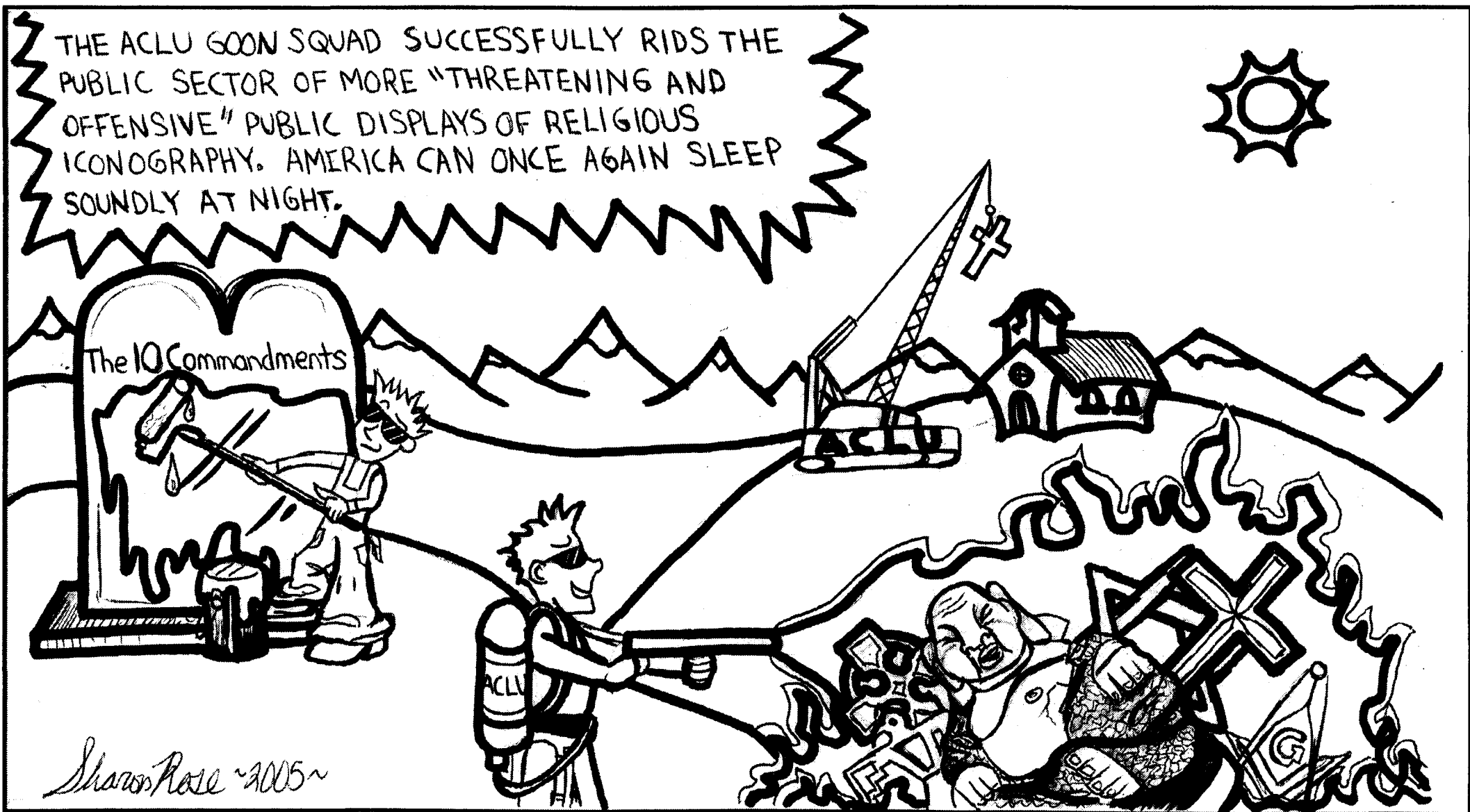
Are WE that insensitive? In the

words of the Black Eyed Peas (a singing group), "where is the love?" What can WE do to better the lives of someone else? The answer is to be sensitive to one another.

I hope that my "puffing" friends will remember that not everyone is a smoker; moreover those with physical disabilities simply want to enter the building without inhaling your smoke.

At my previous school (Central Pennsylvania College) campus security issued \$50 fines to individuals smoking in front of the entrance of an academic building. In addition, campus security was allowed to fine a student \$150 for blocking and smoking in front of a handicap entrance. Maybe we need to resort to extreme penalties so that WE can be more sensitive to someone else.

I hate to come off "cocky," however I hope WE all take this message as a warning before the university does. I wonder what some of US would do if we got a \$150 fine for blocking a handicap ramp. I have met with Dean Hanes on this issue and in the near future, the front of the Olmsted Building will be renovated so that smokers cannot (in any way) block the elevator entrance of handicap students. The Dean was discouraged with the concern that we discussed. So, for all of the students who have a problem with the "ramp blocking puffers" - heaven is just around the corner. I urge my fellow students to be aware of your fellow students, or else you could \$\$\$\$ for it.



WARNING: This is a Sharon Furfaro original cartoon.

Recently, there have been several cases of religious art being pulled from public parks. I need not say that these works, in many cases, held historic significance - obviously, that does not matter since the separation of church and state equates to the virtual obliteration of anything remotely religious or containing the oh-so controversial "G" word that may be viewed by the American public.

I worry about the day that wearing crucifixes and Stars of David is outlawed. I worry about the day that religious art is roped off in a corner of one designated museum.

I worry about the condition of our freedom of speech, and our freedom of religious expression.

Agree with me, disagree with me - America needs to at least start this discussion. Because for now, at least, I have the right to draw these religious symbols, and even print this cartoon.

E-mail: srf171@psu.edu

PSH and NYU students come full 'Circle K'

NYC cont'd from 1

Being part of that team, I can assure everyone that all residents got a freshly prepared meal with food donated from stores. After several hours of walking around New York with the meals and seeing the appreciative looks on the residents' faces, we returned back to NYU to help with the third project, "Surgery Dolls."

By now, the Surgery Dolls and Clothesline team had already had been involved in some serious sewing. They had been creating "Surgery Dolls" that will be presented to children who need surgery. Doctors use the dolls as models and show the children where they would be getting the surgery. The dolls are very popular in New York hospitals and it helps the young children cope with surgery.

At the same time, volunteers were serving food to needy residents at the St. Joseph's food kitchen where they prepped, served, set, and washed food and

dishes. One volunteer even got a cake since it was her birthday. Once again, all appreciated their services and the volunteers enjoyed meeting such a diverse group of people.

The fifth and final project had volunteers heading out into the city and helping residents fill out tax relief forms that would save them money and increase their awareness of tax relief programs.

Raba Rizvi, PSH Circle K secretary, said, "The tax outreach project was really fun because we got the chance to wander the streets of Brooklyn handing out informational flyers regarding income tax assistance for low-income families. It was also really informative to know how many of these families don't even know of the free benefits available to them, so all of us felt good being able to reach so many people in a relatively short amount of time, and hopefully helped made a difference in someone's life." Rizvi also enjoyed meeting

people from such a variety of backgrounds.

After the service projects had concluded, PSH volunteers had the opportunity to enjoy the rest of the day in the city and the NYU Circle K provided tours to various destinations, such as Times Square, the Empire State Building, and Canal St. Several volunteers saw a Broadway show, others preferred to visit Macy's and other stores, and some were content hanging out at "Jamba Juice" waiting for a celebrity to step out of a Hummer limo.

At the end of the day, NYU Circle K provided supper to thank the volunteers for their service and dedication. After final "thank you's" and "goodbyes," PSH departed for home.

Students and their families represented the PSH community in a positive way and each one truly got a unique experience. PSH Circle K is especially grateful for the support from the NYU Circle K members and faculty, Kiwanis International,

Dr. Widoff, Nichole Duffy, Nancy Leister, Helen Casner, Ella Dowell, Capital Trailways, SGA, and the students involved, especially non-Circle K members and their family members. On a personal note, O'Holla wants to thank Circle K members for their continuous support and dedication to the campus as well as the community for without their efforts and encouragement, this wonderful trip would have not occurred.

The PSH chapter of Circle K International is currently looking for new members and is working on several future community service projects and fund-raisers. Circle K has assisted Ronald McDonald House and have also volunteered at Essex House and WITF pledge drives. They have also participated in the Giving Tree Project, helped with the Middletown Halloween Parade, attended THON, and served food at the Bethesda Soup Kitchen in Harrisburg. Future activities include our district convention, an



Photo by Helen Casner/Circle K

From left, SGA senator Nicole Dellinger and an NYU student work together to create "Surgery Dolls" to be presented to children who need surgery.

Xtreme Dodgeball tournament, the MS Walk, an Earth day project, and a used clothing drive. For more information on Circle

K, please contact Steve O'Holla at sao142@psu.edu.