

TO THE EDITOR:

The SGA Farce:

The recent editorial in the NIT-TANY CUB brought to the surface, whether the editor realized it or not, the lack of true student representation by the SGA.

If the SGA were truly representative of the student body, it wouldn't be necessary for the editor to collect (or attempt to collect) information for the CUB in Culbertson Lounge. Instead she could go directly to the SGA members, and through them, find the opinions of the students.

I realize, of course, the SGA is going to retaliate to this statement by saying that they can't represent the students if the students don't come to them with their problems. You've heard it before: "They don't tell us any of their complaints!" But don't forget, when elected, SGA representatives were chosen with the understanding that they would represent the students. That was to be their job: to find the problems of the students and attempt to do something about them. Yet how many students have been approached by an SGA member with questions concerning student affairs? Very few, I'd venture to guess.

Thus far, the only obvious method used by the SGA to obtain student opinion was the questionnaire distributed at registration. Admittedly, it was a worthwhile step in the right direction, but if this is to be the sole method of obtaining student opinion, why are representatives necessary?

It appears to me and many of my "brilliant colleagues" that membership in SGA is not prompted by a desire to represent the student body, but instead by a desire to place oneself on a higher rung of the social ladder.

Membership in the SGA is considered (at least by SGA members) to be a status symbol. Perhaps the best evidence of this was the notice, recently posted on the bulletin board in the O. B. Building requesting five persons to fill vacant positions in the SGA. In part, this notice read: "This is your big chance to be where the action is, and to help make the decisions instead of just complaining about them." In the first place, if the SGA is "where the action is" why are they making an appeal for members? It seems as though they ought to be fighting them off.

Secondly, did the members ever stop to investigate the basis of these complaints that they are so obviously aware of? Immediately they pin the fault on the students when it seems more logical that the fault would be with the decisions themselves.

My point is this: if the members and representatives of the SGA could find it even remotely possible to lower themselves to the level of the students that they supposedly represent, perhaps they could obtain some of that respect that they so badly need. And I'm sure that they would find student cooperation accompanying that respect.

I realize that by writing this letter I am leaving myself wide open to criticism, but after observing for four terms the obvious failure of the SGA and noting the lack of action on their part, I decided that criticism (yes, even from an "ordinary student") would be the best method of prompting the necessary action.

Incidentally, I don't claim to be a "journalistic expert" nor do I think I ever could be.

Bob Hilton