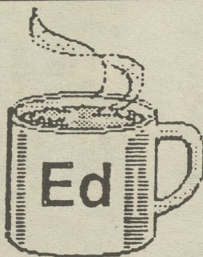


# Opinion & Review

## THE FRONT DESK

by Ed Tomieszko  
Campus Executive Officer



I'm back to writing after a visit to Superman's ice castle. We will all agree that this semester has been strange, at least in regard to the weather.

However, the semester has been and will be a great one - a celebration of the Asian cultures. We are singularly honored to have Professor Lui from the University of Hong Kong visiting our university. He is a distinguished historian and we are privileged to have him with us as a visiting Fulbright Lecturer.

Professor Ruiz will continue his visits with us. He is the President of the Technical University in Chiriqui, Panama. Dr. Ruiz came to Penn State in the Fall semester as a Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow to study higher education administration. He is my "shadow" each month.

Our student exchange program with Thames Valley University in London England is active. Five British students will be coming here in the Fall semester, 1994. As many of you who want to study in London can apply for the exchange program.

Our faculty exchange program with two Slovak Universities is gaining momentum. Two faculty from Slovakia will be on campus in March and again in the Summer semester to work with us on our American Studies program. There is even a possibility of several Slovak students coming to our University to study.

If we were to go back just a few years, I wonder how many of these events would have been considered, let alone considered to be happening on our campus. Penn State has changed enormously over the last few years and our campus has taken a leadership role in making our educational experience the best.

Over the same few years, the world has changed enormously. The international nature of our daily life is becoming obvious. You, as students, are fortunate to have these international contacts because, however you see your future, it will be an international one.

As the world is changing, so is education. Communication has made the distance between locations disappear. We will soon have the capability to conduct meetings via interactive television. In the next several years, you will be able to attend class through the "magic" of interactive television. The classroom takes on a dimensionless character and you become an active participant in learning as opposed to being taught.

Teaching will still take place in the University. But learning will be the key to future success in the very same way as it has been in the past. Teaching and learning are different. Learning takes teaching into a new dimension. Learning makes knowledge useful and productive.

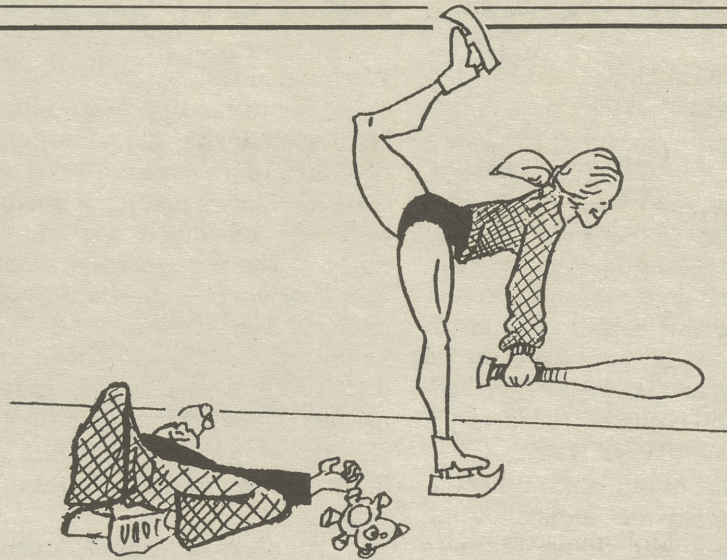
I can teach you a lot of chemistry, and you can even answer my test questions if I had taught you properly. Let me take you back in my own career a decade or two. Back in my industrial research days, one of my first assignments in the company was to the corporate education committee. This committee was charged to take brand new employees with doctorates and "teach" them how chemistry was done in the industry. It was most disconcerting for the new employee to hear that they had to "unlearn" a lot of irrelevant and, in some cases, incorrect information. They knew a lot of scientific facts, but what they needed to learn was how to connect these facts into a working knowledge. To be productive they had to learn how to understand and to extend.

There are those in the University who are now saying, "Our purpose is to transmit knowledge. What students do with the knowledge is their business." This might have been true twenty years ago.

Today and for all of the tomorrows, communication has made the boundaries of nations and knowledge disappear. It is probable that we will visit again with Profess Lui, but we will go to his classroom by television to make our visit, and he will be here with us through television.

Here's the point. I have a higher hope for the future than simply visiting, teaching, and learning. Communication will help with understanding. Understanding is the ultimate goal of teaching and learning because understanding helps us move into new levels of human interaction. The critical understanding needed is to understand the individual person and the different cultures that each of us comes from.

We celebrate various cultures through our Cultures Semesters. The next educational step is to understand the person. Understanding will remove the biases - racial, ethnic, gender, religious, capability - you can add whatever bias you want to add. Without a bias, we begin to understand value. Trust me, the future depends on what value we, as individuals, add to our world.



"She speaks softly, and carries a big stick"

### Editorial:

## The Killer Charm of Your TV

By Martyna Sliwinska

The good news is that fresh into a new semester, we've already had a vacation. The bad news is that very few of us actually gotten to enjoy it. After a week of sitting home with your parents and siblings and what other joys of live God has equipped you with, school seems like a dream getaway. The logical solution is to lock yourself in a room with a bag of Doritos and a TV. That's where the second dangerous element comes into effect - information overload.

Since the year 1993 has just ended, every major TV station took it upon itself to present you, the viewer, with a thorough "year in review" special. So, after you have had enough of re-living the L.A. Riots and Mr. Rodney King pleading with you, the bad guys: "Can't we all just get along...," you turned the channel. Did you escape? No, not really, because the year 1994, as young and "inexperienced" as it may seem, was waiting for you with its share of juicy stories you just could not ignore.

It has been only a month, and already we have had a major trial televised live on CNN. The issue, maybe not too relevant to the welfare of the country, but how much more powerful. All you have to do is mention the name Lorena Bobbitt and you have every guy in the room cringing and cowering. Talk about the impact of the media.

The world of "healthy competition" (meaning sports in case you have trouble associating the two together) was blemished once again. Not that it came as a shock. This time America's skating sweetheart, Nancy Kerrigan, was the victim. That is if the word "victim" is powerful enough to describe the image of Nancy wailing in tears on the ground, the media so carefully flashed in front of our eyes every half an hour on every station for about a week.

After all this, aren't you glad your life is so simple? The television set is the most authoritative appliance in the house, but it also helps you kill the rest of the brain cells responsible for your better judgment. If by watching the news you think you gain knowledge, stop kidding yourself. Do what I did - turn it off, and go dig up your car from under the snow and the ice. Hey, with some luck, you may have to go to school soon!

## THE LION'S EYE

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February

is

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

... a time to broaden our knowledge  
and understanding.