

# Opinion & Review

## Editorials

### PBS Wrongfully Targeted

By Bernard F. Mount

Could you imagine growing up without the benefit of public television? When Lyndon Johnson signed the Public Broadcasting Act in 1968, he thought of public broadcasting as being an educational tool. It created a national communication system that could provide the refreshing kind of discussion impossible in a commercially driven system.

When Congress and Johnson established the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) to protect public radio and TV from political pressures, they failed to guarantee funding.

Two years after its creation, the attempts to diminish public funding to the CPB had begun. Richard Nixon, irritated over the airing of such publicly broadcasted documentaries as *The Banks and the Poor*, which revealed how banks' lending policies were increasing national poverty, ordered his staff to see to it that "all funds for public broadcasting be cut immediately." This reduced Congressional funding and forced the CPB to turn to major corporations for assistance.

Since then the percentage of government funding has been decreasing rapidly, from 26 percent in 1980 to 16 percent in 1990, with corporate funding increasing from 11 percent to 17 percent. This increase in corporate funding is accompanied by increasing demands to commercialize.

Recently, Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich and fellow Republican lawmakers have decided that they would like to eliminate all federal support to public broadcasting, labeling it as a "luxury item."

Gingrich argues that public broadcasting is a "sandbox for the rich," being paid for by "poor workers." He was overheard telling GOP staffers; "I don't know why they call it public broadcasting. As far as I am concerned it's an elitist enterprise."

Research has shown that people of all socioeconomic strata tune to public broadcasting; 40 million people listen to National Public Radio (NPR) each week. A survey in late January showed that 84 percent of Americans polled favored government funding. And last year 6.8 million Americans gave \$390 million of their own cash to their public stations. These are hardly elitist numbers.

More importantly, Gingrich fails to represent the opinion of the nation's most important resource, its children. Public broadcasting, through the introduction of national programs like "Sesame Street" and "Mr. Rogers," has become an important part of our children's early education.

If we lose public broadcasting our children will be losing an important educational supplement that is now available to every household, regardless of income, or ability to pay.

Public broadcasting has indeed become an educational tool. It symbolizes the very qualities this country stands for: freedom and opportunity. Public broadcasting expresses the views and the opinions of the public, not those of the small "elite" who are chosen to represent, or much too often misrepresent the public.

### Which Words Are Off-Color?

By James Foltz

#### The N-Word?

It came up in the OJ trial just recently. Why is it called the N-Word? Why should it be separated from any other sort of degrading, racist or prejudiced word? Why shouldn't one say the word, as one would any other word when speaking about it? The N-Word.

Is it a nice word? No. It is a despicable word with an atrocious meaning behind it. But why would the N-Word be treated any differently than another derogatory phrase?

#### The H-Word?

People have never heard of that. What is the H-Word? It's the same as the N-Word, a racial slur, yet it is referring to a different race.

#### Honkey.

There it is. It's okay to read. It's not as bad to say, or at least it is viewed in a less negative manner by society than the N-Word.

#### "Black Power."

That's an interesting phrase. It means a lot of things. It stands for a lot of things. It has been deemed acceptable, whereas another phrase has not been deemed acceptable: "White Power."

#### "Whitey."

That is another word which seems okay to say. It has been spoken on television in a very bigoted manner, yet the reaction was one of laughter. Why? If the word "blackey" was spoken in the same manner, the reaction would be quite different. No one would laugh.

#### Why is it okay to say "whitey"?

#### Honkey?

#### Oreo?

#### Spic?

#### Chink?

#### And not... well, you know... the N-Word?

Am I proclaiming that people should show a lack of sensitivity and bellow out racial slurs at the top of their lungs? Not a chance. I just don't think that one racial slur should be considered more hurtful than another. If one racist word or phrase is unofficially banned from the English language, then all should be.



MOSES...ER... DR. GRAHAM SPANIER MAKES HIS HISTORIC FIRST PILGRIMAGE TO PSU DELCO!!

### Cultural Diversity In Bloom

By Bill Campbell

Several weeks ago I noticed many works of art hanging on the wall near room 112 on the bottom floor of the library. I hadn't noticed them before, so I am guessing they were newly completed projects of Mrs. Connie Kirker's art students. They were all beautifully appealing.

Walking through this newly decorated hall, I felt, for the first time in the year and a half that I've been on this campus, a sense of belonging and identification. Too many times before the barren walls of the campus had left me feeling empty—bored.

Yes! this is it, I thought, reflecting on the art. We have it after all. PSU Delco has culture. We have spirit. We have diversity.

Why have we been hiding it?

Repeatedly, in the following weeks this impression of latent culture, spirit, and diversity re-surfaced. The campus beautification project is continuing successfully. New lights, the naming of the Vairo Library, posted art work, club flyers and posters, these, combined with other ideas for campus improvement, all make for a nice feeling of a home away from home.

Also, I am impressed with the idea, suggested by Nicholas Felici, co-editor of the *Lion's Eye*, of a "literary cafe". Students could share works of writing and whatever else in a cozy, caffeinated cafeteria.

Another grand opportunity for students and faculty to flaunt their spirit and cultural diversity is the campus literary magazine, *Penn in Hand*.

An unbridled sharing of art work, writing and other works of cultural value can help establish a greater sense of community among PSU Delco students, faculty, and staff. It can help thwart the wide perception of "Penn State apathy," and the idea, implied by Dr. Graham Spanier, President of PSU, and acknowledged by many Delco faculty during Dr. Spanier's inauguration address, that students lack the ability to hold rational discussions.

PSU Delco has the brains and diversity to become one hell of a cultural and academic community. I'd like to see it happen. But, more than that, I'd like to be a part of it.

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