

Opinion

An editorial

Where's the pomp and circumstance

Think about this. You've worked very hard for at least four years, toiling away on essays, projects and exams. You've finally succeeded at completing your degree and are preparing to graduate. Expecting a big ceremony, with lots of pomp and circumstance, you eagerly await the information about graduation. When the information is passed on to you, you find yourself looking at a paper telling you that the ceremony will be held in the library. The library? But how can that be? After all that hard work the campus can't offer you anything better. Yeah right.

On a campus with a large gymnasium and lots of outdoor space, one would think that the administrators here could do something big for you, on your big day. Unfortunately for this year's graduates, there is nothing better, nothing big. A ceremony in the library, where only four people may come per graduate and hat throwing is not allowed, is what our graduates look forward to. It's a shame.

Remember when the President Bush came to visit? The gym was done up with drapes, lights and a sound system. It didn't look like the gym. A stage was built on the floor, the area looked great, and there was plenty of room. Why can't the campus spend some money to buy drapes (yes, we know...they're very expensive) and despite the initial high cost, use these drapes for graduation and any other ceremony that the campus has. The drapes will last for years as long as they are stored properly.

If this seems like too much money to put out for the student body, to make our graduations more special, allowing us to bring more people and enjoy our day a lot more, then think about an outdoor ceremony. Yes, weather could present problems. But if the campus rented, or bought, a large tent, and put it up in the middle of the campus, we wouldn't have to worry about limiting how many people can come, or much else for that matter.

There are so many alternatives to graduating in the library, and the students deserve much better. Many of us look forward to graduation all our lives and to end up in the library, crowded in and with no pomp and circumstance seems a waste of time. If you're going to do something, do it right. Don't make the students feel as if they aren't worth anything really special, or the school may risk losing their precious alumni support.

The Penn State website boasts that the Penn State Alumni Association is a powerful network of more than 145,000 members, and is the largest dues-paying alumni association in the country. By stripping down on the pomp and circumstance for our graduating seniors, the school has put itself at risk of jading the students against their Alma Mater. What kind of student would want to give their hard-earned money back to a school that couldn't even shell out for their graduation. There isn't any student alive who would do that.

While it is too late for the graduates of 2003 to change anything, there is still time for you and your respective classes to voice your opinion about this sad state of affairs. The classes of 2004 and on still have a chance to have their graduation location changed.

Come on Penn State, the students expect so much more from a university that expects only the best.

Saddam crumbles face-first, and freedom triumphs again

As I watched the Iraqi people topple the statue of Saddam Hussein on television after Baghdad fell April 9 and then dance on it in contempt, I was reminded of the natural yearning of the human spirit for freedom from oppression. People worldwide have fought for the freedoms of private property, prosperity, speech and the ability to create their own futures.

The American Revolution is almost an icon of the thirst for independence. Americans owe George Washington a debt of gratitude for defeating the British under General Charles Cornwallis in 1781 in the final stage of the Revolution after a siege that had lasted 20 days. The 13 colonies gained their official independence from Britain Sept. 3, 1783 during the signing of the Treaty of Paris.

The French followed in the footsteps of the United States. The demands of the despotism-denouncing French National Assembly consisting of all three Estates of France (clergy, aristocracy, commoners) for limiting the power of the king and his administrators, establishing a permanent legislative assembly, and reducing taxes were not met by King Louis XVI, who sent troops to break up the revolution. On July 14, 1789, the French people stormed the Bastille, a large prison fortress, to steal arms and free prisoners of despotism. After the

Great Fear during the same summer when starving peasants attacked their lords, the National Assembly dissolved feudal privileges, allowing the peasants to be free from bondage to the land of their lords. The National Assembly wrote the Declaration of the Rights of Man calling for a constitutional monarchy with less power for the king, and the Louis XVI agreed.



By RENEE BLISARD

Who can forget about April 14, 1945, when American and British forces captured Nuremberg, the capital of oppressive Nazi Germany, ending their tyranny over Europe?

President Ronald Reagan asked Mikael Gorbachev to "tear down that wall" and in 1989, the Berlin Wall was torn down, once again uniting Germany. The Soviet Union collapsed soon after and Russians were freed from state ownership of their lives.

Human history is full of people striving for freedom from oppressive monarchies and totalitarian dictatorships. As philosopher John Locke said, "Freedom of men under government is to have a standing rule to live by, common to every one of that society, and made by the legislative power vested in it; a liberty to follow my own will in all things, when the rule prescribes not, and not to be subject to the inconstant, unknown, arbitrary will of another man."

Some people should simply exercise right to stay quiet

Most Americans are proud that we have the freedom of speech and the press, as well as the right to assembly. But some people in this country have taken their freedoms too far, especially in the recent events of the war. While I will defend every person's right to speak his mind, I feel that it would be in some people's best interests to refrain from doing so.

Some people think that their freedom of speech is a license for them to spout out angst-ridden, meaningless words. Televised war protests have shown signs with phrases such as "No blood for oil" and "War is not the answer."

I thought by now people would realize that the war had nothing to do with oil. It was about removing a dictator who is dangerous to his own people and poses a threat to other countries and our own. It was about rebuilding the country he ruled. Oil is irrelevant; we get very little oil from Iraq to begin with, and the war is costing far more than all the oil in Iraq is worth. I think it's easy for someone to say that war is not the answer. But if it's really not the answer, then what is? One thing I've noticed about the war protestors is that they can complain about America's foreign policy, but offer no alternative solutions. Thus their protesting is useless.

I'm sick and tired of people calling our president a moron and stating that he was "not really elected," and using these untrue statements in their arguments against the war. Launching ad hominem attacks does not benefit one's cause. It is not constructive criticism, and it's a rather juvenile attempt to form a well-supported opinion. For those who truly believe that George W. Bush was not fairly elected need to do some serious studying about the Electoral College. Bush may not be the most intelligent president ever elected, and his public speaking schools are far from outstanding. However, he also has an MBA, and I wasn't aware that universities such as Harvard and Yale handed out degrees to idiots. Again, I would like to know how these people would have handled 9/11 and the conflict with Iraq. I have yet to hear a solution.

Perhaps if they considered this, they'd rethink their labeling of our president as a "moron".

Celebrity "activists" are another annoyance. Does anyone really care what Sheryl Crow and the Dixie Chicks say about Bush and the war? To my knowledge, neither has a degree in political science. They have the right to express their opinions about the war, but their opinions are no more

important than those of the average American citizen.

Some celebrities have spoken their minds about the war in inappropriate situations. Michael Moore, for example, immaturely called Bush and the war "fictitious" at the Academy Awards (which is ironic considering Bowling For Columbine was not really a documentary, and thus Mr. Moore won a fictitious award).

Other celebrities, such as Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins, think that their freedom of speech is being violated because a director of an event (in this case, it was Bill Durham who held a Baseball Hall of Fame tribute) does not wish to invite them to speak. This is a fallacy, because only the government can limit one's freedom of speech, and directors of such events have every right to only invite who he wishes. If these celebrities care so much about getting their lame opinions heard throughout the country, they have the option of spending a few million dollars on an advertisement for national television.

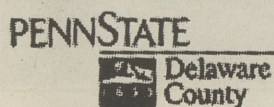
Probably the most contradictory usage of freedom of speech is when American citizens express the sentiment that they hate this country. I wonder if they realize how fortunate they are to openly discuss their hatred for the United States, a country that protects everyone's right to speak his mind, regardless of the absurdity of his words. It is unbelievably hypocritical to say that you hate the nation in which you live. I have some helpful advice for these people: If you hate America so much that you cannot bear to live

here, please take up your greatest freedom and leave. I don't want you here any more than you want to be here.

Basically, freedom of speech is a wonderful thing. But if opening your mouth will only reveal your ignorance and lack of education, perhaps you might want to consider exercising your right to remain silent.

Lion's Eye Mission Statement

We are the newspaper of the Penn State Delaware County campus, serving the students, faculty, administration, staff of, and visitors to, our campus. We vow to entertain and inform all of our audiences, and we will strive to make each edition better, so that we remain a vital part of the Penn State Delco experience. We also strive to be professional, and follow the highest standards of good journalism.



The Lion's Eye

Editor-in-chief:
Anteia Consorto
Copy Editor:
Meredith Becker
Staff writers: Renee Blisard,

Gerry Dungan, Sarah Gallatig, Karen Karaszkiwicz, Shawn Manderson, Jennifer Rufo, Jared Szymurski, Amanda Trombetti
Contact the Lion's Eye: By phone: 610-892-1258
By email: AAC136@psu.edu