Editorial Opinion

An Apology Due

By JOHN LOTT Collegian Editor

The signed column of last Friday written by Mel Ziegler about chapter of the American Associa-Prof R. Wallace Brewster's Political Science 3 course has provoked a wave of letters and telephone calls from Dr. Brewster's colleagues and from students. If one conclu- ty whose teaching and published sion can be drawn from this re- work is widely respected. And all sponse, perhaps it is this: Dr. protested and questioned the sense Brewster's reputation as an instruct of responsibility displayed by the tor, scholar and human being appears unassailable. What has been brought under serious question is the responsibility and judgment exercised by Editorial Editor Ziegler in writing the column, and by The Daily Collegian Editor in permitting such remarks to be published.

The Collegian has received letters from the Dean of the Liberal Arts College, from several political science professors, from the department's acting head expressing the feeling of the department as a

taken Dr. Brewster's course. We also have received a telephone call from an officer of the University tion of University Professors and several late-night anonymous calls All the opinions expressed support of Dr. Brewster as a man of integri-Collegian in this situation.

It has been pointed out that Dr Brewster has long been a champion of student rights, especially in the realm of a free student press. It has been noted that his work in the AAUP has illustrated this, and that, indeed, Dr. Brewster has been one of the leading supporters of a student course evaluation program. His textbook, in addition to being hailed for excellence by the State Department, has also gained highly -favorable critical reviews abroad. In an attempt to offer construc-

Course Evaluation booklet, Mr Ziegler chose a particular course and its professor as an example. Mr. Ziegler has taken the course and received an above-average grade. He himself has maintained a consistently high academic standing. He wrote on the assumption that these factors qualified him to make a critical evaluation.

Perhaps his approach and assumptions were unfortunate. Subsequent reaction has obviously made it embarrassing, not only to Dr. Brewster, but to The Daily Collegian as a whole. While Mr Ziegler's basic aim was to point up the weaknesses of the course guide his overall comments have obviously appeared to some readers as an unprovoked attack on Dr. Brewster Such was not the intention

However, after reviewing the situation. The Daily Collegian Board of Editors believes it necessary to make public apology to Dr. Brewster for any unintended embarrasswhole, and from students who have tive suggestions to improve the first ment stemming from this incident

melfluence **Course Evaluations** By MEL ZIEGLER Editorial Editor

Last in a series

The student Course Evaluation booklet published last week has made a notable advance in the area of student involvement in academic affairs. But in its present format the booklet falls short of its maximum value.

A useful course evaluation will offer guidance both to the student pondering a choice of electives and instructors and to the professor in analyzing his own effectiveness.

Such generalizations as "it contributes (or does not contribute) to a well-rounded education" or "this course serves (or does not serve) as an adequate introduction" aren't really saying anything that will benefit either student or instructor. The booklet is filled with these useless ambiguities.

Currently courses are evaluated through questionaires distributed among student enrollees with the statistical results religiously converted to prose form. The questionnaire is a collection of twenty yes-no answer-type questions, concluding with a solicitation for "additional comments".

As it is, however, the questionnaire is too rigid and inflexible and often irrelevant. A yes or no answer to such questions as "Do you think this course has contributed to your well-rounded education" or "Can you easily find the important material in the text" will not necessarily provide an accurate indication. A new type of questionnaire which will require more than an overly-generalized response from the student, with space provided alongside the question for him to express his feelings in his own words will provide a more intensive analysis of the course,

The major failure in the first Course Evaluation booklet is evident with its use of compiled data. Once a more imaginative questionnaire is drafted, student reviewers responsible for writing the course summaries should be left with the freedom to convert the data into meaningful analyses, instead of the dry verbalized data that is now used.

Students in high academic standing who have completed the particular course they are reviewing with either an A or B grade should be employed to do the writing

Another vital improvement for the course evaluation processes would be, to de-emphasize the classroom policies of the teacher in favor of more concern with his ability to arrange and deliver his material. Whether the instructor bases his exams on the text or his lectures is not nearly as important as the substance of the course





Prejudiced Melfluence

Note to Mr. Zeigler: Attached point I would like to focuyou will find a carbon of a attention on Mr. Zeigler's reletter to the editor. It will probably never find its way Failed." I would like to ask to print, therefore I felt obligated to send you a copy.

TO THE EDITOR: Two basic issues seemed to have emerged concerning the recent publication "Course Evalua-tion." The first concerns who shall judge This issue concerning the qualifications one needs in order to offer responsible and constructive criticism has managed to generate sufficient controversy. Of equal importance, is the question concerning what should be done with the data once it has been collected and tabulated 1 suggest that the data, as such, are "dumb", and will remain so until spoken for by an individual interested in answering a question or proving a point. Further, that researchers in both the collection and interpretation of data have an uncanny way of seeking what they want to see in the data; abstracting in relation to their desires and expectations

cent article, "Why a Professor Mr. Zeigler to clarify the basis from which he made his inter-

pretation, Unless USG offered him additional data not presented in the "Evaluation." I see no reason to accept his conclusion that Dr. Brewster should be considered a failure. Mr. Zeigler, if he did not ob-serve additional data, appears to be the tailure. His article is seems prejudiced and sensatonal in its approach. Such techniques, although they sell papers and create public interest, appear to be irresponsible. Certainly the license to editorialize implies some measure of responsibility. Unfortunately Mr Zeigler did not seem to demonstrate his re-ponsibility either to his many readers or to Dr. Brewster.

In conclusion I would submit that Mr. Zeigler needs to re examine his own methods he fore undertaking to evaluate the methods of others. -David E. Butt.

Instructor of speech

Brewster Analysis Called Critical Generalization

term student majoring in Political Science and having had Dr Brewster for Political Science 3, 1 would like to express my dissatisfaction with Mr. Ziegler's Critical "Analysis" of Dr. Brewster and his course, Mr. Ziegler's desire to expose the Penn State student body and faculty to the "staleness" of Dr Brewster's course. and to open our eyes to the "more prepared" incoming freshmen is indeed admirable. However, "melthuence" has done little more than criticize. and his generalizations and simplifications of Political Sci-ence 3 and of the man who teaches it clearly reflect Mr. Ziegler's inability to balance resource and reason.

Granted, there is much room for improvement in Political Science 3, but I sincerely doubt the usefulness of such'a method as Mr Ziegler has employed. Rather, the products of his method may be resentment and dissatisfaction. Perhaps, strangely enough, these products may have even served as the motivating factors for this particular column of "melfluence.

-William Strawn

Serious Abuse LETTERS TO THE EDITOR **Restraint Urged** TO THE EDITOR: As a 5th TO THE EDITOR: The Depart- constructive purpose. In the ment of Political Science vel- future, we hope that those who comes constructive criticism from any and all students of claim to write under the protection of free speech and free its course offerings. The mem-bers of the Department, howpress will exercise the right are unanimous in dewith a degree of restraint and ploring the unsubstantiated, unresponsibility.

founded ad hominem attack upon an individual professor The venomous nature of that attack could hardly serve a

I'M GONNA GET SLAUGHTERED, BUT I CAN'T RESIST THE CHALLENGE

I HATE

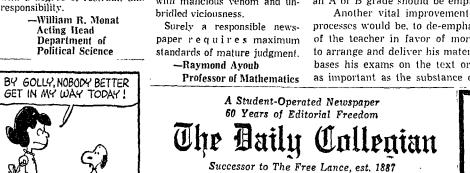
THE WHOLE WORLD!

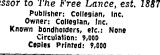
I FEEL

MEAN!

TO THE EDITOR: The recent attack on Professor R. Wallace Brewster by Mel Ziegler is without doubt a serious abuse of freedom of the press. One might be inclined to dis-

miss it as juvenile (and, as it turns out, ignorant) exercise in criticism were it not filled with malicious venom and un-





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In Memory of William Jeffrey Honorary Sigma Phi Alpha, 1934 If I have done any deed worthy of remembrance, that deed will be my monument. -Agesilaus the Brothers and Pledges

In relation to the second

of Alpha Kappa Lambda, successor to Sigma Phi Alpha

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