

# Alma Mater's 'boyhood gate' under criticism

By JOAN HARDESTY  
Collegian Staff Writer

The Penn State alma mater lately has undergone close scrutiny by campus women's organizations.

When the alma mater is sung at football games, students who aren't chanting "We don't know the goddamn words" are singing "When we stood at boyhood's gate... Thou didst mold us, dear old State, into Men."

According to Association for Women Students President Marjorie Storch, "The stanza fails to represent the women who make up nearly one half of the University's student body. Just as social attitudes and institutions change over time, so must outdated and irrelevant traditions."

Norma Raffel, chairperson of the National Education Council of the Women's Equity Action League, said the stanza is "just out of this world I can't understand why class after class of women have sung it. This stanza is an abuse of women students who

seem to have no sensitivity to it."

Raffel said this Alma Mater stanza may have been appropriate 50 years ago, "but it no longer is and should be deleted or modified if it is to have meaning at all. It's everything like this that adds up to equal opportunity for women."

"By keeping this stanza the University has not moved with the trend to abolish sexist attitudes and practices," she said.

The composer of the alma mater, Fred Lewis Pattee, anticipated feminine reaction to the stanza and wrote words to be substituted in the stanza but refused to make the final change himself.

When the alma mater was written in 1901 when George

Atherton was college president few women attended college. According to his autobiography, "Penn State Yankee" (1953), Pattee said he believed in 1901 that "a college was for the education of men."

Pattee wrote that Penn State always had been a "he-man's college" and it became co-educational only because it was supported by the taxpayers who had as much right to send their daughters to the institution that their money was supporting as they had to send sons. Once the tide turned, however, it became a "flood."

Indignant male students sent a petition to the trustees protesting that their college was becoming "a tea party and a dress parade." "Penn State's a he-man's college," they said, "not a nunnery." The trustees obliged by setting a quota of female students permitted to be enrolled.

Eventually, Pattee wrote, he realized Penn State was no longer purely a masculine student body and rewrote the stanza as "When we stood at childhood's gate... Thou didst

mold us, dear old State, Dear old State."

"Surely in this world nothing is permanent save only change," he said. "But it does seem to me Penn State's mission has been to mold men for the major jobs in the world. I hesitate to change the stanza. Let someone with the forward look do it."

AWS believes this year, International Women's Year, is the appropriate time for the change.

"I'm behind them," Michael Thomas (graduate-English) said. "It's silly that we even have a verse like that in 1975."

Ann Shelton of the Alumni Association expressed interest in informing the Alumni Council of the move. "This may stir up some controversy among the old-timers," she said.

University President John W. Oswald has expressed disapproval of the move. "The alma mater written over 50 years ago is a part of long-time campus tradition and I feel there are more fruitful ways to proceed than to try to alter those words," he said.

"Its composers, I feel positive, had nothing

discriminatory in mind when the verses were written."

One anonymous student said, "I like it like that. It sounds nice to me."

A graduate of the University class of 1937, who is employed in the Penn State Room of Pattee Library, said the "alma mater is a tradition that many people cherish."

"Women need to get changes in political and legal areas, but not in alma maters. Women fooling with the Alma Mater will turn people off," she said.

However, one student said, "It would be a subtle change but important enough to make people notice."

Bob Moyer (9th-psychology) said, "I don't think the alma mater is taken too seriously. I had to learn it when I joined a fraternity."

"I can see how it might be inappropriate though," Moyer said. "The girl I'm going out with is very much into women's studies and if I say 'that stupid woman driver,' I get clobbered. It doesn't matter to me whether they change the alma mater or not, but if it comes down to a hassle, I'd say change it."

## Mayaguez affair ok'd

# U.S. action condoned

By United Press International  
Newspapers in England, Spain and Israel said yesterday the United States was justified in using military force to retake the American cargo ship Mayaguez and its crew from the Cambodians.

Somewhat surprisingly, the Soviet Union's official Tass news agency reported the American show of strength without comment and the mass media in China omitted mention of it altogether.

Reaction was also favorable in South Africa, but a French newspaper criticized the action. United Nations officials were silent on the matter.

"This time it would be difficult to blame the United States Administration for what occurred," the London Times said. "This was clearly an act of piracy—indeed, being carried out by the naval forces of another country, an act of war—which no government could ignore."

The Daily Mail said the Americans "were justified in going to the limit to rescue their men and their ship," and the Evening News said the decision to send in the Marines "was one of those very rare occasions when might is right."

The Madrid newspaper Informaciones said the American action was welcomed in Europe as a demonstration that "the Communist vic-

tory in Indochina has not turned the United States into a scarecrow."

In a report from Washington, Tass gave the basic details of the operation against Cambodia, mentioning the fighting and the sinking of three Cambodian vessels.

It quoted the Cambodian allegation that the Mayaguez was engaged in intelligence activities, without elaboration.

The main early evening television news in Moscow did not report the U.S. action at all. All mass circulation media in Peking omitted mention of the matter.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the former Cambodian head of state living in Peking for the last five years, remained silent on the note the American diplomatic mission handed the Cambodian embassy Tuesday.

In Tel Aviv, the Israeli Labor party newspaper Davar said the United States was right to retake the ship by force.

And the government-run South African Broadcasting Corporation said the United States would "benefit from the determination not to be pushed around by any pipsqueak nations indulging in criminal acts of violence."

United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim offered to mediate early in the dispute but refused comment on the American military action.

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