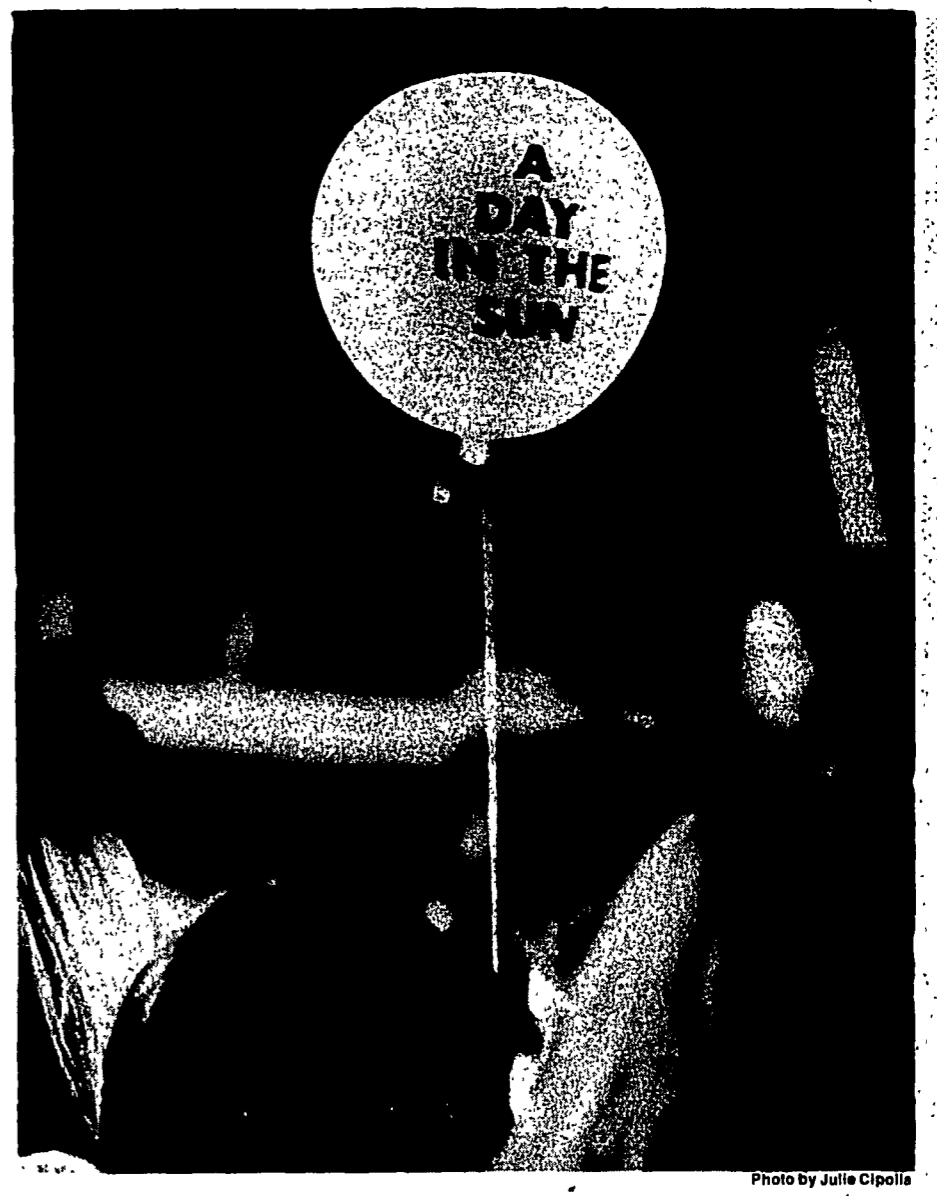


Stash your trash  
and let everyone  
have a  
Gentle Thursday.



## Sixties' idealism a cliché

Today if the sun shines thousands of students will abandon their books to bring blankets and brown-bagged bottles and bubble blowers to the HUB lawn.

Gentle Thursday, which began as a Speech 200 project, has been a tradition since 1970. It's typically a day when anything goes — people paint their bodies and dress in freaky clothes and peacefully pass out on the HUB lawn. Its theme is always something like "a day of sharing," or "a day of caring, sharing and love," or "a day in the sun" — words that often seem embarrassingly syrupy and overdone to the cynics among us.

But cynicism will have no place on the HUB lawn today. And that's the beauty of this gentle holiday — it evokes a nostalgia for the sixties, when young people were still optimistic and the words "peace" and "love" were not clichés.

Today it is vogue to languish in the nostalgia of the forties and fifties, eras

far removed from students' memories. To most of us, the sixties were a time when bearded outlaws carried protest signs and threw firebombs at college administration buildings. It was a time when scraggly "flower children" smoked pot and chanted Indian canticles in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district.

It was also the time of Woodstock, the big granddaddy of Gentle Thursday, where 400,000 people between the ages of 18 and 25 spent three non-violent days listening to big bands on Max Yasgur's dairy farm.



Cathy Cipolla

Woodstock is far away now — we can pull out the album and reminisce about how shocked we were, in all our high school innocence, to hear Country Joe's "Fish Cheer" for the first time. We can reminisce about those big 10-page spreads we saw in Life magazine of students demonstrating for "social causes" or against the Vietnam war.

Now their angry faces blur into the background, and we can see how wrong they were to try to fight the system, right? Their "social consciousness" no longer exists today. We have something else now — some call it "seriousness of

purpose" or "a new conservatism"; others are more blunt and call it "looking out for number one."

We found out that we can't fight the system, so we take refuge in our books so we can get top grades and get fantastic jobs so we can buy corvettes and stereos and get a house down the shore. We crack jokes about Nixon and Watergate but few of us even bother to vote. Our clothes reflect less self-expression and more narcissism — we want to make a good impression, of course.

We complain that the demonstrations of the sixties solved nothing, and that the violence that often accompanied them was senseless. But was it any more senseless than the guerrilla tactics recently used by Bruce Springsteen fans, who fought tooth and nail to be first in line so they could buy four tickets and scalp three?

In the late sixties, folk singer Arlo Guthrie had glowing hopes for the future: "All political systems are on the way out. We're finally gonna get to the point where there's no more bigotry or greed or war. Peace is on the way ... people are simply gonna learn that they can get more by being groovy than by being greedy."

Some people would criticize poor Arlo for living in a fool's paradise. Perhaps some of us have learned that being "groovy" inevitably leads to being screwed. I, for one, lament the loss of this optimism and idealism among college students. And I also think we should make an effort to remember these feelings today, on this "day of sharing."

## Mob scene strikes hype

By KEITH BARNES  
Collegian Staff Writer

The Gentle Thursday Committee is about to hold its annual extravaganza. That low moan you just heard can be traced to the Hetzel Union Building and its adjacent lawn.

Gentle Thursday, a day of hype billed as a day of "music, balloons, flowers and sharing." Thousands of the younger brothers and sisters of the Woodstock generation turning out to turn on to peace and love. But mostly to litter.

Gentle Thursday, 1975, another excuse to put the books aside to party, and an obscene mob scene. A relentless downpour forces peace, love, Woodstock and its accompanying trash indoors. Some say mother Nature did it on purpose.

Peace. Hipsters jam wall-to-wall in the HUB Ballroom. One particularly loud and hard-driving band spurs a fight in the back of the room, that quickly becomes a

forgotten memory.

Love. A pile of garbage growing higher as the day wears on. Someone starts a rumor that the custodians will be more than happy to clean up on Friday. After all, that's what they're paid to do. A stumbling bit of human refuse steps on the same person three times in two seconds. "Quaaludes, man," he apologizes. With a goofy grin and a clever spilling of red wine on his victim's bright white painter's pants, he rolls off to fall on someone else.

Woodstock. It rained there, too, at which point everyone took their partying home. Perhaps they even cleaned up their own mess. They may have gone home just to relieve themselves. Throughout most of Gentle Thursday, HUB rest rooms feature freshly peed-upon toilet paper.

Sharing. The Ballroom gets its fair share of abuse. The pile of garbage stops growing as darkness sets in. Why

trek to the pile when a casual drop at one's feet will do? It's the natural way.

And smoke. They're even burning incense. It's 1975 and the leeches are still burning incense. The HUB groans. The stuff still stinks. At least it covers up the smell of everything else. Cigarettes of all makes and kinds are being ground into the once-proud wooden floor with a vigor that would even take the shine off the seat of a bus driver's pants.

Throughout it all, Gentle Thursday people gleefully distribute aspirin, shampoo and squirt guns free of charge. Irony would have it that a well-tossed canister of Excedrin would slam into someone's head. Instead it merely grazes a hand and sends a half-empty beer bottle shattering to the floor.

Peace? Love? Woodstock? Horse-frocky. A truly Gentle Thursday would feature a snowstorm and locked HUB doors.

## Not generally speaking

Does anyone remember the 12-part series "Rich Man, Poor Man," which was on television last winter? It was a soap opera type dramatization of a novel by Irwin Shaw, concerning two brothers who could neither get along with or without each other. One was "good" and the other "bad," to generalize a bit. Fang wrote me about it and begged me to watch it as a favor, and I complied because he sounded so enthusiastic. Monday nights I would tiptoe down the stairs to the basement television, always fearful that someone would have beaten me out and captured a "Medical Center" re-run. I shouldn't have worried. Every Monday night, down in the basement, sat twelve guys, and me, entranced by "Rich Man, Poor Man."

The temptation here is to too hastily conclude all sorts of erroneous assumptions about the male animal's viewing habits, thereby wounding a few egos, missing the point, and demonstrating what is wrong with generalizing without actually saying so. There isn't enough information about all of those guys for me to say that men are just as scatter-brained as women, just because they were caught watching a soap opera. I don't know why they were watching it — did it mean something personal to them, watching the conflicts of these

two brothers? Was this a weird class assignment? Had they caught the first chapter and become hooked by suspense? Should I just think they thought the lead actress was extremely pretty, and let it go at that?



Sarah Martens

Television, as it has been said before, is a strange addiction. It insults everyone's intelligence and then tricks them by suspense into coming back again and again. In high school I would have killed for a single program of "Star Trek" previously viewed at least six times before. I think most people have experienced some sort of attraction for a particular show some time in their lives, whether it be "Little Rascals," "Sixty Minutes," or "As the World Turns." Is it fair to be stereotyped for being a victim of the latter?

Even here there is a risk of being too

snide by calling viewers victims, just because my personal scruples tell me one person's entertainment is my own waste of time. "Some of my best friends have been known to watch soap operas?" No, that doesn't work either. The public I am speaking to does not know my poor clichéd "best friends." Instead I ought to be asking anyone who has been wondering lately about female intelligence how they are seeing us, as individuals or as part of a great mass of "them?"

It is hard to destroy preconceived ideas stuck in people's heads like so many marbles, but it is harder still to quietly watch blatant and insulting generalizations being thrown around which have been based not on a single facet of that person's being. It isn't good scientific method, and it isn't even good people-method. We all complain we are never really understood or appreciated. Our strange little defenses and fears keep us from becoming close to one another. Yet to resort to lumping a certain class or group together as ratty, flutter-buttery or dumb is just saying we haven't got past our initial fears, and are afraid to look underneath the surface appearances for the truth.

It's more comfortable for me to say guys are silly, too. But is it honest?

## Letters to the Editor

### Inviting hate

**TO THE EDITOR:** This is in response to Mr. Harding's letter of April 22, 1976 regarding the truck driver-like behavior of female Penn Staters. Well, Mr. Harding, I don't know where you lived prior to State College or what part of town you frequent, but I beg to differ with your generalizations and narrow-minded view. So, only truck drivers use those distasteful four letter words? I've heard them from many a mouth that didn't sit behind the steering wheel of a Mack truck (if you followed Watergate, you would have noticed they have even reached Pennsylvania Avenue).

Your reference to a "Levi's-clad lady" also shows your ignorance and is appalling. This is 1976 and I thought people disregarded the notion that a female wearing blue jeans was any less of a lady (Have you checked the price of a pair of Levi's lately?).

Concerning the female lack of cleanliness, I have lived in the dormitories and I tend to believe most girls strongly believe in and practice personal hygiene.

You state you feel there is enough hate and fighting going on in the world. I feel you should swallow that bar of soap you are offering to all the "ratty" girls at Penn State and quit inviting it yourself with your attitude.

Pamela S. Lawson  
8th-accounting

### No opinion, please

**TO THE EDITOR:** I am strongly opposed to the editorial you printed on election day. I feel it is the duty of a newspaper, any newspaper, to print the facts regarding each candidate as fairly as possible. It should then be left to the voters to decide which candidate will best represent their views. For the media to endorse any candidate is to belittle the intelligence of the electorate. In the future, please print the facts, and leave the choice to us.

John R. Kusiak  
graduate-geophysics

### Only a filler

**TO THE EDITOR:** We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate The Daily Collegian upon acquiring the title of "best college newspaper in the Northeast in 1975." However, as Sheila McCauley wisely points out in her editorial dated April 26, the Collegian sometimes deserves criticism. Therefore, from our non-journalistic pens we wish to make a suggestion.

Once again Penn State has been portrayed as a party school

at the expense of educational activities. We refer to the Collegian's coverage of Saturday's 59th annual Little International Livestock Exposition. In comparison to your paper's coverage of the Phi Psi 500, Little International rated slightly more than a filler. We do not wish to take issue with the participants of Phi Psi 500, for one could hardly dispute the worth of such a charitable cause. However, as stated in the article printed in the Collegian, participants in the Little International invested a great deal of time and effort in preparation of the Exposition. Perhaps their efforts should have been "rewarded" by more comprehensive newspaper coverage.

We feel that substituting a picture depicting the events at the Exposition for one showing a young man sharing his "ill fate" with a trash can may have given a better overall portrayal of the weekend's events. We would be interested in hearing opinions from the rest of the University community on this matter.

Steven Jacobs  
12th-general agriculture  
Michael Hansen  
graduate-health education

### Do people think

**TO THE EDITOR:** In response to Mr. Saltzman's query, "Do women think?" I am compelled to counter "Do people think?" We do. This includes male and female.

Mr. Saltzman is ignoring the fact that the complexity of the human brain permits a diversity of thoughts and attitudes. Some people are into soap operas. That's their prerogative.

It's also everyone's prerogative to take a break from the concentration demanded by work, classes or studying. This necessity is a psychological and biological fact. Even a theatre major can't always be into spontaneously sitting down to watch Edward Albee on TV, especially at lunchtime, because this is one time many people unwind.

Just because you, Mr. Saltzman, were into watching "Mid-day Live" on the tube one day does not mean that anyone who wasn't doesn't think. The fact that you could be so obnoxious as to turn away 13 people from a public TV room makes me wonder how much you think.

Susan Laird  
4th-English

the **Collegian**  
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SHEILA McCAULEY  
Editor

NADINE KINSEY  
Business Manager

