

Closed doors

Administrators always whisper about it behind closed doors. They equate it with orgies and regard it as a carnal sin. They never call it by its simple, common name — only by its euphemism.

But, dorms are a fact of life, guys. It's happening right here in Happy Valley. It's happening all over the country. So bring your "co-residential housing" out of the dark.

On Wednesday, members of Residential Life and the Association of Residence Hall Students met to discuss a co-ed proposal. Even though the meeting was basically organizational a

Collegian reporter was not allowed to stay and cover its transactions.

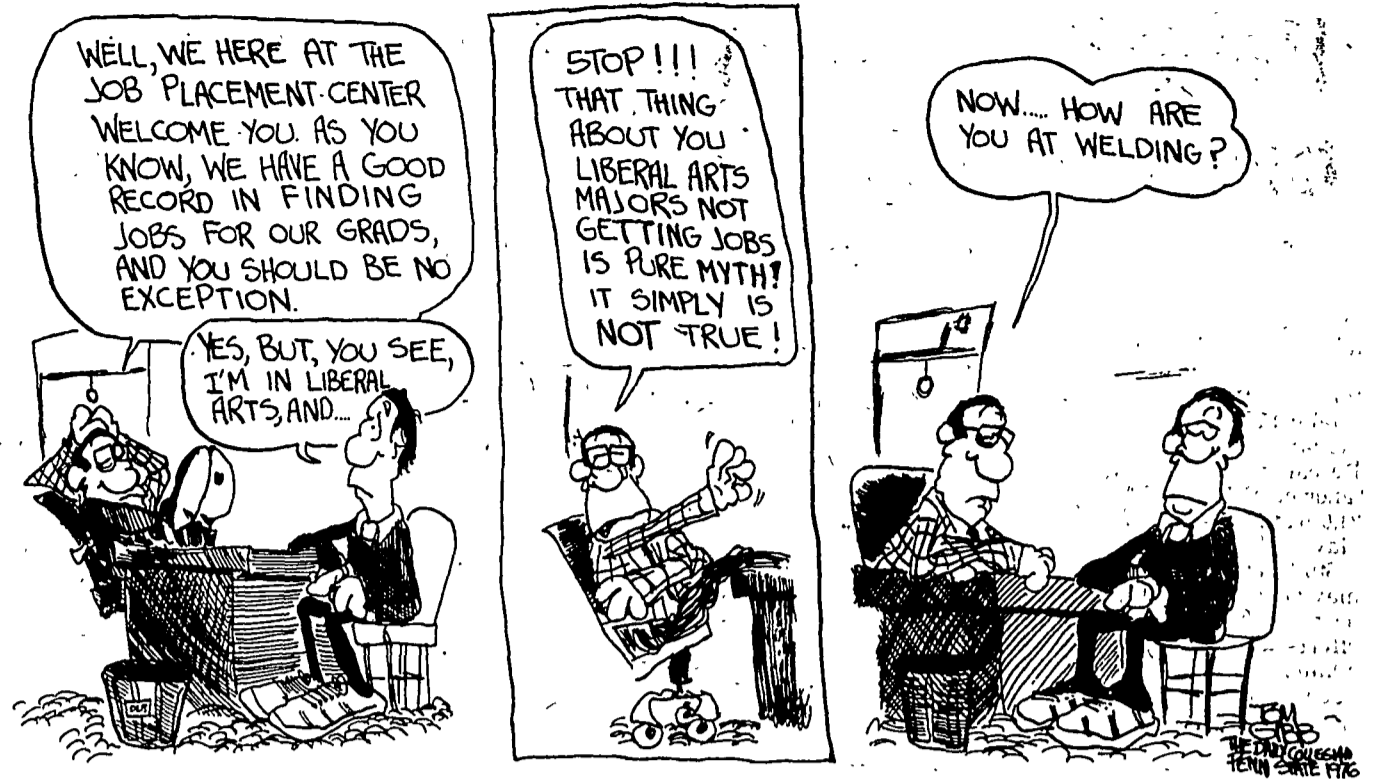
This cubbyholing of decision-makers shouldn't happen — ARHS and Residential Life are involved in deciding the future life styles of thousands of Penn State students. Setting early recommendations before the public can result only in better recommendations in the end.

If students are exposed to the line of thought of both student leaders and administrators from day one, when a final proposal is drafted and accepted, students would not only be familiar with the

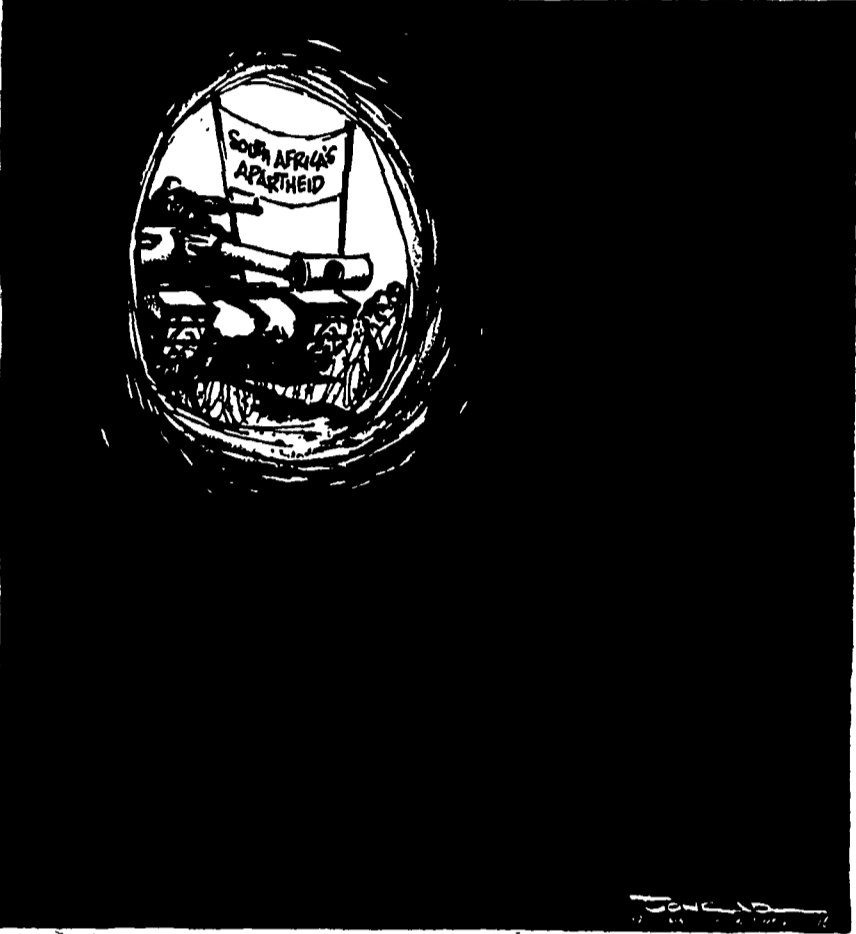
proposal but have been able to help guide it. Decisions affecting students should not be made without student input.

By withholding information from students ARHS has removed itself from the realms of student service and taken on an air of bureaucracy. It should remember that criticism can be healthy and openness results in understanding.

Co-ed housing is a good idea and ARHS and Residential Life are to be commended for developing it. But they should do it in the light of day, because that is the only way to see all its flaws.



THE WHITES AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL



Books move him to exhaustion

Racer stacks up well in events

My friend Flusher is a logistics major (12th—trucks and trains) and he was telling me about all the great sporting events coming up this Spring Term.

"I enter them all," he said. "It costs me a lot of money, but it's well worth it. I think the money usually goes to charity."

"It's good to see that you're involved," I said. "But I didn't think there were many athletic events you could sign up for."

"Oh, there's a lot of them," he said expansively, "but they aren't very well publicized. For instance, the Time Trials in Pattee Library; I came in second last year. I hope I can win it this time around."

"I don't understand."

"Oh, not many people know about the races in Pattee," Flusher said, "but I'm sure you've seen them without knowing they were being held. Haven't you ever seen someone running madly through the stacks looking for a book? He was probably in training for the Dewey Decimal Decathlon."

"What's that?"

"It's one of the most rigorous and demanding foot races in existence. You see, all the contestants line up in the card catalog room. At the sound of the

starting gun, they run over and have to pick 10 cards out of 10 different drawers at random. Then they copy down all the call numbers and run into the stacks to retrieve the books.

"The first one to come back with all of his books is the winner. I would have won last year, but I had a QH355 over on second floor east Pattee and I ran into an old friend who was studying for a virology test."

"I'm shocked," I said, shocked. "In the library? The library is supposed to be a quiet place — isn't it an annoyance to have such a physical race there?"

"Oh, no, the quiet doesn't bother me one bit. It makes it easier to concentrate on where I'm going. And you don't have to be physical in this sport, just quick and organized. That's where my logistics training comes in handy.

"I must admit," he continued, "one time I had to get violent, though. This kid needed one of the books on my list for a course and he was taking it off the shelf just as I got there."

"What happened?"

"It was a big heavy book on Renaissance Art and I explained to him I only needed to look at one of the pages. He offered to let me see the book for a minute. When he turned his back, I clobbered him over the head with the book."

"That's horrible! Was everything all right?"

"Yeah, I came in third place, anyway."

"Well, are there other less severe events at the library?" I asked.

"Lots of them, like the Four-Floor Five-Dollar Footrace. The rules are very simple. You enter the library and they give you a five dollar bill and a copy of an accounting text. You then have 40 minutes to try to find somebody at a library desk that has enough change to break the five. Providing you get it, you then have to find a Xerox machine that works and make a copy of page 300 of the book. Also, you have to remain within four floors of the changed desk."

"Do you do well in that race?"

"So far as I know, no one has ever

completed it. I think that the race officials are probably going to modify the rules this year so all you have to do is find a copier that works. That's still pretty hard."

"Are there other races that people can compete in," I asked.

"Mostly shorter things like renewing a book when they've lost your sign-out card, locating reference materials and similar events. Oh, yes, they offer orienteering games, too, but they're not serious sports competition, so I don't enter."

"For this they blindfold all the contestants and take them into the stacks without a map or a compass. I'm sure you've seen those people, wandering blindly about." "All in all," Flusher said, "it's well worth it for me to sign up for these races. The entrance fees are pretty stiff, but I always enjoy myself."

"How much do you have to pay?"

"Thirty five dollars a race. That's a lot of money, but like I said, I think it goes to charity."

"Oh, I think you're getting off pretty easy," I said. "A lot of people I know competed in the races and had to pay a lot more."

"What did they have to pay?"

"Tuition."



Jack Jackson

Honoraries praise men, but only for a small fee

Gentle Thursday aside, this is not an especially gentle time of year. Most of us are racing the grim reaper to summer jobs, hoping against hope that this spring's disasters will not be consummated in a tidal wave that will engulf the state of New Jersey.

It is into this maelstrom that the honorary societies plunge each year. To many, these organizations are a bit mysterious; some committee, somewhere, chooses students for the privilege of paying 20 bucks to add a line to their resumes. They honor a host of accomplishments, ranging from academics to the ability to drink a glass of water while standing on one's head. It is, I guess, Penn State's solution to a mass inferiority complex — at Penn State, every man can wear the Croix de Guerre.

Don't get me wrong — I'm not knocking the honoraries. I belong to several, and I am proud to say that I have been elected to serve as an officer in one particularly honorary honorary. I also sell pencils on College Avenue, hoping to replenish my now depleted bank account.

It's just that the selection process for some of the organizations puzzles me. For some, it seems that the powers that be take a list of all the students in a given major and decide to initiate all those on the list who have never thrown up in class. That completes the "tapping" process, so named because it is

often done while the membership of the organization tap dances in the HUB Ballroom.

Other organizations have more rigorous membership requirements, and some have not initiated members since the turn of the century. One unfortunate honorary, truly exclusive, is in limbo today; the man who founded the society never found another suitable member, and he contracted terminal psoriasis, flaking to death in the epidemic of 1947.



Jerry Schwartz

Once the prospective member has been chosen, he receives a letter in the mail notifying him of the great honor that has been bestowed upon him, and asking that the check be made out to the Penn State Chapter of ZZZ. This is the most important part of the process; as everyone knows, poor people cannot possibly be honorable, and therefore have no place in an honor society.

The cost of joining an honorary is usually an odd number, \$22 or \$18 or \$7.

While most of the groups do not ask that the money be delivered in small, unmarked bills, the path of the dues is somewhat cryptic. Most of the money goes to what is referred to as The National, a colossus somewhere in the heartland of America. The National takes the money, and sends back directories that no one can read, let alone understand.

Each honor society is usually identified by three Greek letters, which are explained at the initiation ceremony, a simple affair that includes the symbolic passing over of the checks. The three letters always stand for words like "Truth" or "Virtue" or "Knowledge". Seldom, if ever, do the letters stand for "Nausea" or "Acne" or "Depression."

Much of the time, it doesn't matter what the letters stand for. While some honoraries meet often, discussing current issues, many initiatives will have their last burst with the Penn State Chapter of ZZZ two months later when Mid-State returns their cancelled check.

Which is OK, I guess. We come to honoraries to praise men, not to bury them, and since they are all honorable men, anyway, little harm is done. Some have told me that, years from now, I will be proud of my membership in the more obscure honoraries and, in any case, my name will be etched in the books of the Penn State Chapter of ZZZ for posterity.

My bet is that I'll just forget what the letters stand for. It's all Greek to me.

Letters to the Editor

Life saver

TO THE EDITOR: On April 20, 1976, I had a serious accident in the quad area in East Halls. I was taken by ambulance to Ritenour and thus began a week-long ordeal. Now that I'm back on my feet again, I would like to express my appreciation to the Ritenour staff, ambulance crew and the friends who stayed so near me. Too often our student health services are put down without reason. My friends and I are grateful to the staff for continuously supplying reports on my "progress." Without exaggerating, if it was not for the excellent services made available to me at Ritenour, the accident might have had far-reaching effects on my life.

— **Jed Newirth**
7th-social welfare

Dear clown

TO THE EDITOR: This is an open letter to the clown who screwed up the ride board lists.

"Dear Clown, It was a good joke. Not only did you make up false names and addresses but the telephone numbers were not legitimate either. Your one mistake was using the same telephone number for each alias: otherwise, I never would have caught on. It was overdue — three or more fake names per ride sheet with the same telephone number. I only hope that when you need a ride home the same thing happens to you."

And to the person whose telephone number it is (if there is such a person):

"Dear 5-2341, Are you aware that your telephone number is being used? Do you have any or many enemies? Or is your social life so dull that your phone number must be plastered on the ride sheets in order to get any calls? Or are you really going to all corners of the state this Friday?"

— **Suellen Smock**
9th-management

Poor criteria

TO THE EDITOR: I suppose the Collegian's policy of censoring letters it feels are racist, as stated on the editorial page of the April 28th Collegian, is good. However, if the Chinese students offended by the Doonesbury comics were the paper's editors, they could have invoked this policy and refused to print the allegedly racist material.

"Racist" is a nebulous and ill-used word in current American usage and poor criteria for censorship. If a letter is worth printing, it should be printed in its entirety with editorial comment if necessary. Newspaper editors should be especially leery of arbitrary standards, no matter how well intentioned, when they are applied to our freedoms of speech and press.

— **Stephen C. Dally**
3rd-math

In defense

TO THE EDITOR: I would like to take issue with Mr. Saltzman's letter of the 27th. He wrote that he was in Kern building watching a talk show which he felt was "geared to the 'thinking woman'". Putting all cars and cogwheels aside, several women who had entered the viewing room and had expected to watch a particular soap opera left when they realized another program was on. This gave Mr. Saltzman the opportunity to employ the catch-all phrase "airheads" regarding these women.

I am not in defense of soap operas (which, according to Time magazine, men also watch) but in defense of the women who left. I consider myself to be a well-read person, and having some knowledge of Edward Albee, I doubt I would have

watched the talk show either. As for Oriana Fallaci, this is not exactly a household word. Perhaps the intellectual development of the eleven women who left was such that they do not appreciate what "even the commonest simpatons could have enjoyed" as Mr. Saltzman evidently did.

I hope that Mr. Saltzman appreciates the fact that the women who were present when the show first began did not demand their right as a majority to turn the channel. Perhaps politeness is an airhead trait?

At any rate, I was amused by the inference on Mr. Saltzman's part that all women are airheads, and consequently may be likened to hamsters that are "interesting to look at and touch" until one tries to discover a working mind. If this is the manner in which he gets to know women, perhaps he should reorder his priorities and look for intelligence before he touches if he wants to be more favorably impressed.

— **Linda Blossel**
6th-administrative management

Tribes

TO THE EDITOR: What is the narrow conception of NSCAR or its president of U.S. history? The American Indians are still wards (i.e. subjects) of the federal bureaucracy. Only two tribes are legally citizens!

— **M. Huber**
10th-history

Illogical

TO THE EDITOR: Regarding: Soapy Airheads (Who is female, by the way.) Does Jon M. Saltzman think?

Come on now Mr. Saltzman, just what are you trying to prove? Anyone reading your asinine letter would believe your point to be that males are the inferior thinkers, or at least that you are one. Your reasoning is totally illogical. Just because a few women chose to leave the room when you switched from soap opera to "thinking program" is no reason to blindly assume, as you have, that they can't think. What evidence do you have to support your hypothesis? That they got up and left? Everyone has the freedom of choice. That it was a soap opera that you turned off? I know men who are as involved in them as some women are. That they showed some emotion when you switched? I'm sure they acted no worse than some, if not most, men I've seen when deprived of their football games, which they choose over other "thinking programs." I won't generalize and say that all men are as narrow-minded as you seem. At least I hope they aren't. For, like hamsters, men are interesting to look at and touch but after the initial thrill it's nice to have something else there.

— **Joanne Evon**
7th-art education

the Collegian

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