

# Heal thyself

How ironic that the Department of Nursing should find itself plagued by an internal illness.

Outward symptoms of the disease may come in the form of a missing department head or irregular filing procedures.

Victims of the disease have been known to suffer from loss of accreditation or approval. It is also important to note that the malady is contagious; it adversely affects all those who come in contact with it.

Late last year, the head of the Department of Nursing resigned and was replaced by an acting head — an understandable and wise move at the time.

But nine months later, the department is still directed by that temporary replacement. Nine

months later, a search for a permanent head has yielded only two possible candidates.

And, most importantly, nine months later finds Penn State's Department of Nursing faced with possible loss of approval by the State Board of Nurse Examiners and loss of accreditation by the National League for Nursing.

Both groups require that all nursing institutions have permanent, not "acting," directors, before they give the school their okay.

Their approval is not something to be taken lightly; it is not merely a glorified certificate of achievement. Rather, it is a vitally necessary tool for the proper functioning of the department.

Above all, it is crucial for the students.

Graduates from non-approved schools may not take state nursing exams. They may not legally become licensed registered nurses. And, chances are, they will be beaten out in the job market.

Students in any discipline deserve no less than the best from their department. Their tuition check entitles them to adequate guidance AND to a guarantee that they are being prepared as adequately as possible for future employment.

So far, two candidates have been suggested as permanent department heads. But first, the candidates must be interviewed by the faculty and administration for the department and then approved by the Board of Trustees.

However, the Trustees do not meet until September. The deadline for the appointment of a permanent director is Aug. 1.

Department officials feel certain that Penn State's Department of Nursing will retain its state approval. We hope so too.

But the real issue is that they have let things go this far, that they had to be faced with a threat before they would act.

Perhaps they are knotted up in red tape. Perhaps they are drowning in a whirlpool of bureaucracy. But those are only empty phrases to describe empty actions.

The first of August is still a few weeks away. There is still time. Physician, heal thyself.



## Motorist fears Congress' push for longer, heavier super trucks

I was in a mellow mood the other day, cruising down Interstate 80 in the sunlight, watching the lines go by.

Suddenly, without warning, something enormous shot by me with a roar and stench of burned rubber. It rattled my car, deafened my ears, and forced me off of the road.

As I watched it dwindle in the distance, going about 80 miles per hour, I wondered, was it a bird? Was it a plane? No, it was a supertruck, an 80,000 pound, eight-foot wide, monstrous mass of metal. These beasts are the largest animals ever to ram the earth, dwarfing even the dinosaurs, and perhaps are the most dangerous.

And, as if this weren't enough, there's a move in Washington to make them wider and longer and heavier. The trucking industry, encouraged by but not satisfied with size increases granted to them by Congress last year, is pushing for special recommendations that would increase the present 40-ton weight limit to 60-tons by 1985.

This overall increase in size includes an increase in width from 96 to 102 inches, and virtually no limit to length. Though most states ban trucks which are longer than 55 feet, the truck lobby is trying to obtain permits for twin 40-foot trailers — and even triples.

The entire movement is backed by the Ford administration, which, "when confined with the influence to the truck lobby, virtually assures that the recommendations will pass.

Fact: The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported this year that the fatality rate of nontruck participants in truck-car accidents increased as the weight of the involved truck increased.



Tom Reeher

Fact: Many truck drivers already object to driving with 80,000 pounds of truck behind them. An increase to 120,000 pounds would be intolerable to many.

Fact: Regardless of any claims to the contrary, a 60-ton vehicle will tear up the roads very quickly and efficiently. Of course, taxpayers' money will be needed to fix these roads. Any fuel economy resulting from supertrucks will be more than offset by the costs of accidents and road repairs.

Someone is insulting my intelligence when they tell me that a 60-ton supertruck can roll down the highway, and I can't even put studded safety tires on my car.

To tell the truth, I'm scared to death of those supertrucks. If you observe the 55 mile per hour speed limit, it's impossible to avoid them, and the safety hazard that they represent by going downhill at 80 mph and uphill at 30 mph is enormous.

Oh, someone is sure to say that these trucks are an economical asset, that they're benefitting me, the consumer, by reducing overall costs, that they're not really all that dangerous, that the truck driver's skill will compensate for the size increases.

Well, the fact is that they are dangerous. I cannot justify the loss of even one human life by citing economic gain. And I won't compromise my principles by cowering under the shadow of a 60-ton Mack truck, and I won't bet my life on the skill of any truck driver.

But I may have to. There will be a battle in Washington between consumer representatives and truck lobbyists, and I'm afraid that that battle will be as uneven as the one currently being fought on the highways between the automobile and the supertruck.



## A toilet by any other name just ain't the same

At a time when the English language is abused as never before, when jargon and doubletalk are surging and precise speech and writing are gradually eroding away, the American public is beset by a class of idiom perpetrated by the advertising and promotion industries and condoned by government. Euphemisms. Perversions of speech that obscure meanings and remove many of the picturesque elements from description and general conversation. Dictionaries call euphemisms "words substituted for more plainly explicit words which might prove offensive to some readers or listeners," and there are, admittedly, rare cases in which the more descriptive, precise word is simply too earthy for the sensibilities of some.

The sad truth, though, is that more and more Americans are mistreating the language and with the help of Madison Avenue and Washington D. C., euphemisms are beginning to take a harsh toll on American speech and letters. The creation of euphemisms and their quick absorption into the culture is frightening. The Dictionary of Contemporary Usage provides some excellent examples.

A used, second or third-hand car is never "used" anymore. It is only pre-owned (even if it has 98,000 miles on the odometer and a paint job that makes it look like it's been sandblasted with half-inch ball bearings). A sewer commission is now a pollution-control agency. People are no longer fired from their jobs, or even "terminated." They're rifled, an acronym for "reduction in force." Or better still, "selected out," a term with widespread use, especially in government.

Of course, there haven't been any janitors around for years. They all died one sad day and were reincarnated the next as "maintenance superintendents" or simply, "supers," a word with wonderfully powerful and pleasant, though usually inaccurate, connotations. Plumbers are "sanitation engineers" and a trash can is an "ecological receptacle." In fact, one without garbage man, in an attempt to cash in on the science and engineering booms of the past decade, has labeled himself a "garbologist" and adopted the slogan "Satisfaction guaranteed or your garbage refunded."



George Osgood

America's unfortunate folly in Indochina spawned literally hundreds of euphemisms. After awhile the military establishment began to get embarrassed about reporting the destruction of native junks, sampans and other small boats by supersonic warplanes—it was a little like swatting a fly with a baseball bat — and grouped all of these boats into a false category they labeled "wiblics," a failed acronym for Water Borne Logistical Craft. It seems that to "clear a wiblic" is much more impressive than to simply blow a sampan to bits.

Search and destroy missions became too ruthless an ap-

pellation when military efforts in Vietnam began to come under intense public scrutiny, so they were wrapped and replaced by "search and clear" missions. My bombing raids were "protective retaliations." The best simile that I came across concerned the accidental shelling of one U.S. position by another. The Pentagon brass didn't call it "misdirected fire" or even a "regrettable error." It was called, in true euphemistic fashion, "accidental delivery of ordnance equipment."

Madison Avenue has had a pervasive influence on American diction. Thanks to the ad men, nothing is ever "large" or "cheap"; it's "king-sized" or "economy-priced." Clothes are not tickled for fat boys but for "junky lads." Their fat fathers don't find any racks labeled "Fat," but get their garments from the "portly" or "big" sections. At an unspecified point in their late thirties, women neither obese nor age, rather they "mature" and become "matrons," nice, motherly ring to that.

Some of the best examples of this calculated abuse of the English language came out of the Watergate hearings and their aftermath. Burglary of a psychiatrist's office was consistently referred to as an "intelligence-gathering operation;" part of the conspiracy that was called the "overall game plan." There was a great tendency, for some unknown reason, to create nearly meaningless phrases rather than use a single, precise word or a commonly used, completely adequate phrase. For example: "at this point in time (translation: now); "at that point in time" (translation: then); "electric surveillance" (translation: wiretapping). Breaking and entering became "surreptitious entry" and was performed by political espionage agents,

but by that friendly tradesman, the "plumber."

The list goes on and on, and is growing daily. There are even euphemisms for other euphemisms that fall out of favor. Financially bereft people used to be poor. Then they became "needy." Sociologists and psychiatrists evidently determined that to consider oneself "needy" was self-defeating and unhealthy, so "needy" was scrapped in favor of "culturally deprived." But "deprived" created a bad image, so the poor became "underprivileged" which itself became too descriptive and was changed to "disadvantaged."

As the euphemisms accrue, the actual meaning of the original word is further and further obscured. It is the same with all euphemisms: their function is not one of clarification and description, but of imprecision, ambiguity and distortion. Maury Maverick, a government agency head during the Forties and Fifties, was angered by the spread of euphemisms, then called "gobbledygook language" (hence, euphemism is a euphemism for itself) and threatened that "anyone using words like 'activation' and 'implementation' will be shot."

That may be an extreme position, but it would solve a problem that has increased tenfold since Maverick's time. Everyone has to pitch in and consciously strive to eliminate these bastard words from the American vocabulary.

The next time you feel the urge, don't go to the powder room, don't see a man about a dog, and please don't go to the little girls' (or little boys') room. Just go to the bathroom. Or be even more descriptive and accurate. Gentility is one thing, but just as a rose is a rose is a rose, a toilet is, after all, a toilet.

## Letters to the Editor

### Appreciation

TO THE EDITOR: The painting by fifteen year old Heather Fleming which was in the HUB has been recovered and will be returned to her. The painting was abandoned in the Engineering Complex.

We feel certain that your publishing a photograph of the painting in The Da Collegian on July 14, 1976 was instrumental in its recovery. We appreciate your help and assistance in this matter.

David E. Stormer  
Director, Police Service

### Cosmogirl

TO THE EDITOR: People don't always disdain Cosmo magazine because it's sexist, but because it is primarily directed toward a college woman. The disapproval Ms. Palencar felt when buying Cosmo was probably snobbery. You wouldn't expect a girl to serve a diplomatic dinner on T.V. trays, and for a "college girl" reading Cosmo is declassing. It's a matter of owning "The Greatest Hits of the Cupcakes." A host everybody sneers at the aspirations, philosophy and taste of the group below her or him in the hierarchy. This attitude is as divisive as it is unjust. But let's be fair to those S. refers, they didn't actually disparage Ms. Palencar — she did for them.

Granted my objections to Cosmo are really class prejudices and in jeans, nevertheless, there are some valid feminist complaints against the magazine. It's bad enough that Playboy and Penthouse treat women as another status-enhancing commodity. The busty blonde is just another item to be consigned along with a man's Chivas Regal, Cadillac and Adidas shoes. That Cosmo should encourage women to treat themselves as consumer goods is revolting.

The "layouts on sexy summer negligees" Ms. Palencar mentioned do just that. The Gothic Romances inculcate a woman's subconscious with sentimental claptrap. They cloud her decision process with unrealistic expectations and give her fairy-tale princess role models. If any woman succeeded in becoming a "Cosmo Girl" she would be a fantastic creature indeed — a combination Valkyrie and Electric Penis-Sharpening Machine. This creature might well need Cosmo's psychology column.

Liberation does come in many forms as Ms. Palencar suggested. However, rebaptizing an old oppression and calling it a liberation is the sort of hocus-pocus I would hope women could see through. If it's embarrassing to wear chains, by all means, let's call them jewelry! George Wallace can probably find a Black person somewhere who says that he really loves picking cotton and that everything since Brown vs. the Board of Education has been an awful mistake, but at least Ebony doesn't propagandize for this point of view, why should women make sexist magazines profitable?

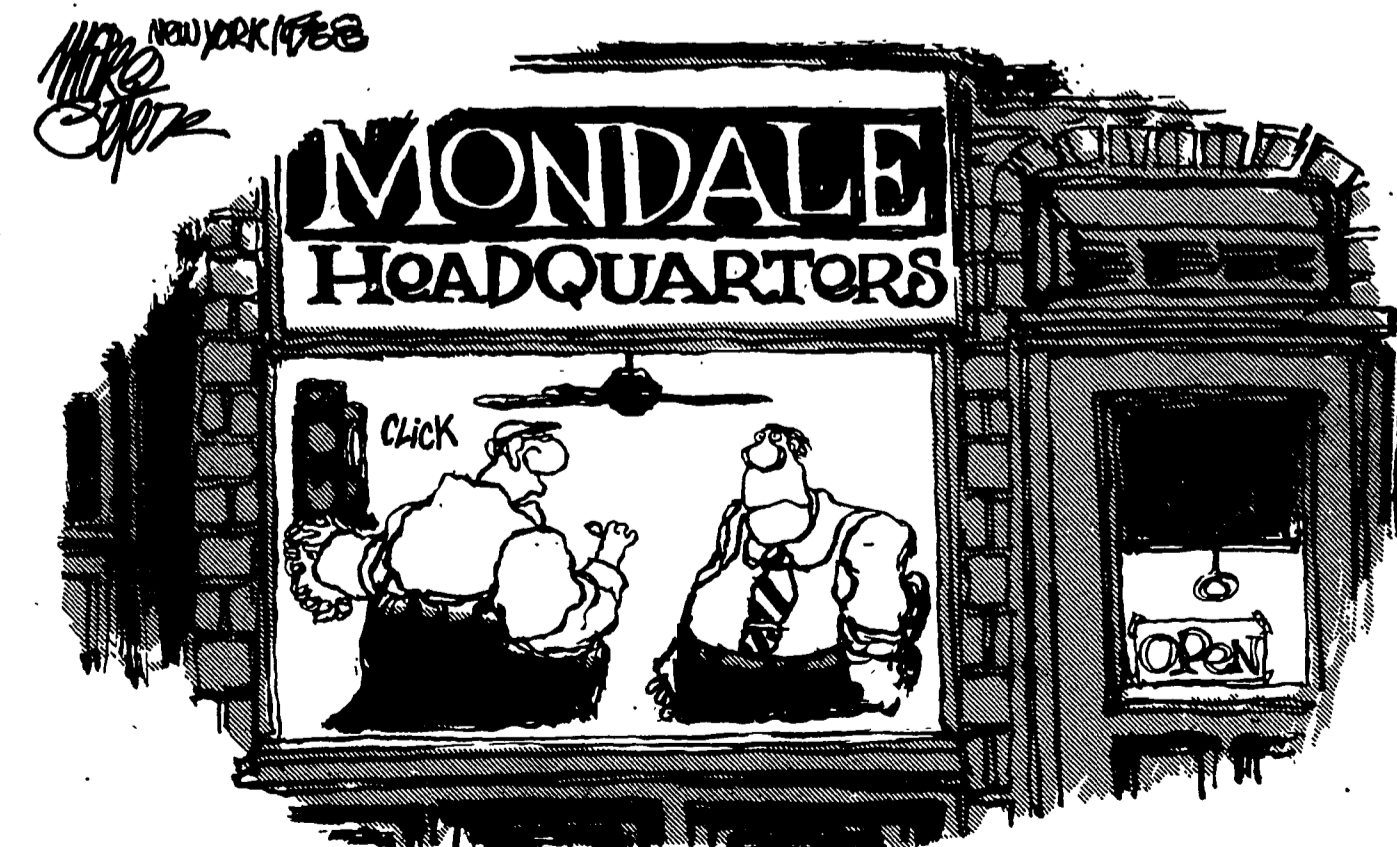
As for the What-can-I-do-anyway syndrome, remember that Christianity was founded by an unemployed carpenter and his disreputable friends. Communism, before which we tremble, was started by a handful of bald men in baggy brown suits. If you're not too far gone in resignation, the Women's Resource Center could direct you toward some worthwhile feminist projects, or make better use of your \$1.25.

Claudia McClellan  
University Employee

## the Collegian

JANICE SELINGER  
Summer Editor

NADINE KINSEY  
Business Manager



"SENATOR, IT WAS JUST SOME CRACKPOT FROM GEORGIA WHO WANTED YOU TO GO RUNNING WITH HIM..."