

Branch out

Penn State's grades are in, and it looks like the University passed most of its tests.

But some enlightening points were brought out in an accreditation evaluation of the University by a team of professors and administrators from the Commission of Higher Education of the Middle Atlantic States.

According to the preliminary report which began in April, the branch campuses, from which thousands of current students have transferred, lack long-range plans for new, innovative courses to suit the particular needs of students.

The Commonwealth Campus faculty look toward their counterparts here for direction when

initiating new courses, but the evaluating team says that sometimes the University Park faculty do no more than request that the branches follow the same course procedure that is found here. This stunts the creativity of the branch campus faculty, who are highly qualified and want to help shape and improve the quality of the branch campus system.

Because branch campuses operate on a smaller scale than we do, they may have more flexibility and more personal attention in the classroom. They can put this to their advantage.

The team also felt that not enough attention has been given to changing courses or programs to suit the changing student body

five or 10 years from now. More data must be analyzed to make accurate five- and 10-year projections of commonwealth campus needs.

Each branch campus is a satellite of the overall University in its own community. Not only do they need more programs for the students, but for the rest of their communities. More campuses are trying to create programs for high school students who may jointly be enrolled in a branch campus. Continuing Education staffs work off-campus with community groups and county agents to discover what educational services are needed for older adults and the elderly, too. Each branch could be using its facilities to

capacity to enrich an entire community.

The quality of program selection cannot fall short at the branch campuses. Every term more of these students join us as fellow classmates at University Park. Whatever they encounter during their first two years of school will affect their performance here, as well as the academic standards and class pace at this campus.

Yet we're not concerned about the future of the branch campuses merely because University Park may indirectly be affected, but because Penn State students all over the state have the same rights to a quality education that will teach them, train them, and help them branch out.



Blue Bland vs. Stanford band—viva la difference

It happens every time Stanford's Cardinals come to roost for a few days in idyllic Happy Valley. Along with the football team comes a mishmash of apparently demented individuals who call themselves the Leland Stanford Junior University Marching Band. Invariably, they present delightful, appealing, irrelevant, flipped-out pregame and halftime shows that are something of a mixture of theatre of the absurd, the Not-Ready-For-Prime-Time-Players and John Philip Sousa's opium dreams.

Although the alumni-parent-sportsfan-over 30 segment of the game's spectators appear to have mixed reactions to the band, reactions ranging from wild approval through drowsing indifference to tooth-gnashing, white-knuckled frenzy at the anti-traditional outrage of it all, the great majority of students in the crowd really enjoy the performances.

And they should. The band has a tremendous flair for showmanship and an equally tremendous grasp of what they can pull off and what they can't. Their routines are consistently funny, if sometimes obscure (to say the least) and they have the keen touch to be able to "put one over on the old folks," or at least baffle and befuddle the older segment of the audience to the point that the band can get away with just about anything they want.

Last Saturday's show featured a number of puns and double-entendres including several items that may mean one thing to the over 30's (or 40's, or 50's, or wherever that line is drawn nowadays) and may have a completely different connotation to college students.

Spelling out "REDS" on the field may conjure up images of

McCarthyism and the Cuban Missile Crisis for the West side of Beaver Stadium, while for the East side the effect may be to summon up visions of little plastic bottles of Seconal.

In the band's comment on PSU's ongoing feud over possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages in dormitories, they spelled out the alternative to beer blasts: "COKE." For a youth culture that is constantly bombarded by references to the wide world of drugs and drug jargon, the Stanford band presents not one alternative but two in their block letter formation.



George Osgood

The Chinese theme of the halftime show allowed the band to form a giant "69" ostensibly in a reference to the Taoist symbols of Yin and Yang. But we know better, eh, Leland?

And it's good. It's funny. It's refreshing. The Band members themselves seem to run the gamut of psychoses. Scattered among the traditional tubas, trumpets, trombones and tympaniums are people "playing" instruments of rather questionable musical authenticity. One individual plays a

construction worker's hardhat. Another plays what from the stands appears to be a giant, misshapen, hockey stick but is actually the tiller and rudder from a small sailboat. A couple of people play nothing at all and seem to be content to hop around in random patterns smoking cigars and tripping other Band members. Its slapstick, but with a touch of genius. Both Woody Allen and the Three Stooges would be proud. And the people are talented musicians as well as performers. Even the guy playing tiller-rudder makes a contribution to the overall sound.

Just as surely as the Stanford Band is going to perform an insane routine, the Blue Band is going to come out and go through their drill team formations and play traditional football-Saturday tunes. And they are going to get bad-mouthed for it. There was more disdain in the stands at halftime over the Blue Band's performance than there was over Joe's sputtering offense or the no-ice condition of the cokes-cum-mixers.

The Stanford Band is a hard act to follow, especially when the audience knows that the next performers are not going to give any surprises. A number of people feel that the PSU musicians should change their name to the Blue Bland. But that isn't really fair, either to the musicians or to the traditional halftime performance. What the Blue Band does, it does exceedingly well. The musicians are more than competent, and the formations are usually militarily perfect, if occasionally unimaginative. The program as a whole is always well thought out, well rehearsed and neatly performed.

The consensus in the East stands is that the Blue Band falls

dismally in its attempts to entertain and that a band like Stanford's is infinitely more worthwhile. Now that the drum major doesn't do flips, the high point of the performance is when he hurls his baton high into the air. The suspense is not whether he'll catch it, but whether it will come down point first and run him through. Judging from the reactions in the East stands, the fact that this hasn't yet occurred is a major disappointment.

The Blue Band as it now exists, in a rather traditional mold, is exactly as it should be. College football Saturday afternoons are innately traditional animals.

They are occasions that call alumni back to the campus and that become memories for today's students. For the Blue Band to try any of the Stanford Band's gambits would be disastrous: they are too disciplined to achieve the studied carelessness of those performers. And I think that after the tenth game, antics of that type would begin to wear thin.

It's an all or nothing situation. The Blue Band could not (and should not) try to be like the Stanford band. It wouldn't work; if they tried to go halfway they would neither maintain the tightness and precision of their current format nor approach the zaniness and spontaneity of the other extreme.

The Leland Stanford Junior University Marching Band is funny, but I think it's possible that much of its humor derives from its aberrance, its flouting of the traditional college band image, and the Blue Band does have a lot going for it, in the long run. At the very least, it offends no one and provides entertainment for many. And at least this week none of its tuba players fell down.

After the ball was over the band played on...

Like a California breeze they blew into the party, 15 or so members of the Stanford band.

A strange mixture there. The younger members of the local press, alumni, freaks, jock-types, groupies and a burnt-out band.

Stanford had lost to Penn State earlier in the day but the band really didn't give a damn. They were out for a good time.

Most still had remnants of their uniforms on — red blazer, black pants, white shoes, shirt and tie.

One wore a t-shirt with the picture of a pot plant on it. Around the aromatic weed were emblazoned the words "drugs sex violence." Another wore a Penn State t-shirt. "I'm a member of the Blue B and."

"Liar," came a voice out of the crowd, "she's an infiltrator."

Steve Beck, a trombone player, said he was the group's leader. He was leader simply because he was the only one who could find the house where the party was, somewhere on the fringes of State College.

Steve explained what the band did that day:

"We all wore black armbands (he still wearing his) in mourning for Chairman Mao."

At halftime the band spelled out "REDS" as a salute to Red China. They then formed the number "69."

"That's for six-point-nine on the Richter scale, yin and yang and the obvious."

In a protest against the dorm liquor laws the band became a martini glass, the members in the swivel stick wearing letters on their backs which read "NO BOOZE." For the alumni they played "My Old School" and in the pregame show they spelled "COKE" in honor of the Penn State students.



Phil Storey

Nothing illicit circulating before the band arrived at the party, just four kegs of beer going down fast.

Around the side of the house a large baggie (quarter-pound size) of marijuana appeared. Someone said it was Pennsylvania homegrown. Not top quality but it didn't matter. Whoever had it was being generous with it. A pipe, not one of those small pot pipes but a regular tobacco pipe, kept getting filled. Dozens of times.

A few of the band members wanted to play a drinking game called zoom figliano." No one got motivated enough to start the game. Later one of them got up to go look for Mr. Schwartz.

The individually insane band members talked about Pennsylvania, California and all else absurd that lies in-between.

Stanford has units instead of credits. "And yes, yes, yes, we really do go surfing after every class. God, California is beautiful. You'd love it."

"The drinking policy here is ridiculous," Steve intoned. "We can drink anywhere we want to at Stanford."

"Look how ridiculous it is. You students can't drink in your own dorm rooms and we were at the HUB (where the band stayed) every night drinking and smoking openly. The campus police didn't bother us."

As time slid on past midnight and into the morning, the kegs ran dry. The band all gravitated slowly to the HUB's study lounge. Many people were sacked out wherever they could make themselves comfortable but some were still up, drinking and smoking openly.

"This is the essence of the Stanford band," Steve said, surveying the blurry-eyed survivors. "This is what we're all about."

He turned away. "Does anyone still have the motor coordination left necessary to roll a joint?"

Letters to the Editor

War stories

TO THE EDITOR: "Thirty thousand American soldiers died in Vietnam for absolutely no reason." This was a remark once made by a friend of mine, and I would like to analyze its validity.

First of all can any person make such a judgment about the lives of thirty thousand people? War certainly is a horrible and dreadful thing. The reasons for which it is fought are often difficult to discern in the face of the tragedy they cause, but does that mean that those who fight and die in war, do so for no reason?

I know the parents of one such soldier who died in Vietnam. Should they believe that their son died for no reason? No, and they don't. They believe that the Americans who died in Vietnam did so for a cause. The cause was to stop domination of the world by communism. It is a cause which many people still consider valid today. Even now, one third of the world's population is ruled by communists.

Whether or not fighting against communism in Vietnam was justified is subject to great controversy. In any case we lost the cause in Vietnam because the American people lacked the resolve to continue the war. The American people and our political leaders finally came to the realization that fighting a perpetual defensive war was a mistake. We finally realized that as long as we were not willing to make the initial commitment to crush the North Vietnamese at the onset of the war, we could never win. Perhaps this will be a lesson to America not to become involved in wars in which we are not prepared to demonstrate the aggression and utilize the force necessary to win.

However, just because we lost in Vietnam doesn't mean that the men who died there died for no reason. There may yet come a time when Americans will die fighting against communism in a place not on the other side of the world.

In conclusion I plead that if you are tempted to proclaim that thirty thousand American soldiers died in Vietnam for no reason, please don't — for their sake and for the sake of those who knew them and loved them. Not even God takes a single life for no reason.

Corbett S. Klein
10th—microbiology

Heart's content

TO THE EDITOR: As concerned students of The Pennsylvania State University, we realize that state law prohibits drinking of alcoholic beverages by those under 21 years of age. University policy merely reflects that law as it deems necessary. University policy also prohibits the drinking of alcoholic beverages in public areas, regardless of age. That policy is being strictly enforced on all University grounds, except on Saturdays, in those areas surrounding Beaver Stadium. Since we are aware of the realities of the alcohol policy and its enforcement, we suggest that all Penn State students face that same reality. Therefore, rather than taking the risk of referral by partying in the dorms, transfer your festivities to the Beaver Stadium parking lots on Saturdays and party to your hearts' content.

William A. Garlow
4th — civil engineering
Bruce J. Markovitz
7th — biology

Limp wrists

TO THE EDITOR: I had the opportunity to spend my summer in State College. A few days after Residential Life instituted its punitive alcohol policy, I expressed my opinion to a few people that Lee Upcraft would continue these disagreeable policies into the Fall Term. This is, or was, a surprising prediction because such a policy would severely circumscribe the role of Upcraft's RAs by robbing them of their confidence with the students in their respective houses. I was correct and the policy is in force this Fall Term.

I have come to realize that Penn State University officials feel they can do as they please with student interests in complete safety. This is true because they understand that the students of this University are in general too-limp wristed to stand up and fight for their own collective interests. The student body is awed by authority and like robots is programmed to obey the University's every whim.

It should be apparent that writing letters to Harrisburg is worthless because student leaders have tried that approach for several years and have accomplished little. We are a very underwhelming political interest group because we don't have the kind of political resources to persuade anybody in state government office. The only thing we have is the numbers to hold mass action protests, but the only people who advocate that course of action are political midgets — the Young Socialist Alliance.

The actions proposed by Messers Zanes and Brust in the Sept. 9 Collegian have proven, at best, ineffective in the past. I don't see how they can be expected to work now. As a practical person, I don't see any justification in using policies that have failed practically everytime in the past five years. I endorse the actions proposed by W.T. Williams and feel that it is time we showed certain University bureaucrats that we as a student body cannot and will not allow our rights and privileges to be stripped from us without a struggle.

Mark Ruckman
10th — physics

Sex education

TO THE EDITOR: Once more a member of the law enforcement team has overstepped his bounds by opening his mouth and dictating his prejudice. Mr. Stormer, please educate yourself.

On the controversy of homosexuality, your recent statements (Collegian, September 10) are frankly sexist. Firstly: You obviously exclude 51 per cent of the world's population from your view, namely women. You couldn't have made a larger oversight. Yes, Mr. Stormer, homosexuality is not exclusive to men.

Secondly: (in light of the above) you narrowly-mindedly see gay men as effeminate. Turnabout is fair play: "All police are crooked, because we know of some who are." (They're in the news all the time, aren't they?) Wise up!

Thirdly: you flaunt your prejudice under the guise of your misapprehended title as "social control agent." You say, "Certainly the police should change with (society's) ideas." Would today be too soon to start?

Sexuality is only a matter of sexual preferences. It is not a determinant of roles, characteristics, or traits. (Does your brother like pink? have a lisp? have hair on his palms?)

Sexuality knows no social or economic barriers. It is not contagious and it is very healthy. (Have you ever thought of it without gender association?)

Your doctor, lawyer, spouse, sibling, or grandparent could have a homosexual preference. Your best friend could be gay.

Mr. Stormer, I do not know if any of the individuals on your force are of a homosexual orientation. Frankly, I understand why you "doubt such a person would be interested in working for" you. It is oppressors such as you, sir, that have allowed gays to be misunderstood, judged, and mistreated. Until such time as society can explain how sexual preferences are determined, please be so intelligent as to hold your judgement (or at least keep it out of print).

Peter Sichel
7th — arts and architecture

