

Editorial opinion

New start

Sometimes it's best to tear something down and start all over again.

That's just what the Undergraduate Student Government did when it sponsored the Student Leaders' Conference this past weekend. This coalition of student leaders from 25 schools across the state is trying to pick up where the defunct Pennsylvania Student Lobby left off.

The PSL was an aborted attempt at student lobbying because the large universities and the small colleges had few problems in common, and everyone seemed to be out for their own gain.

Not so with USG's student leader conference. The idea to organize separate lobbies for state-related, state-owned, private,

and other types of schools is more functional and will keep one major lobby from becoming bogged down with dissension.

These separate lobbies will have common focal points — lobbying for a lower drinking age and the decriminalization of marijuana. Some of these lobbies will even have a full-time staff, which is a more realistic and efficient way of structuring a student lobby. A lobby run by part time students never seems to get off the ground.

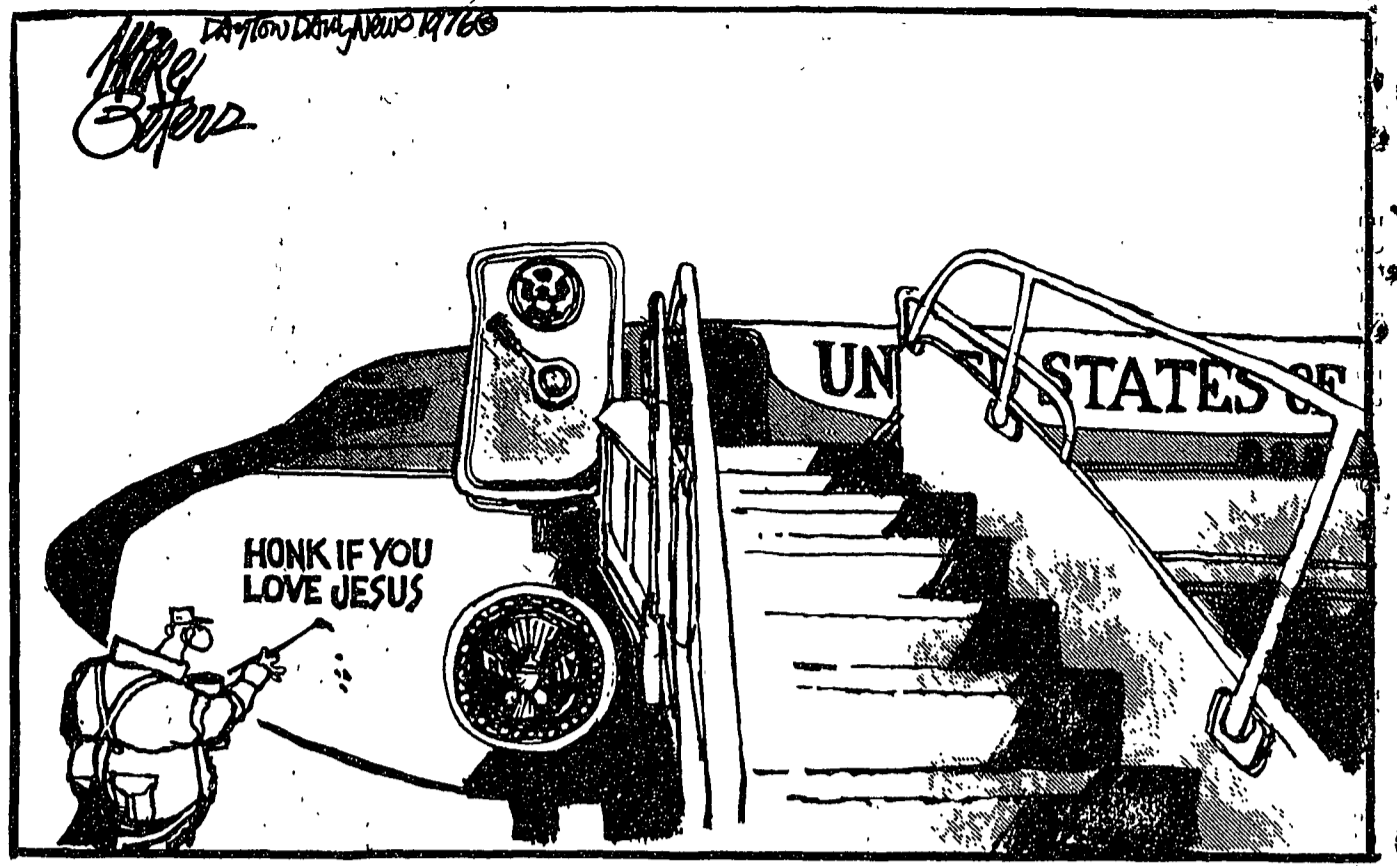
The only problem with the lobbying effort to lower the drinking age may be the suggested student letter-writing campaign which will be initiated "when the time is right."

Similar attempts in the past have been exercises in futility. Too

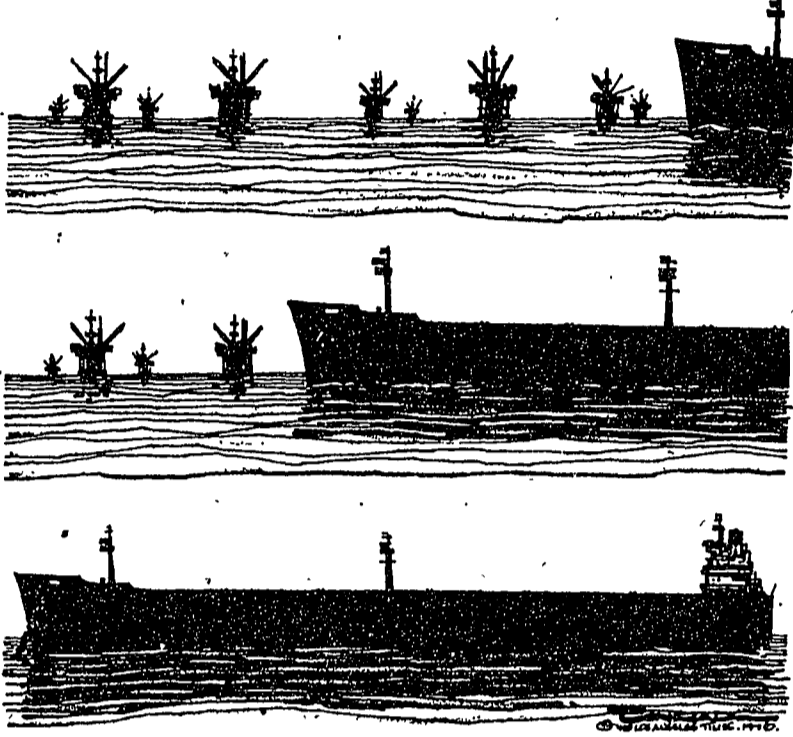
often students have written form letters which are ultimately ignored by Harrisburg.

It is also commendable that students may concentrate efforts with other citizens groups to pass a bill which helps to preserve the Appalachian Trail. It's good to know that all of the students' lobbying interests are not only student-oriented but public-oriented, too.

Perhaps the most challenging problem the lobbies will study will be the budget problem. If they could make as much progress on lowering tuition as they could on legalizing alcohol and decriminalizing marijuana, we would have not only fatter wallets, but probably more respect in the legislature, also.



OIL COMPANIES' PLAN FOR BLOTTING OUT UNSIGHTLY OIL RIGS



From the Editor

You've come a long way, baby

I guess it was in 1965 that my parents gave me my last doll. She was a Madame Alexander babydoll who had black hair and a sweet face.

At the time, I was a little wary of her and of dolls in general. I was on the verge of being too old for dolls. I remember trying to coax my parents into letting me wear nylons for Christmas.

Because I wasn't sure I had outgrown this last doll, I never named her — she became a nameless cuddle that I held when I read *The Secret Garden* on rainy days.

I guess most of us remember last toys in a special way. For one thing, last toys have a habit of hanging around. My last doll sure outlived Chatty Cathy and Barbie. She also outlived a hard plastic doll I begged for and finally got, who came with a hairdressing salon. I used to put pretend lipstick on her until I got

hold of the real thing one day and smeared her whole face with it.

Unlike Baby Alive, a current favorite of little girls, my last doll never defecated on me after I fed her. When I shoved a bottle into her mouth, I did not worry about what would be coming out at the other end.



Sheila McCauley

And when I put her down I did not worry about her crawling away and meeting a horrible end on some busy street. Watching Baby Thataway

commercials has given me many a nightmare. One recurring dream has me sitting up in bed at night after hearing "something" in our cellar.

What I find in the cellar is Baby Thataway, her motor come to life, and her hard little plastic legs moving closer and closer and closer . . .

I fear no such thing with my last doll. I know she sits in our cellar with utmost patience. She will not come to life again some night and make me scream.

Neither would she herself ever scream. I put her to bed at most unusual hours and she never kicked, never fussed. She certainly didn't yammer like Hush Little Baby and her scolding little brat of an owner seen on the television commercial.

The last doll didn't make me jealous like Barbie did, either. In 1965 I had begun to notice clothes and I couldn't

abide with a plastic form that came with a queen's wardrobe. Not to mention a car. Not to mention her own college. I hate to think of a pubescent little girl trying to deal with Barbie and her townhouse, hot rod, hundreds of new outfits designed since '65 and, this is the hardest, her teenage sister who grows from puberty to womanhood with the twist of an arm.

I suppose some mothers see practical merit in Baby Alive and Growing Up Skipper. But I can't picture myself presenting Baby Alive with a "Here kid. This is the real world. Real babies are dirty little buggers. It's time you knew that."

Any robot worth its salt can do the things Baby Alive and Baby Thataway do. A real babydoll should do nothing, but sleep quietly, and occasionally — very occasionally — gurgle.

Letters to the Editor

The Daily Collegian encourages comments on news coverage, editorial policy and campus and off-campus affairs. Letters should be typewritten, double spaced, signed by no more than two persons and no longer than 30 lines. Students' letters should include the name, term and major of the writer.

Letters should be brought to the Collegian office, 126 Carnegie, in person so proper identification of the writer can be made, although names will be withheld on request. If letters are received by mail, the Collegian will contact the signer for verification before publication. Letters cannot be returned.

The buying game

TO THE EDITOR: I am writing in reply to your latest escapade of muddling against Tony Dorsett.

On Dec. 6, Sheila McCauley, a very mixed up young lady, wrote a column which said many ambiguous things about Mr. Dorsett. Ambiguous in that she stated one thing but maliciously implied something totally different. The best example of this that I found said, "I may quote the article, 'I mean just for signing up with Pitt for four years, he gets a new car. And yeah, they figured out a way to do it legally.'" First of all Miss McCauley, who bought Mr. Dorsett the car? Second, and I think most importantly, if "they" did it legally there is really nothing more that can or should be said on the subject.

Another point I would like to bring up is your mention of Mr. Dorsett's "mental magic." First of all you mention that Mr. Dorsett's English teacher said certain things concerning his English grade. Since this teacher obviously said these facts to you personally, why did you not print the name of the school where she taught him in your column? For the moment let us take it for granted that this mishap of grades happened at Pitt or Mr. Dorsett's high school. Wouldn't this switching of grades that you mention, and I quote, "somewhere between her grade book and the computer grade printout, Dorsett's F became a C," be enough to substantiate an inquiry concerning Mr. Dorsett's eligibility to play football? Also wouldn't this bring about the same type of inquiry against the athletic program with which he was involved with at that time? Shouldn't someone report this to the NCAA? I guess since this English teacher told you this that she had access to Mr. Dorsett's records, or obtained them illegally. I can't believe that a school of the caliber of Pitt would allow this to happen, so I have deduced that this grade switching escapade did not happen at Pitt but at another school, maybe his high school?

I would like to conclude by saying that I find it quite incredible that anyone living as long as you have in this land of plenty called America, could believe that Mr. Dorsett has been treated any differently than any other Heisman Trophy winner. I believe every big name college or university plays the buying game, some play it a little better than others. You must know that!

David E. Mosley
8th-Individual and Family Studies

EDITOR'S NOTE: The grading incident did happen at the University of Pittsburgh.

Holiday symbols

TO THE EDITOR: In reply to William Butler's letter to the editor of Dec. 10, concerning Christmas and the winter solstice. The religions of the world, in the course of their evolution and spread into new countries, have absorbed much of the culture and customs of those countries e.g. Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa and Buddhism in Asia. This was also true of Christianity during its early centuries of spread throughout Europe. Many customs of the indigenous animistic beliefs were instilled with symbolism of the new ideology, thus evergreen trees came to represent eternity and an eternal God. It is also believed by some that the date of Christmas was deliberately chosen to coincide with the solstice to aid missionary work.

The customs of the world's major religions may be beautiful, pleasant or comforting, but the essence of these faiths are their beliefs and moral standards. Catholics believe that faith is a gift, but that salvation is also dependent on a good life. It is often inspiring to see people with little or no faith meet this challenge through the use of their intellect and emotions to develop admirable sets of personal ethics.

Unhappily, many atheists fall their ethical standards as "religious" people do their moral ones. Were it otherwise, the world would have fewer wars, less crime, and a more equitable distribution of wealth. The investigation of scientific principles is a marvelous pursuit acceptable to all but the more traditional sects of Christianity. Nevertheless, I would be hesitant to endorse the governing of social interaction along the lines of "soundly-based scientific concepts" without a great deal more study of such concepts. I believe the last country to attempt such a venture was Nazi Germany.

Ridicule of deeply-held beliefs is uncivil, and only fosters antagonism. Mutual respect and consideration permit diversity and enhance co-operation.

Pat Mulligan
graduate-man-environment relations

Press freedom

TO THE EDITOR: "For better or for worse, editing is what editors are for." — Chief Justice Warren Burger in CBS et al, v. Democratic National Convention.

"Liberty of the press is in peril as soon as the government tries to compel what is to go into a newspaper." — Zechariah Chaffee in *Government and Mass Communications*.

The latest controversy between USG and the Collegian has now reached a point where the issue is more than merely whether student government has done anything at all in the past year. It has developed into a question of freedom of the press. Who will determine what goes into the Collegian, the staff of the paper or the director of communications for USG?

I don't purport this letter to be impartial. I am doing a master's paper on some aspects of freedom of the press and feel very strongly that the minute the government tampers with the media, we run the risk of hearing only what they want us to hear. Yes, I want to hear what they have to say, but I don't want them to control the medium through which we receive our messages.

As an independent check on government's powers, the press, be it the Collegian or the New York Times, has the responsibility to criticize an official, or a body, when it sees fit. The editorial in the Collegian on Friday, Dec. 3 did just that. USG responded on Monday, Dec. 6, with a retort three times as long as the original editorial. The Collegian is to be praised for running the article by Grant Ackerman in its entirety. It was under no legal obligation to do this.

Now, USG is upset that the Collegian used its own, straight news headline instead of the sensational one submitted with the retort. If USG wants to write its own heads, let it start its own paper. When the Collegian gives up editorial control of its pages, we will all be the losers.

Jerome Silber
graduate-journalism

No bah humbug

TO THE EDITOR: Concerning William Butler's cynical and overall pessimistic view towards Christmas and mankind in general I retort Bah Humbug! His rather morbid, scientific classification of life is a misfortune indeed.

Christmas is a joyous time having religious as well as universal connotations. Personally, I cherish the season where smiles, gift giving and greetings abound. True, for most of us this exchange of good will is generally limited to a few weeks, but the very fact that we can break the "routine" is in itself gratifying.

Being realistic, unfortunately the spirit of brotherhood that

surrounds Christmas cannot exist all season long. The halting of wars, the Christmas bonuses, and the season sales are short-lived. But the mere existence of such a time to look forward to, and to treasure past memories of, can and does continue.

Although flashing red and green bulbs, pine trees, carols, turkey dinners, snow, chimneys, and gifts are a big part of Christmas, they are only ornaments on the tree. The feelings of unity, harmony, contentment and peace of mind is the essence. Too many people share Mr. Butler's robotic view of Christmas as "an accepted anthropological concept for temperate zone climates to celebrate the winter solstice." Open up and live!

Shame on his dismissal of Mr. Claus "as a mythical character." I believe a figure such as Santa Claus is vital to the children (and some adults) of the world. Belief in fantasy is both necessary and enjoyable to the young and old alike. Man cannot live on fact alone.

As a non-Christian, I savor the spirit of the holiday and the aroma of the yule log as much as my fellow Christian. Religion has individual meaning; Christmas a universal one.

Try letting go. Taste snowflakes, window shop, smile at people, radiate warmth. That, Mr. Butler, is the true Christmas spirit. Enjoy.

William Asknazl
2nd-political science

the Collegian

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Puppy industry: it's a dog's life for man's profit

Few of us today are hard-hearted enough to resist the pleading brown eyes of a pet store puppy. Temptation generally takes charge, coercing us to pay the price and absorb all the warmth our grateful companion can possibly bestow.

Yet few of us are hard-headed enough to find out what horrors our new family member had to experience on his way to the pet store. The sad fact is that most pet shop puppies are products of puppy mills — merchandise manhandled by wholesalers more concerned with profits and quantity than benevolence and quality.

The breeding, transportation and distribution of puppy mill puppies is a multimillion-dollar industry. It is a savage, callous, inhumane business which lacks regard for the health and well-being of its "livestock." Puppy mill puppies are produced, packaged and consumed like anything else on the market. They might just as well be heads of lettuce; there are no differences in how the two are handled.

Puppy mill sadism has been thoroughly and accurately documented by Lee Edwards Benning in his newly published book, "The Pet Profiteers." According to Benning's exhaustive research, most puppy mills are in the Midwest, particularly Iowa, and are chicken-turned-dog farms. This is because puppies reap higher profits than eggs. They also fit nicely into the same cages.

Benning writes, "A tour of such a dive (puppy mill) would seem to be in order. The first stop, a USDA-licensed kennel, is a converted chicken coop containing 110 dogs. At first glance, the floor appears to be covered with white, fluffy, high-piled wall-to-wall carpeting. Then the carpeting moves. Maggots. Hundreds of thousands of them."

Maggots, however, cause only part of the agony experienced by puppy mill puppies. Pups are crammed into fitted cages with barely enough room to move. No room to run. There they stand on wire-mesh: coarse wire two inches square or large enough to allow feces to fall through. Six feet below on the ground the feces and urine stack up, emit a pungent odor and serve as a breeding ground for rats, snakes and yellow jackets.



John Harvey

The gagging odor alone, Benning points out, is overpowering. For the caged pup it is inescapable. It is hell from birth.

Puppy mill pups find no refuge in the weather. In their open cages they must withstand the prairie dust and wind, heat and snow. Lucky pups can shield themselves behind rusted oil drums attached to their wire crates. Unlucky pups must huddle together for protection. Their shivering is a display in terror, a pitiful reminder of our abusive treatment.

Because millers maximize profits, health services for pups are neglected. Notorized health certificates which come with pups are ordered wholesale (20 for \$1). Few puppies visit a vet

before they are sold. Afterwards, when new owners discover the pet's unhealthy condition, pups run up sizeable doctor bills.

Feeding costs are also slashed by the miller. The bitch feeds her pup up to the fourth week, when it is sold to a broker. The broker "crates" the pup and sends it to a pet shop.

There is no guarantee, of course, that the pup will survive the plane ride to the store. Often crated pups become lost like any other baggage.

As Benning notes, "One Labrador puppy was lost in transit for two weeks. Without food and water, he attempted to eat the sawdust in which he was packed. He finally arrived at his destination. DOA: They found him packed, literally, with sawdust. His eyes, his ears, his nose, his mouth, his stomach."

It should be pointed out that not all pet store puppies originate from puppy mills. Many are bought from local breeders who raise their pets with care and pride. Likewise, not all puppy millers are irresponsible.

John Ballenger, State College pet shop owner, said the majority of his pups are bought from local breeders. He said however, that he does buy pups from brokers.

Ballenger refused to say from which brokers he buys and how many puppies he buys from them. He also did not say where the brokers got the pups.

Recognizing the travesty caused by the industry is simple enough. Suggesting a remedy is more difficult. Obviously, there are only two sets of groups as strong as the industry: consumer and governmental groups.

Federal and local governments, which conduct irregular on-

site inspections of puppy mills, must initiate an intensive, crackdown of the puppy mill industry. Laws which have been enacted should be enforced to protect puppies from such inhumane treatment.

Another, more idealistic approach would be for consumers to withdraw economic support. Simply ask the pet store owner where the puppy came from and refuse to buy the pup if he came from a puppy mill.

So often, however, the tendency is to relieve the pup in the window of his misery. Yet buying one dog is subjecting a thousand others to puppy mill torture.

The next time you press close to a pet store window and get that light-headed feeling when some sad-eyed puppy beckons, remember that if the pup was born on a puppy farm he has a cause for sadness. Remember that he could have been born in a wire-mesh cage with little weather protection, food, health care and cleanliness.

Remember, too, that if the pup came from a puppy mill, he understands brutality, persecution, debasement, cruelty, depravity, inhumanity, perversity and despair.

Remember that that same pup understands betrayal and the ways of the human creature. He knows of man's ability to squeeze monetary advantage out of the pup's natural beauty.

And remember too that despite the human creature's abuse of him, that puppy mill puppy would, if given the slightest chance, float innocently into your arms with boundless affection and loyalty.

Indeed, that puppy deserves infinitely more than we have given. We must stop supporting the rights of the puppy mill industry and begin supporting the rights of the puppy.