

Conditions

All men are created equal — conditionally, that is.

Just so the persons involved act as the norm of a given town's society dictates, they are accepted, or at least tolerated.

But the minute a group goes against the grain, it is labeled strange or undesirable, and the public moves to make it go away.

Members of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church have been treated as less than equal in State College. Whether or not people agree with the beliefs of Moon's followers, they do not have the right to stop them from expressing their faith.

The rights of Moon's followers are protected under the Constitution just as anyone else's are. As long as Unification Church

members comply with the solicitation rules for State College, they should be free to sell their flowers and candy and talk to those who will listen without harassment.

Individual solicitors in State College must obtain a peddler's permit before hitting the streets. Organized groups, however, are required only to register with the municipality. No permit is needed.

However, when Moon's followers at first attempted to register to solicit, they met with disapproval because of recent adverse national publicity surrounding the Unification Church.

Because the group's ideas did not balance with those of the majority of townspeople, they were nearly denied the right to speak out freely.

Religious groups such as the

Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses never have been denied the right to knock on doors, distribute literature or talk about their religion to those who had the time to listen.

But those groups have been around awhile. They are not liked, but they are tolerated because they pose no threat.

Followers of the Rev. Moon are different. The way they act is difficult for many persons to understand. Thus, they make State College uneasy.

No matter how uneasy they make others feel, members of the Unification Church have the right to practice the religion of their choice and to speak out about it. Freedom is not a conditional ideal.



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. The editors reserve the right not to print letters if they do not conform to standards of good taste, or if they present an opinion which may be irresponsible or libelous. 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.

Letters to the Editor

Off the beat

TO THE EDITOR: After listening to the new Klaatu album on WQWK last night, I've concluded that it's a hoax (as if this wasn't obvious). Remembering the rampant gullibility of the public during the brief death of Paul McCartney (I listened to every Beatles album backwards) it was shown that by sowing a few suggestive seeds of misinformation, with a liberal application of dung, in the fertile dirt of the unwashed, one could cultivate a luxurious fraud.

The Beatles' legend, in the warming rays of the press's spotlights, has become juicy and ripe for harvest. History presents many instances of legends spawning pretenders: false Dimitris, ersatz Emperor Fredericks and pseudo-Stuarts abound. Every five years someone sees Martin Bormann sunning himself on Copacabana Beach. Despite the supposed sophistication of our day, people are just as easy to dupe as they were in those superstitious times.

Granted, the music on the album sounds similar to the Beatles', and certainly the lyrics are stupid enough to be the work of Paul McCartney, but the voices don't sound anything like any of the Beatles'. Nor does stylistic similarity necessarily prove who the performers are — imitation in rock music is easy. Robin Trower (and a million local guitarists) can play Hendrix better than Hendrix could have done himself.

Practically any band who knew how to hold their instruments could do a passable imitation of the Beatles. Finally, even if the album was done by the Beatles, it's a lousy album, so who cares? Seems to me they never found Buddy Holly's body . . .

John Phillips
12th-economics and history

Secret methods

TO THE EDITOR: The major "issue" in the recent USG presidential elections was reorganization of the system to allow for improved and open communications. But, the old "secret" methods continue and will continue. Many students don't know that most student leaders who are involved in various organizations are invited to join the honor society ODK.

It just so happens that Dr. Oswald and other Penn State administrators are in this society. What a convenient way for the administration to control the student groups. Wouldn't the conscientious leaders object to a society like this that has such a potential for corruption? Not necessarily, because besides the potential for corruption, there is the potential for a letter of recommendation for graduate or professional school from the Penn State higher-ups. Such letters are very influential.

I do not believe that most student leaders would sell out the student body for the hope of a letter. But, I do know from working in a USG department for the past three years that many students compromise their ideals and really believe that they can personally do, within this set up, what no one has been able to do in the past.

It is not USG or the administration that needs to be reorganized, but their connections, which ultimately determine what happens to the students. Therefore, I think that Grant Ackerman should resign from ODK, and use his expertise in communications to set up a new and open means for student-administration cooperation without any favors or kickbacks involved!

Gary Snyderman
12th-political science and Latin American studies

Call to action

TO THE EDITOR: Dave Hickton's article on the student union at Exeter was inspiring. College students having a real influence in a college — imagine that. How nice for them!

So, now take a look at the Jo Ann Farr controversy. A lot of us are upset. We've made our feelings known. But what lever

does the student body have to get the teaching we want and are paying for?

Remember the English writing option? Sure you do! It's still around — receiving periodic doses of slow poison. If there's no blood, maybe nobody will notice as it fades away. We're in the writing option are aware of this, but where is the power to stop it?

Remember tuition hikes? How could you forget. And when someone asks who's going to make up the difference between what the University needs and what it's got, who pays? The ones with no bargaining base — us. We can't even see a detailed budget.

And remember how we all sat cringing and praying while the faculty voted on unions that would have left us in the cold? Well, it's not the last time they'll have such a vote.

Now the administration wants to have a joint task force on student participation. I don't doubt the sincerity of students involved in this, but does anyone really believe that Old Main wants students to become an effective force in policy decisions? Their idea of student participation is how we can pick up services as they drop them. This "task force" is merely a move of appeasement and another nebulous organization to add to the confusion. We lie on the operating table, divided and conquered.

I don't mean to paint the administration as the villain in this piece, but it's not exactly the cavalry either. On many things the University stands with us, but we must face the fact that Old Main's interest and desire is not always our own.

The time has come for us to form a student union with full-time, professional officers. I'd be happy to pay \$20 to \$40 a year to have one. We'd not only make up for that money elsewhere, but would have the real power-base needed to get things done.

This is not a call to arms, but a call to action. Anger, ridicule and demonstrations won't change things. Calm, careful organization and planning will.

Michael S. Messina
8th-English and philosophy

Truth of the message

TO THE EDITOR: I would like to respond to the letters published last week which were critical of the recent multimedia show, "If I Should Die . . ." As the coordinator for the presentation I'd like to express my point of view.

Let's consider whether the show was an appropriate means of communicating the true message of Christ. The presentation of death by car wreck, cancer or old age inherently has the potential to produce a response of fear because man is always fearful of the unknown. The purpose of, "If I Should Die . . ." was not to enlarge on this natural dread of death, but rather, to present the idea that such a fear is unnecessary since Christ conquered death. To cause people to consider seriously the fact that they will one day die is hardly to overdramatize reality.

Although Jesus spent considerable time teaching about how man should live and the temporal benefits of following Him, He also emphasized the eternal consequences of such a choice. The issue of death was certainly not peripheral to the teachings of Christ or the early church (I Corinthians 15:1-56).

I seriously doubt that viewers were "so freaked-out they couldn't think." Rather, I think many people did more thinking than they usually do about the consequences of death and the relevancy of the message of Jesus Christ. Natural fear of death can be a healthy thing if it causes a person to come into a personal relationship with Christ in which "perfect love will cast out fear" (I John 4:18).

So again, the purpose of the presentation was simply to cause people to think about Jesus Christ and His claims about life and death. Jesus promised freedom from the fear of death as well as many of the fears of life. I suggest that the real question to ask about "If I Should Die . . ." is, "Is the message true?"

Darrell L. Barr
PSU graduate, 1977

The shaft

TO THE EDITOR: In the midst of rampant vandalism and theft of both student and University property, we dare ask, "Why does the Occupation Army, alias the Police Services, spend our money harassing students in their leisure time activities, commonly termed victimless 'crimes'?"

We believe the police would do better to protect the student populace and its possessions from criminals and not, from ourselves. We refer to a recent incident of continuing oppression executed by the bourgeois society's marionette squad of law enforcers. The scene, a hall in the Nittany housing area, served to stage this most recent act.

Strolling in with an unmistakable air of superiority, the Campus S.S. proceeded to lay waste to the makings of one fine evening. No sooner was a poorly mistaken label of malicious intent tacked onto these people than we were harangued and treated as common criminals. To those exposed to the inequities of the current police campaign against on-campus partying, no more need be said.

In the U.S.S.R. dissidents are at least granted a knock on the door. Under these conditions at PSU, how far off can 1984 be?

The whole situation is perfectly exemplified by the monolithic shaft of Old Main.

Timothy G. Shean
6th-health and physical education
James R. Sienkiewicz
6th-law enforcement and corrections

Grass is greener

TO THE EDITOR: Dennis S. Rentschler. The name doesn't sound quite right, but nonetheless, "Off the Grass," Apr. 6 does force into mind a neighbor from my childhood home town. Maybe you know this neighbor — the one whose lawn was flawlessly organized.

Yeah? Perhaps then, you too, spent many hours wondering what this man would do with his time with the coming of winter. Perhaps, you too, sighed at the thought of a perfectly good circular (rotating nevertheless) watering system going to waste on such forbidding ground. Perhaps, you too, had nightmares of your favorite Chinese jump rope flying off onto this domain. Heavens!

Or, even you, Dennis S. Rentschler, must be able to empathize with a little girl whose roller skate wheel got stuck in the troughs which insistently outlined his lawn. (It hurt, too, but my legs ran quicker than my tears.)

So, dear Dennis S. Rentschler, if you want to see some real nice "green vegetation," get in touch with me, and I'll give you my old neighbor's address. (Are you sure you weren't my neighbor?) I prefer not to look at such perfection but to be surrounded by the excellence inherent in all that is natural.

Nancy Klalps
10th-mathematics and physics

Nominations

TO THE EDITOR: Each year the College of Business Administration Student Council, with the support of CBA's Alumni Society, seeks to recognize individuals in our college for making personal contributions to the undergraduate business program. Categories have been established for the purpose of recognizing (1) the outstanding teacher, (2) the outstanding advisor, and (3) the outstanding graduate teaching assistant.

I invite all business students to take an active part in this program by submitting their nominations for these awards. Nomination forms are available in the lobby of the Business Administration Building and a special notice will appear in the Wednesday issue of the Collegian. Nominations may be turned in to Room 110-A BAB or at the HUB desk. They are due by Friday, April 15.

Phillip J. Fleming
undergraduate counselor

Torture as usual

TO THE EDITOR: The word "torture" brings to mind Boris Karloff applying some diabolical device to a victim in a dungeon. Torture is just an eerie memory from the Middle Ages, or is it? Alexander Solzhenitsyn documented its contemporary use in "Gulag Archipelago." The macabre mechanisms are nowhere in sight. Modern torture is a prosaic ordeal involving sleeplessness, hunger, thirst and an occasional cigarette put out on the victim's face. One method Solzhenitsyn mentions is simply to make the victim sit on the edge of a chair "so that he is under painful pressure during the entire interrogation. He is not allowed to stir for several hours. Is that all? Yes, that's all. Just try it yourself!" ("Gulag Archipelago," p. 110.) The ordinariness of the equipment conceals what's going on from the unthinking observer or participant.

Some very ordinary torture has been going on at Penn State! According to the Collegian, the good brothers of Omega Psi Phi have been beating their pledges, denying the one student who was later hospitalized food and water for over 24 hours as well. If this had happened outside the fraternity system the brothers would be in jail for assault. Instead this interfraternity Council's judicial branch will administer the usual wrist slapping, and the fraternities will continue to haze pledges, i.e., torture them. A spokesman will come forward (as in every previous year) and say that this cruelty is the exception not the rule.

Baloney! Five of the six hazed pledges kept their mouths shut about the beatings. (Everyone hates a poor sport.) The sixth only spoke up when he woke up in the hospital. There are undoubtedly many unreported incidents of hazing that fall short of actual hospitalization. If the members of the Association of Women Students were habitually this violent, not only would the University disband the organization, but the FBI would sniff the group for public enemies.

Fortunately for the frats they are, with all their smiling cruelty, 100 per cent pro status quo. The members of Omega Psi Phi have little to worry about. If IFC throws them out, they can always reorganize as a chapter of the California Bike Club. Who would notice the difference?

Claudia McClellan
University library employee

the Collegian

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Wet T-shirt photo—the way contest really was

Often, the reasoning behind a newspaper's decision — for example, to run a photo or not to run it — is unintelligible to the reader. The journalist makes his decision at least in part as a result of professional standards, and these may be unfamiliar to the reader. They should not be; hence, this column.

On Monday, The Daily Collegian ran a photo which has evoked some readers' reactions. (Not as many comments as were expected, but enough to inspire this column.) The letters have been negative, for the most part, but it is the nature of letters to the editor to condemn rather than to praise.

In response to those letters, this is how the decision to run the wet T-shirt contest photo was made.

We considered the wet T-shirt contest important enough to cover with a photo and a story — not because it was a wet T-shirt contest, but because it attracted hundreds of people to a downtown bar. In a college town on a weeknight, the contest could be considered the most important local event of the evening and perhaps of the weekend as well.

In one respect, the wet T-shirt contest was like the streaking incidents of 1974; not in its nudity, but as a student phenomenon and a possible trend on American college campuses. The contest was a slice of student life; as a student newspaper, we consider student life a large part of our coverage.

We covered the wet T-shirt contest with a photo as well as a story because it is our policy to run as many news photos as possible; photos enhance the written word. News photos together with news stories are the most complete way to cover an event.

Our photo editor, Randy Woodbury, who also took the photograph, remarked rather ruefully this weekend that he wished the picture didn't even exist because of the decision it forced on the Collegian. But the photo did exist and a decision had to be made.

In deciding whether to run the picture, we considered the quality of the photo itself; as journalists, many of us judged the photo to be an almost textbook illustration of what a good news photo should be: It was accurate, it encapsulated the mood of the event, it caught the winner in the instant of winning and it captured the reaction of the audience — all in the same photo.

Kathleen
Pavelko

Events "happen in 360 degrees," beginning photographers are told, and this picture captured all 360 degrees of the event. The woman in the photograph was in the Collegian office before the picture ran in the paper. Although she had some reservations about the evening and about the photo's appearing in the paper, she agreed that the picture was a good news photo. She herself had taken Journalism 260 a photojournalism course.

We also asked other women on the staff to comment on the picture and to offer their opinion on whether to run it. The photographer himself felt the need of a woman's advice. I, as one of the women asked, found myself in the unusual position of arguing to run the photograph.

On the basis of what I had observed myself at the contest, I thought the photograph as a whole was not salacious or offensive; it did not pander to anyone's prurient interest. In fact, looking at the picture as a whole, I thought it was a strong argument for the woman's point of view; the reaction of the men on the left was caught beautifully — tongues out, eyes bulging. I could think of no better way to illustrate the ugly reaction of the crowd that night.

Which brings up the point that we knew many of the readers, male and female, would look only at the right side of the photo, at the woman. We could not prevent that, but this inability did not seem reason enough to withhold the photograph.

No newspaper can second-guess accurately its readers' reactions to everything in the paper — the readers' opinions are too diverse. If we were to try to anticipate reader reaction in every case, we would be crippled to indecision every night.

We had to decide on journalistic grounds alone — on the basis of the story's importance and the photograph's accuracy and quality. For that reason, we decided to run the picture as it was taken; to put black squares over the breasts would have been a cowardly way out, an indication that the paper itself was unsure about running the photo in the first place.

Black squares also give a photo an automatically seedy, "National Enquirer" look. And, most importantly, we did not want to mutilate a fine photograph.

Contrary to accusation, the decision was not made lightly or quickly. It was made only after long consultation with many staff members. The editor was reluctant to make a quick decision, and after listening to arguments for both sides, he agreed to let the photo run.

So it was decided to run the photo moderately, on an inside page, and at an average size. We ran the photo with what we considered a good, calm story which also captured the mood of the evening and which served as an excellent accompaniment to the photograph.

One argument made by a staff member was that the quality of the story justified the photograph. I feel that the quality of the photograph justifies itself.

We ran the photograph also because the Collegian is the only newspaper which could conceivably run it. The Collegian throws away its advantage as the college audience's newspaper if we fail to use the opportunities to do things other family papers cannot.

The Collegian welcomes the comment and criticism of its readers. We are glad this photograph has encouraged some of our readers to think about the proper role for a campus newspaper. Most important, however, it has forced us on the Collegian to think about it as well. Although decisions like this in the future will have to be made as they appear, this experience may put those later decisions on a more substantial foundation.