

All's fair

Opening the dorms after the Pitt-Penn State game Nov. 24 was an effort by the University administration that warmed the cockles of the student body's collective heart.

Such an attempt by the administration to alleviate potential inconvenience on the part of students traveling to the game from such remote parts of the state as Pittsburgh and Philadelphia was a pleasant surprise.

The University is going to charge students \$2.25 per day to stay in the residence halls during term break.

That seems like a fair rate. After all, as Director of Housing and Food Services

William McKinnon said, compared to a hotel, the dorms are cheaper.

But students received only a \$1.68 per day refund for the room and board costs, including meals, for the five days which were eliminated last Spring Term.

In light of the recent decision to charge students \$2.25 per day for boarding only, apparently something was amiss last spring.

The University says the two rates cannot be compared because the \$1.68 per day was established from the fixed funds within the housing contract, while the \$2.25 rate is based on employee and cleaning costs.

This year, all students are getting is housing and they are paying more than they were refunded last year for the loss of more services.

Last spring, students should have been refunded more than \$1.68 per day for the loss of food, maintenance and housing services.

Last spring's rationale was that the full worth of five days room and board could not be returned because they just didn't have the money.

Just as it's only fair to ask students this year to pay the full value for what they're getting, it should have been only fair last spring to refund students for the full value of what they missed.



Letters to the Editor

Really important

I would like to comment on the article written by Jill Connors and Bev Steller concerning the homecoming awards. One competition that did not get mentioned was the lawn display. I realize this was not one of the four required areas and it was not one of the biggest, but those fraternities who did spend the time and money deserve the recognition, no matter how large or small the event. Our brothers spent as much of an effort on our display as did any other fraternity on a float or window.

I'm sure that other fraternities in the lawn display feel the same way. When I stepped up to receive our award, I heard cheers and applause from my fellow Greeks. I thought I would never hear and see that approval after our display was completely demolished by vandalism Friday evening.

Collegian Forum

Schools ignore Creation theory

Evolution, once the only widely accepted view of man's origin, is now being challenged by the old theory whose reputation is gaining in popularity. This theory is creationism, and it questions a concept we've all been taught to accept since grammar school.

Which theory is correct? Both have solid claims. The question here isn't concerned with the debate over who comes out on top. Rather, the question dealt with here concerns giving the underdog theory — that of creation — equal time in the classroom.

The creationists' position is gaining more acceptance in society today than ever before. The major problem of its followers is getting others to understand what creationism really is — a scientific theory, not a religious fairy tale.

One way to reach this aim is through the educational system. Creation isn't taught in schools, though, because it is widely considered to be purely a religious view. This is the schools' first mistake.

Creationists believe that all life forms began at once, and although they've changed through time, they haven't changed as radically as the evolutionists believe they have. The creation hypothesis supports its claims by citing evidence in the fossil record — not merely in passages out of the Bible.

One such piece of evidence lies in the fact that fossils can be found in strata comprising only thirteen percent of the earth's history. Yet, according to evolutionist theory, life has supposedly been around for sixty percent of the

earth's existence. The creationists' question is, "What happened to the other forty-seven percent?"

Furthermore, evolutionary models show forms of early man making up a chain-like pattern from the most primitive types up to our present day Homo sapiens. Although the doctrine does admit that some forms lived contemporaneously with others and therefore were extinct branches of this pattern, it does not account for the findings of the various links out of order. Fossils of the more modern classifications can be found below those of supposedly more primitive origins in the same strata.

New evidence is also being presented that points to the earth's age as being much younger than the now-believed 4.5 billion years. If this is true, would there still be time for evolution?

These are questions creationists feel they can answer more accurately than evolutionists. The point is that the creationist theory can be supported with solid scientific evidence. If one chooses to interpret the theory with religious meaning, that's up to the individual. Teaching creation isn't teaching religion.

But evolutionists have their points also. The evolutionary standpoint is based on the fossil record, too. There is no need to convince people of the legitimacy of the theory because it is so widely held. It is supported by the scientific principles of random mutation and selective pressure. A changing environment favored individuals with

The point I am trying to make is not that I-we think we were personally picked out not to be in The Daily Collegian, but that all the Greeks contributed to a fine homecoming and that all should be recognized for deserving achievement.

Guy McWreath
11th-rehabilitation education
Oct. 23

Yeah, really

The cartoon in The Daily Collegian depicting an Indian fetus with a begging bowl has offended quite a few people.

Why? We (Americans) and other countries can ridicule or satirize American ideologies, its leaders and government; yet we can neither criticize or, in jest, ostracize other realms?

We take our criticism with a grain of salt, let others do the same.

David E. Lutz
10th-art
Oct. 24

What'll America think?

I was one of the 77,827 fans at the Penn State-Syracuse game last Saturday. As an alumnus of PSU, I must admit I was somewhat appalled at the conduct of some of the student body.

I think it is reprehensible, degrading and ignorant of those students who do not stand for the National Anthem, and equally disgusting when I note so many who do not remove their hats. This should look good on the 60 minutes production to be shown nationally in a few weeks.

It also should look good to see the constant flow of oranges, causing numerous delays. The yelling, in unison, when Syracuse was on offense indicates extremely poor taste and a complete lack of true school spirit. I am ashamed of my school.

R.J. Merlin
Harrisburg
Oct. 23

Majority rules

Dear Walt,
In your column yesterday, you tried to equate signing the Pennsylvania Public Interest Research Group petition with keeping Rubber House supplied with water balloons. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The purpose of the petitions is to prove that the PIRG concept has the support of more than half of the fulltime students. If Rubber House could get half the students to support their cause and request use of the University billing system, then I would support the majority. This is, after all, a democratic country.

So, Walt, next time get your facts straight, PennPIRG would create alternatives for the students, not rip them off. If the students really don't want a PIRG, they don't have to support it, but right now they don't even have a choice.

Thomas Houston
12th-philosophy
Oct. 23

Free ride

When I was a student at the University of Pittsburgh I was a member of the Programming Committee, which was responsible for providing the school's entertainment. We were a close-knit, 30-member organization with a lot of drive and ambition.

Today, I am a member of the University Concert Committee at PSU. I've attended the three meetings we've had so far, and have noticed a marked decline in attendance and interest with each passing meeting.

At Pitt, we had acted as a group, designed to achieve harmonious success (no pun intended). During the last meeting of UCC, I became disgusted at the members' attitudes toward our organization, especially the ones not in attendance. Fellow

members, I will direct this to you: By not attending the meeting (unless for valid reasons, and I can't believe about half of the members had valid reasons), you are showing an uncaring attitude to the committee and to your fellow students. Remember? We are working for them.

I consider us a privileged few to be associated with this committee, but, we do have obligations. We must fulfill these obligations.

Let me ask you a question: Why did you apply to be a member of UCC? For sure it wasn't for monetary gain. Did you just want to see the shows for free? Did you want to fill that empty void on your resume? Or, was it because you wanted to lend a helping hand to UCC in bringing in the best available entertainment? Hopefully, you take the latter view.

Granted, there may be an oligarchical format involved here, but this occurs in most organizations. Each of our voices will be heard and listened to — if we want them to be heard.

Maybe the problem is that our small group is not small enough. In my opinion, UCC can probably be very functional with a dozen people who are willing to work. We can get ushers for the concerts probably just by asking people. Our group, right now isn't dysfunctional, but it's getting close to it. You don't deserve to be classified as a "member" if you're just along for a free ride.

Jamie Berger
5th-arts and architecture
Oct. 24

Shoddy journalism

Walt Meyer's column of Oct. 23 is yet another example of the shoddy journalism that has become a trademark of The Daily Collegian. In that column, Mr. Meyer stated that Jeff Dixon was the "self-proclaimed president" of Rubber House. This statement is erroneous and insulting to the inmates of Rubber House. If Mr. Meyer had bothered to check his facts, he would have found that, according to Rubber House Executive Order number 9754, Jeffrey Dixon was appointed "boss of Rubber House and its dependencies" by last year's boss, Joseph Cybulski. Furthermore, I would like to point out that no self-respecting human being would appoint himself boss of Rubber House. They have to be dragged into it. As you can see, Mr. Dixon's appointment was made in accordance with normal accepted procedures. That position was not usurped as the appellation "self-proclaimed" would suggest. So, Walt, let's check those facts and stop insulting people. Okay?

Kurt R. Schwartz
10th-history
Oct. 23

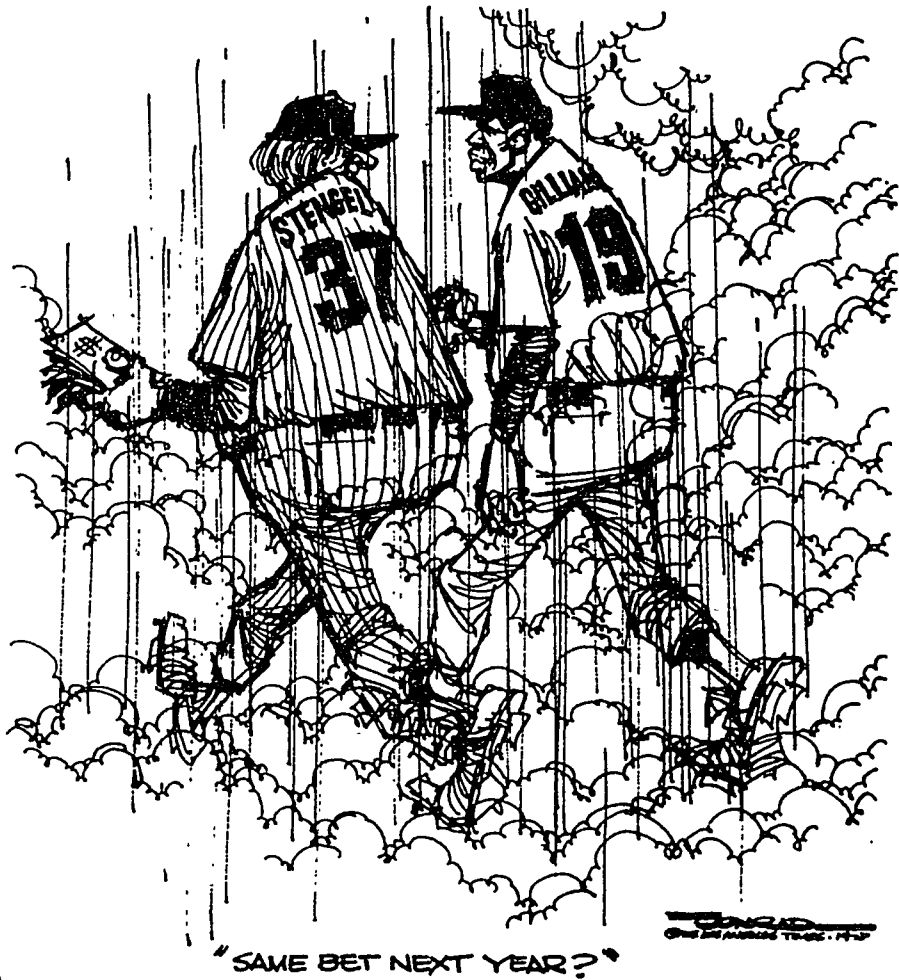
the Collegian

Dave Skidmore
Editor

Judy Stimson
Judi Rodrick

Business Managers

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.



Economics shouldn't decide health

When the Senate subcommittee on health resumes hearings on proposed national health insurance next January, it could find itself choosing between two mutually exclusive priorities.

If so, the committee members' choice should be easy. One priority offers members the opportunity to save federal dollars and further President Carter's standing on Capitol Hill. The other priority is a bit more far-reaching — it involves the economic and physical well-being of some 45 million Americans.

The subject of the hearings is a national health insurance plan recently proposed by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), chairman of the subcommittee. The plan would provide comprehensive service benefits, preventive health care and catastrophic illness relief for nearly all Americans by 1980. It would be funded by employers' insurance costs, and federal subsidies, which would pay costs for the poor.

The Kennedy plan runs counter to the national health insurance proposal unveiled by Carter in July. Carter's plan consists of 10 general principles for national health care, including a ban on increased federal spending until fiscal year 1983.

It also calls for a gradual phasing in of new health programs, with each phase dependent upon the general economic climate. The proposal would take at

least 10 years to become fully operational, and could be derailed at any time by downward turns in the economy.

In that light, the Carter proposal represents at best a promise of national health insurance with several delaying strings attached.

Kennedy's plan, on the other hand, offers Americans the reality of health protection with few strings and little delay. It is a proposal that should have reached the program stage years ago.

Paul Pringle

Critics have used the cost of the plan as their chief weapon in either opting for the president's formula or in decrying national health insurance altogether. In these days of taxpayer resentment, such criticism falls upon an increasing number of sympathetic ears, and Carter's call for an overly cautious program is perhaps understandable from the viewpoint of political expediency.

However, an economic look at the health care industry renders that criticism, as well as Carter's proposal, as short-sighted and ill-informed.

Federal costs of the Kennedy program would increase current health spending

\$30 billion by 1983. By today's standards, this represents less than an 8 percent increase in total federal spending. The figure is dwarfed further by the \$162.2 billion in health costs paid privately and by government in 1977.

The inflationary spiral of private health costs has rocketed at a rate twice that of federal spending since 1950. Increases primarily are due to leaps in hospital fees and doctors' salaries, which in the past 15 years have jumped at a rate 50 percent higher than salary increases for other professions.

Under the Kennedy plan, state authorities would be created to monitor health spending and to negotiate budgets and fees with hospitals and physicians. As the plan envisions, these authorities would serve as built-in restraints to runaway medical inflation.

In the long run, alternatives to the Kennedy plan could be costlier, despite their spend-thrift appearance. The stop-gap delays central to Carter's proposal would let the inflation factor spiral freely for at least a decade — thereby allowing a proportionally bigger burden of health costs to fall on federal shoulders in the future.

The other frequently heard alternative to the Kennedy plan — that is, no national health insurance at all — would simply let health costs continue to run hog wild. And uninsured Americans

would be left unaided to cope with the often prohibitive price of medical care.

Those Americans now number 26 million. Nineteen million more are inadequately insured, and another 98 million have no protection against catastrophic illness costs.

Despite its ranking as the wealthiest country in the world, the United States remains the sole industrialized nation without a subsidized system of health maintenance. The results of that often transcend economic debates. Studies have shown that a person's financial standing — or a person's ability to afford medical care — usually is a dominant factor determining how long he or she lives.

Among poor blacks, for example, the life expectancy is seven years shorter than that of more affluent whites. Infant mortality rates in the ghettos — where prenatal and other preventive health care measures simply are beyond financial means — have long been double those charted in middle-class neighborhoods.

These are issues the Senate subcommittee must weigh in deciding which path toward national health insurance is politically expedient and which, in the broad picture, is both economically wise and morally sound.

Paul Pringle is a graduate student in journalism.