

The mauling of Ferguson Township

Responsibilities to the area and its residents who would shoulder future burdens must be answered in mall question

The Ferguson Township Supervisors, like all government officials, must keep two major responsibilities in mind when formulating decisions.

They must (1.) satisfy their electorate and (2.) work towards the betterment of the community. On the hotly-controversial Ferguson Mall issue, fulfillment of these responsibilities by the supervisors seems quite questionable.

Despite strong opposition from citizen's groups, the township supervisors have clearly leaned in favor of the proposed \$10-12 million shopping mall, which will house three department stores and about 85 small shops. Thus, they have not followed the wishes of their constituents.

However, this does not necessarily mean the supervisors should reject the mall plan. The voters do not always know what is best for the community. But with all the com-

plexities surrounding the Ferguson Mall, it seems no one — including the supervisors — can conclusively argue that the mall would be for the betterment of the community. This is where the supervisors have fallen short on the second responsibility of their office.

After months of township meetings and media interviews, it is still unproven that the economic benefits and consumer convenience created by such a mall would outweigh the developmental, environmental and economic drawbacks.

The site for the proposed mall is probably the biggest question mark of the entire controversy. Although the site along Route 322 (North Atherton Street) near Laurel Glen apartments might be convenient for town and student shoppers, mere convenience must not be given priority over much, more serious considerations. These include traffic

snarl-ups and the safety of school children attending the nearby Radio Park Elementary School.

Other problems with the site stem from the blueprint's 37½-acre parking lot, which could be plagued by sinkholes. Although a representative for the mall developers, the Oxford Development Co., claims water runoff from the parking site would be the purest water produced from any of the site alternatives, that conclusion seems shaky because of all the spilled oil and car exhaust soot that would stain the lot.

Another negative result of the expansive commercial drawing card would be the need for additional police services, an expense which would most likely be borne by the taxpayers rather than the mall investors.

Economic mysteries over the necessity and stability of such an

enormous shopping complex have also not been satisfactorily answered.

Experiences with malls elsewhere clearly indicate that construction of the mall might be bad news for State College businessmen. In Greensburg, Pa., for example, competition from two nearby malls caused the downtown business district there to wither away. Who is to say the same thing might not happen to State College?

It is also questionable whether the Centre Region has the breed of consumer that would keep the mall from becoming a \$12 million white elephant. After all, the bulk of consumers in the area are students, most of whom do not have the spending money to make large purchases for living room sets or color televisions, which would keep the three large department stores slated for the proposed mall operating suc-

cessfully. Those department stores which would comprise the financial and commercial foundation of the development, have remained anonymous and have not made public their support of the area market, possibly because they do not want to incur bad publicity by getting wrapped up in a small-town controversy.

Although The Daily Collegian has previously come out in favor of the concept of a mall, it seems in real terms, at least, the Oxford plan is not satisfactory for the area and its residents.

While certain individuals and enterprises who favor the mall might profit quickly and largely from its approval and subsequent construction, it seems the possible future burdens of such a mall would fall onto the shoulders of those who cried out against it in the first place.



Writers draw curtain on Collegian careers

Cleaning out the notebook 'cause I'm going home

Rather than boring my audience with trite expressions of cliché farewells, I felt I'd spring clean my notebook of some columns that never were:

1) Since this is my last performance from Carnegie Hall (actually Carnegie Building), I should like to object to the University practice of naming and renaming buildings after dead notables and live bores.

I'm one of those advanced term relics who still refers to Eisenhower Auditorium as University Auditorium. I propose creative naming like Art's Building for Arts Building, Edifice Rex for the Liberal Arts Tower, Ben for Willard, Veronica Lake at Stone Valley, and official recognition of Mary "Beaver" White.

2) Dorm rooms tend to ignite nightmares. Once in East Halls I dreamt my waffle ceiling was dripping maple syrup on me. I wonder what Freud would think of that?



Mark Harmon

My latest nightmare involved the University administration acting out The Rocky Horror Picture Show.

Hal Shaffer and Vicki Sandoe played Brad and Janet — two normal, healthy kids (virgins) who get a flat in a rainstorm and follow a light they see in a castle, Old Main. "Dammit Janet," says Brad, "We must be lost in time and space."

Eddie, played by Eddy Eddy, spins about on a campus police scooter only to get shot by a campus policeman and reduced to a tender subject. Suddenly John Oswald in drag marches into a USG meeting singing "Sweet Transvestite." The shock of that sight awakened me.

I couldn't return to sleep as my mind spun in a rose tinted world of superheroes, wild and untamed things, floor shows and double feature science fiction. Even smiling made my face hurt. I kept pondering "Whatever happened to Fay Wray?" and "Don't dream it, be it."

3) Letters of Protest I Never Sent: Dear Campus Mail, please hold all insurance promotions, I'm betting I'll live.

4) I have obtained secret information on a new drug that can make you a man, a potent anabolic steroid called Paternozone. It miraculously increases size, speed, strength and grades on English papers.

This drug, however, is not without its side effects. One feels an incredible urge to shorten your pantlegs, wear white socks and quote Robert Browning.

Additionally, Paternozone never should be used without endzone, a drug designed to make sure a team does not come up inches short of the goal line. Penn State cheerleaders have reliably reported that our halfbacks often come up inches short and consequently never score.

Female cheerleaders, of course, are overdosed on jeaserone — a drug sometimes known as school spirit, T & A, Vitamin E, or P-E-P. This blue and white capsule is extremely dangerous. It increases the bust, decreases the waist, tans one's anatomy, and brightens the teeth. It causes strange convulsions (sometimes with pom poms) and primeval screaming.

One side effect is a strange impotence toward those earning less than \$50,000 a year. Entire sororities have overdosed on this drug.

5) Penn State graduate students returning to India have been put in charge of that country's housing shortage. Borrowing from their education, they have nationalized all housing and will make everyone wait in line for a housing contract. The line formed yesterday and already has backed into Pakistan.

6) Headline from 1989 — The Pennsylvania State University increased tuition for the 22nd straight year. Both remaining students refused to pay.

7) In short, students come and students go but P.S.U. always will mean the same thing — Portable Sanitation Unit.

My experiences here at Penn State are too varied and personal to make a good column. I know I've grown, but wish I could gain a little physical height. I know I've learned, most of it outside the classroom. I hope I've stimulated some thinking and brightened some days. Maybe hindsight on my Penn State years will be 20-20. As for now, I see blue skies through the tears in my eyes and I realize I'm going home.

Mark Harmon is a 12th-term broadcast journalism major.

Classwork was a burden on long and winding road

Only a small hill is left to climb until I reach the end of the road.

The journey began four years ago when I decided to attend Penn State. I don't really remember what the reasons were behind this decision. Now that the end is in sight, I glance back over my shoulder and wonder if I made the right choice.

I have spent the last four years acting as a passive recipient in the learning process. My curiosity and enthusiasm have been stifled, because I have not been given the freedom to pursue my education.

The last four years a professor has stood in front of a class and told me that I would have to learn a given amount of material by a certain date. This teacher emphasized only the memorization of factual material; factual material that I have learned and long since forgotten. I have been rewarded for this ability to regurgitate factual information on a test paper with a grade; a grade which no longer conveys meaning.



Mark Jackson

Somewhere along the line I must have been misled. I thought a college education was suppose to encourage you to want to learn, to think, to reason, to ask why.

Despite these objections, I have remained and somehow survived. I realized that if I chose not to conform then I wouldn't be presented with that piece of paper. A piece of paper that would enable me to enter the teaching field where my criticisms could be used to constructively improve the educational system.

This is not to say that there haven't been any detours along the road to conformity. During the course of a college education the student will usually have one instructor who will leave them with a lasting impression. I found that instructor in Ed Walsh in an introductory sociology class. Ed Walsh opened my eyes and I began to look at the world around me in a different perspective.

The chance to write for this paper provided me with the opportunity to share my opinion and this perspective with others. This experience has proven to be the most beneficial part of my education.

At an institution of this size it is difficult for me to imagine what impact I might have had. If I have been able to reach at least a few people then all the work has been worthwhile.

The last thing I ever thought that I would be doing when I arrived at this school was to write for The Daily Collegian. In high school I spent all my time on the athletic field and I often wondered what was wrong with those people who spent their time writing for the school paper or practicing for the school play. It was my objective to continue my athletic career on the intercollegiate athletic field, but it never worked out the way I had hoped.

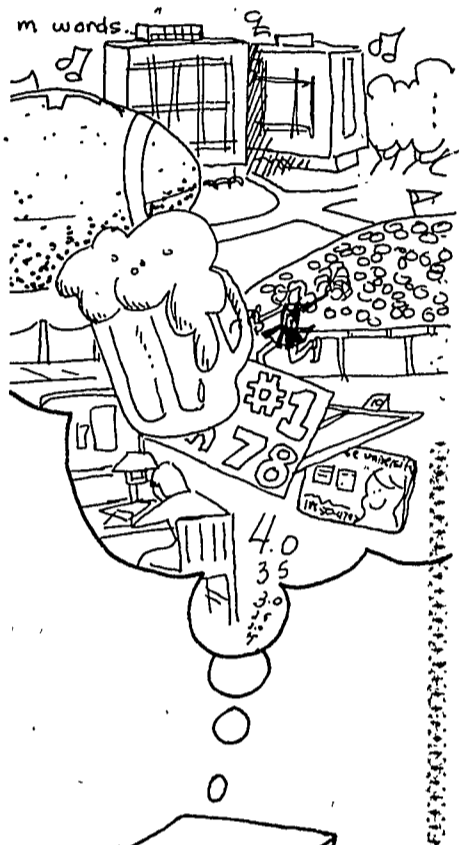
Where one road ended another path began. I moved into the coaching ranks and assisted with the State College High School baseball program for three years. The experience will not be easily forgotten.

A scene from the movie "The Graduate" exemplifies my feelings and reflections over the last four years. Dustin Hoffman, who plays Ben, graduates from college and returns home to adopt the life style of a bum while he contemplates what to do with his life. Ben's father approaches him one day while he lays in the pool and asks, "Do you mind telling me what those four years of college were for? What was the purpose of all that hard work?" Ben looks up and replies, "You got me."

My experiences indicate to me that the value of a college education cannot be found in the meaningless hours spent in the classroom. A college education only appears worthwhile when one reflects on the teaching of one instructor or on the memories of a single experience.

Now that I have been given my ticket, I must wait in the line of employment. Just the other day I shared my philosophy of education during an interview for a teaching position. The employer looked at me and asked if I was a radical. It was a question that awakened me to the fact that there was no longer any need to glance back. I had only just begun the journey down the long and winding road.

Mark Jackson is a 12th-term secondary education major.



Be defensive, or take it with humor and humanity

A learned man came to me once. He said, "I know the way — come." And I was overjoyed at this. Together we hastened. Soon, too soon, were we where my eyes were useless. And I knew not the ways of my feet. I clung to the hand of my friend; But at last he cried, "I am lost."

—Stephen Crane

The main lesson I learned at Penn State had been taught to me many times before I began my Freshman year here, but it took this institution of higher learning to beat it into me so I'd never forget it.

On a cold spring morning, about 15 or so years ago, a kid I'd just met in my neighborhood gave me my first exposure to this rule of thumb for life. We were at the local playground, fooling around on the see-saw, each of us standing on either end of the thing, going up and down by walking up and back on the plank. Slightly dangerous, but when you're young and careless

Anyway, when I was at the top, the kid stepped off. Just a few stitches in my chin was all that resulted, but I should have gotten more than that.

I should have learned what a dangerous thing it is to trust someone you don't know.

Between that early time in your life and college, you're bound to get burned — it's a fact of life. I got burned no worse than anyone else, and no more often than anyone else, but unlike some, I had failed to learn my lesson before I entered Penn State.



Bob Frick

I was again taught that lesson my first term here. I was given a student adviser who didn't know what he was doing any more than I did, and I can say with some certainty that my first two terms were wasted taking courses this asshole told me were what I should be getting out of the way my first year. But heck, he spoke with such a soft, concerned voice, I couldn't believe he was leading me astray.

At any rate, I quickly learned, mainly through my work on the Collegian — but also from just being a student — you can't trust people more simply because they hold a more responsible

position. Top administrators will mislead you as much as Undergraduate Student Government leaders as much as your professors as much as the local teamster officials, etc.

Of course this is a stereotype, but a useful one — especially to a journalist. Having this attitude emphasizes what should be among a journalist's, and maybe even among Joe Student's "modern ten commandments of living." You could best summarize this attitude with the following saying: If your mother says she loves you, check it out.

Sound cynical? Sure. Today you can't trust anybody or anything. You can't trust the television to bring up your kid (unless you want him or her to wind up with the intelligence of a soap opera, the depth of Charlie's Angels, and a vocabulary of clichés).

Why should you be trusting when deception is the name of today's game? People tell out and out lies in the interest of our new god, "Hype." Liza Minelli probably doesn't even drink Puerto Rican Rum, Granada's don't look like Mercedes, McDonald's may or may not be your kind of place and Charmin isn't squeezably soft (no more than a dead racoon). Politicians' campaigns are based on hype, issues are submerged in hype, nothing is what it seems.

People immersed in it are apt to say, "come on, it's fun, just ignore it." These are the people who

love the Brady Bunch, honeymoon at Six Flags over Hackensack, read ads before news stories and TV guide before Time Magazine.

I never really feared hype until the guy I thought would have been immune to it, columnist Art Buchwald, said he thought it was society's major problem. If he can't rationalize it, take it with a grain of salt, see it in a humorous light, nobody can.

I'd like to say at this point that the only institution you can trust completely on this campus is the Collegian. But, Pete Barnes forgive me, I can't. I will say, though, that while we are no more honest or righteous than any group, we will give you the fairest shake on campus. We will because it's our business to be fair. USG spends our money on programs (generally very worthwhile ones) and the Collegian prints what the people who run it know as the truth.

In addition, if you don't think you've gotten a fair shake, you've got as much of an opportunity as our reporters to get something published — write a letter.

What do you do if you can't trust any person or institution? You can become defensive and suspicious as hell, but obviously this isn't conducive to a very happy existence.

Anyway, you can become as defensive as hell, or you can deal with all that is misleading and deceiving with a mixture of humor and

humanity. I'm happy to say that this is another lesson Penn State taught me which was easy to learn.

Specifically, two professors of life, Dr. John Martellaro and Dr. Martin Smith, whose words graced this page in the past, taught me that the human condition is basically out-of-condition; but that, what the hell, we're all bozos on this bus and you make the best of what you have.

I also learned that the only time to get pissed is after you've decided it's too important to laugh off, and too deliberate to forgive on the grounds that the offending party is just a schmuck or doesn't know any better.

Then, when you get pissed, don't pull your punches.

So much for dealing with life. The one thing I wish I could really tell Penn State in my last column is how to enjoy life. But then, Penn State itself really taught me that trick, and for this and other reasons, I'll always respect my Alma Mater. And so . . .

I thank you God for this most amazing day; for the leaping greenly spirits of trees and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything which is natural which is infinite which is yes

—e.e. cummings

Bob Frick is a soon-to-be-graduate in journalism.