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## Rumors circulate of apartment 'casing' magazine peddlers

By BECKY JONES  
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

Rumors of magazine salespeople who may be "casing" apartments to see which ones would be profitable to burglarize during term break are circulating in several local apartment complexes.

A number of tenants in the Beaver Hill, Cedarbrook and Park Hill apartment complexes said they have seen at least three different magazine salespeople in the past two weeks and have subsequently found various codes on the walls next to their apartment doors.

In addition, several of the same codes found near the apartments have been found next to rooms in Lyons Hall on campus. Students there also reported visits of magazine salespeople.

State College Police Chief Elwood G. Williams Jr. said the police received a complaint Tuesday night from the Daniel Kinley, manager of the A.W. and Sons Enterprise, about the marks next to the apartments in the Beaver Hill complex.

"We are trying to look into it to see if the marks are related to the large number of magazine salesmen who have been in the area recently," Williams said.

He said the salespeople were licensed to sell magazines.

Joe Silvestri (5th-science) and George Mishkin (5th-science), residents of Beaver Hill, said they believe the codes made in blue ball-point pen indicate whether the apartments contain televisions or stereos. They said a star indicates a stereo in the apartment and an "A/81" indicates a television.

Marlis Tolbert (8th-petroleum and

natural gas engineering), also a Beaver Hill resident, said she was told the same information about the codes by another tenant.

Tolbert said she spoke with a woman in the manager's office of the complex and the woman confirmed that the codes meant the apartments contained certain items, rather than just indicating that a salesperson had seen the tenants.

The manager of the complex had no comment on the rumors.

Tolbert also said he was told the hallways would have to be repapered because washing would not completely remove the marks. However, other tenants said they had successfully washed off the codes.

Betsy Hartman, manager of the Park Hill and Lexington apartment complexes, said she did not know about the codes next to the apartments until yesterday afternoon when she received a complaint from a tenant.

Hartman said the marks were evident next to apartments on the first and second floors. A maintenance man is scheduled to clean off the marks today, she said.

If the rumors are true, however, Hartman said the Park Hill management recently installed dead bolt locks which are more secure than most other types of locks.

A number of tenants in the Beaver Hill and Cedarbrook complexes said their apartments have locks which are relatively easy to pick. Some said they had gained entry into their apartments with student identification cards and credit cards.

In addition to the stars and the "A/81" found next to the doors, the initials "DH" appeared a number of times.

Debbie Harris and Monica Mendez were the two women's names of salespeople students gave. Some also identified a man named Tim as a salesman.

The salespeople say they are selling the magazines to earn points toward a \$10,000 scholarship. The company sponsoring the sale is a Florida-based firm called Publishers Marketing Agency.

### Settling down

Today will be much more tranquil than yesterday. There should be a good deal of sunshine with diminishing winds by afternoon. The high temperature this afternoon will approach 18. Tonight will be clear, calm and very cold with a low temperature of 7. A warming trend will begin tomorrow as we should have variable cloudiness along with a high of 28.



Water, water everywhere. . .

. . . and not a drop to drink.

Alpha Fire Chief Marvin Robinson observes as fire company pumps work to remove the water behind apartments on Corl St.

Actually it is too soon to tell if the heavy rain, plus the melting snow and ice, have eased the water shortage in the area, said Paul Fisher, assistant manager of the State College Water Authority. He said no well readings were conducted yesterday.

Accu-Weather unofficially reported that a little more than an inch of precipitation fell in the area since Tuesday afternoon. An inch or two of snow

was expected last night and little or no precipitation was expected throughout the weekend, according to Accu-Weather.

Recent precipitation was mostly run-off water because the ground was still frozen. Water Authority member Robert Schmalz said at Tuesday's meeting, Schmalz, a University professor of geology, said rain will not help unless ground frost melts.

The authority recently reported that well levels are not dropping, but they are not rising either.

—by Paul Boynton

Photo by Nick Ostrosky

## Local groups working to wipe out discrimination

Editor's Note: This is the second part of a three-part series examining racism and discrimination in State College. Today's article examines racist and discriminatory attitudes locally, and the reasons behind them. Tomorrow's article describes courses of action available to minorities discriminated against in Centre County.

By JOE GRACE  
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

Last spring, the home of a local Jewish family was utterly destroyed by vandals. Racial epithets were scrawled all over the doors and walls. The State College Police Department conducted an extensive investigation of the incident. Nothing was found. No one was arrested.

In July, during the Arts Festival weekend, a black student who had come to the University from South Africa was assaulted by four white men on East College Avenue. The student's injuries were severe enough to require hospitalization, and after his release, he returned to South Africa. A police investigation ensued, but no arrests were made.

Two incidents of racial hatred erupted in State College, and innocent victims were seriously harmed. But the perpetrators remain free.

These two examples of racist and discriminatory incidents have galvanized the local Jewish and black communities into action. A meeting was held on Jan. 22 at a local church to air grievances and report cases of racism and discrimination.

Rabbi Jeffrey Eisenstat, director of the State College Jewish Community Center and the Hillel Foundation, said local minorities are no longer going to sit back and accept racist and discriminatory attitudes and incidents.

"We want to try and make it so that prejudiced behavior will be totally unacceptable in State College," Eisenstat said. "We want to make it known that anyone committing or communicating an anti-Jewish, anti-black or anti-anything act or message will be told, 'We don't buy your act.'"

"Any offense, no matter how minor it may be, is still an offense," Eisenstat said.

Racism and discrimination generally receive more publicity in towns with large minority populations. About 1 to 2 percent of the State College population is black, said Elwood G. Williams Jr., State College chief of police. The Jewish percentage of the population is unknown.

William Asbury, chairman of the Centre County Advisory Council to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, said the small percentage of minorities in State College has an effect on the degree of discrimination.

"I'd say there's significantly less discrimination in State College than in cities like Atlanta and Buffalo," Asbury said. "The reason being that there's very few blacks in State College. As far as discrimination is concerned, there's not that many opportunities to discriminate."

But Asbury made a distinction between discrimination and racism.

"As far as racism is concerned, I don't think State College is any different than anywhere

else," Asbury said. "By racism, I mean the thoughts and attitudes that prevail throughout the country — that race is a factor."

Bernard Bronstein, chairman of the State College Hillel Foundation's governing board and an adviser in the Division of Undergraduate Studies, tried to distinguish between discrimination and racism.

"Discrimination means that a person is denied employment, housing, membership in a club, because they are something, not because they aren't something," Bronstein said. "Because they're black or Chinese, or Jewish, for example."

"Prejudice, or racism, is when someone says 'I don't like you because you're black, or because you're Jewish,'" Bronstein said. "But that doesn't necessarily mean they're in a position to discriminate against anyone. What the Ku Klux Klan is trying to do right now is take that bigotry and prejudice and make it operational. They want to combine the mental dislike of minorities with the authority to control them."

Bronstein and Eisenstat agreed with Asbury that racist attitudes are more prevalent than discriminatory practices in State College.

Thelma Price, president of the State College chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said the hidden nature of discrimination makes it more dangerous than racism.

"Racism is overt — discrimination isn't," Price said. "It's like the difference between segregation and discrimination in the South. Segregation was something you could put your hands on — you knew where it was. In the North,

the subtlety of discrimination comes into play. I deal with these things much better when they're out in the open."

Price said racism affects people in State College more than discrimination. She said racial slurs and name-calling are offensive to adults, and can be particularly harmful to children, including her own.

"My children have been called derogatory things in school here," Price said. "And they can't handle it too well. Name-calling can be highly destructive to young children. They just can't deal with it as well."

Price and others emphasized the importance of the home and parents when dealing with racist attitudes.

"About nine-tenths of what a kid learns, he learns at home," Price said.

Eisenstat agreed with Price, and explained what the Jewish and black communities were doing about it.

"Prejudices are developed in the home," Eisenstat said. "An eight- or nine-year old can't learn these anti-Semitic or anti-black ideas on their own. They learn them in school too."

"What we have planned is a meeting on Feb. 26 between townspeople and State College School District officials," Bronstein said. "We want to establish lines of responsibility for the schools in the teaching of racial tolerance and understanding."

Price said problems of racism and discrimination affect University students as well as townspeople and their families.

"A high percentage of black students here are

constantly on guard against anything that might be interpreted as a racial remark," Price said. "Their first reaction to anything that happens to them is — 'Is it because I'm black?' And those feelings carry over into everything they do."

"There's a feeling of distrust among black students here," Price said. "And that's unfortunate. There's a general feeling among blacks of being uncomfortable in State College."

Community leaders and the police differed in their opinions about the degree of racism and discrimination in State College.

"I suspect there are some people with legitimate claims (of discriminatory and racist treatment)," Police Chief Williams said. "As to whether the problem is of the magnitude people would have us believe, I'm not sure."

"If the problem is of this magnitude, someone would've said something sooner," Williams said. "And there have been very few complaints of racism and discrimination filed with the police."

"I know enough people in the Jewish and black communities that they know they can call the department immediately if there's a problem," he said.

Price looked at the issue from a different perspective.

"Any discrimination or racism of any degree is serious because it cuts so deep," Price said. "And the wounds can be very permanent."

"If you don't deal with racial incidents when they're small, it's like a cancer — before you know it, it's out of control," Price said. "And then there's nothing left to do about it."



Flames rise from the burning Las Vegas Hilton during Tuesday night's fire in which eight people died and 198 were injured. Arson was determined the cause of the fire — the second major hotel blaze in the resort city in three months. An employee of the hotel, who was the first to report the fire to the fire department, was arrested last night and charged with eight counts of homicide.

## Busboy at Vegas Hilton charged with setting fire

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (AP) — A busboy at the Las Vegas Hilton Hotel was arrested and booked on eight counts of homicide last night in connection with the arson fire that burst from an eighth-floor window and roared up the side of the 30-story hotel.

Eight people died in the fire and 198 were injured. Homicide detectives said they had arrested and booked Phillip Bruce Cline, 23, who they said was the first person to report the blaze to the fire department.

"We determined that probable cause exists to charge him with first-degree arson and eight counts of murder," said Deputy Chief Erik Cooper.

Cooper said Cline was questioned for two hours, that he was taken to the Metropolitan Police station yesterday afternoon and that he was in the hotel at the time the fire started.

Some 4,000 people were rescued or evacuated from the building, including 110 plucked from the roof by helicopter. Hilton Hotels Corp. Vice President Henri Lewin had offered a \$100,000 reward for information leading to the apprehension of the arsonists.

"This is a homicide investigation. This is a criminal investigation," Nevada Gov. Bob List said as hundreds of fire refugees listened outside the Las Vegas Convention Center meeting room where a news conference was held.

"This state has a tough law," List said. "The penalty for arson that kills someone is capital punishment." The survivors from the fire erupted in applause.

Unlike the killer MGM Grand Hotel fire which claimed 84 lives Nov. 21, Las Vegas Fire Chief Roy Parrish told reporters "building codes were not a factor in either point of origin or spread of fire."

Parrish said fire hoses on the ninth floor were severed, stuffed with flammable material and set afire.

Fires were started "on the eighth floor in the elevator lobby area. Another was on the second floor in the uniform linen area and the other was in the third floor in a service elevator," he said. The fourth fire started in a ninth-floor firehouse.

The hotel sustained \$10 million in damage from the fire. Barron Hilton, chairman of the board and president of Hilton Hotels, said 900 of the hotel's 2,783 rooms were damaged, mostly from smoke.

"We expect that the Las Vegas Hilton will be operational in one week with the estimated 1,900 rooms unaffected by the fire available to our guests," Hilton said in a prepared statement.

There were no sprinklers in the area on the eighth floor where one of the fires began, and none were required by local building codes. Parrish said he did not know if the fire alarm system was working.

But one guest, Cliff Davis of Fresno, Calif., said he heard no alarms and had to wait in his 16th floor room until a security guard rescued him.

The main blaze started at 8:07 p.m. (11:07 p.m. EST) Tuesday. See related story on Page 14.