

the daily collegian opinions

editorial opinion

HUBub

New HUB food service will be nice; so is Heineken

By next fall, the ground floor of the HUB will cater to every tongue and tooth. In response to a marketing survey done for the Office of Housing and Food Services measuring student appetites, the new complex will offer quick hamburgers, pizza, subs, soups, salads, chili, takeout baked goods and table service.

But the renovations, which will have the HUB ringing with the sound of hammers and drills through Spring Term 1983, will do more than please palates.

First, they will plug the cash drain from the Terrace Room cafeteria, which vies with the Faculty Club for status as Penn State's whitest elephant. Since it was built in 1972, the Terrace Room has neither made money nor become popular with students. In fact, nearly half of a group of undergraduate students surveyed by Housing said they have never eaten there.

The Penn State Bookstore, now divided among three locations, will inherit the Terrace Room's building — a textbook store is perhaps the only institution that can't lose money in State College, and students will no longer have to buy books, pencils and Penn State souvenirs at different locations.

The campus post office will inherit the bookstore's space in McAllister Building.

And the new eateries will inherit the Terrace Room's kitchen facilities, replacing the ancient and hard-used kitchen of the Lion's Den.

All in all, the shell game is a stroke of genius — or at least the right plaster, paint and plumbing at the right place at the right time.

But it's going to be expensive, very expensive. To be as exact as possible, in these inflationary times, the new HUB will cost Penn State \$2.87 million.

Rest assured that those millions will not come out of University funds: food service operations pay for themselves, including their buildings. So it is unfair to make comparisons with other places on campus where the money could doubtless be put to better academic uses (such as the library, where a \$2 million budget for new materials is inadequate to keep Pattee on par with the major research libraries in the country).

But it's still a pity that so much is being spent for new restaurants, bookstore and post office while some much less expensive academic concerns are dying for lack of funds.

So who's going to pay for the new HUB and Terrace Room? Students, in higher prices for on-campus food. Students, in higher prices for books and materials.

There's no free lunch.

The Daily Collegian's editorial opinion is determined by its Board of Opinion, with the editor-in-chief holding final responsibility.

SAYS HERE MOST COLLEGE STUDENTS DO NOT KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT WORLD AFFAIRS TO SCORE MORE THAN 50 PERCENT ON A TEST.

WELL, MAN, "HUSTLER" AIN'T THE MOST RELIABLE SOURCE.



More than one person gets blame for Pulitzer disaster

After years of exposing everyone else's scandals, journalism finally came up with one of its own.

Actually, it almost looks like someone else's scandal — change the names and a few minor details and it could be the saga of any of the n'e-do-rights whom journalists crusade each day. There's no sex or violence, but there is everything else that makes a good story: ambition, competition and lies.

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Much of the blame is placed directly in the imaginative fingers of Janet Cooke. She is a 29-year-old heroin addict, concocted vivid descriptions of his mother's boyfriend shooting him up with dope and kept his "identity" a secret by saying her life had been threatened if she revealed it.

Much of the blame, of course, belongs with Cooke. It is — or would have been — gallingly beyond belief that any reporter could so completely and so nonchalantly disavow all journalistic ethics and values just for the sake of a good story. Or more precisely, for the sake of a Pulitzer Prize.

But Janet Cooke did not put that story in the newspaper by herself. She had plenty of help from her editors, editors whose job it is to hear, and to heed, alarm bells and red warning flags. And there were plenty of warnings. Some were heard but not heeded; others were not even heard.

It's a fact of journalism that newspapermen must work with a basic trust in their reporters; there simply is no way to ensure that reporters have gotten every fact in every story right, that they are telling the story in the proper context, or even that they have not invented "quotes" — or entire stories.

When questions do arise, reporters are grilled more intensely and pressed to make sure that their information and interpretation is correct. But even then, as the Post said in its apologetic editorial last week, "You just do not read a many-paged memorandum from an apparently reliable reporter, relating her visit to and prolonged conversation with several people in great detail, and then inquire: 'Say, did any of this actually happen?'"



Paula Froke is a 31st-term journalism major and editor of The Daily Collegian.

But it's Gonzo Janet Cooke who made it all happen

"We were somewhere around Barstow on the edge of the desert when the drugs began to take hold. I remember saying something like 'I feel a bit light-headed; maybe you should drive...' And suddenly there was a terrible roar all around us and the sky was full of what looked like huge bats, all swooping and screeching and diving around the car, which was going a hundred miles an hour with the top down to Las Vegas. And a voice was screaming: 'Holy Jesus! What are these goddamn animals?' — the first paragraph of Hunter S. Thompson's book, 'Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: A Savage Journey to the Heart of the American Dream,' the definitive piece of Gonzo Journalism.

"Jimmy is 8 years old and a third-generation heroin addict, a precociously little fellow with brown eyes and needle marks freckling the baby-smooth skin of his thin brown arms." — the first paragraph of Janet Cooke's Washington Post story, "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas," the recipient of a Pulitzer Prize for about two days.

My, how journalism has progressed. When Hunter Thompson created his extreme brand of journalism, using obviously exaggerated facts to illustrate a situation and having the writer be more of an intruder than an observer, he was a genre unto himself. Although the New Journalism allowed writers much freedom, Thompson's Gonzo Journalism was the first to go way out — distorting the facts to hell, making the story a strange blend of fiction based on fact that somehow told the truth. No one tried emulating him. Now a new force has hit the scene: Janet Cooke. Gonzo Journalism's extreme. She has taken the genre a step further, however, opting to eliminate all facts and trying to pass off bullshit as news, with no regard for the truth.

No one seriously believed Hunter Thompson did everything he wrote in "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas"; he would have to be super-human to ingest that many drugs and to get away with antagonizing everyone he met. Yet he did travel to Las Vegas with his attorney friend to cover a story and more than likely consumed drugs during the trip. But what he saw and felt in Las Vegas could not be put into conventional journalistic form. His perception of the American Dream could be expressed only through gross exaggeration, contorting the facts to create an impact, but with the reader fully aware of his intentions.

Janet Cooke has committed a heinous crime against the people. She has raped a sacred institution, journalism. For personal gain, she fabricated a major news story, a story that was marked clearly as fact. Although the editors of the Post erred in not catching her lies, she bears the brunt of the blame. Editors must be able to trust their reporters. She should have her fingers cut off.

How many other news stories are mere fabrications, the public is wondering, how do we know these media people aren't bullshitting us just to sell papers? What painful questions these are, yet they must be confronted. The credibility of the media, especially newspapers, is questioned daily, mostly a result of the inevitable inaccuracies that come from collecting the news. A step worse is the sensationalized story, the screaming headlines, the manipulated quotes. They help create a general skepticism of the media. But Cooke's escapades? Good God, her crimes are out of my realm of understanding. Completely fabricating a news story so she can pursue the monster of success? Oh, the horror, the horror...

America is based on rights of the individual and the idea that people have the freedom to make whatever they want out of their lives; part of the American Dream is that success is available to anyone. Janet Cooke decided she wanted to be a star journalist, but didn't want to wait around. She took a chance, pushed her luck to the limit and faked her way into big-time journalism.

Her overpowering desire for success made her blind to her own evils. Like a heat-seeking missile destined to attack a plane, Cooke barreled along, bent on her own self-destructive path — aimed at exploding in the middle of journalism. The American Dream warped her mind; success became more important than scruples. She thought she could get away with it.

"I felt like a monster reincarnation of Horatio Alger... a Man on the Move, and just sick enough to be totally confident." — the last sentence of "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas."

John Allison is an 8th-term journalism major and assistant editorial editor of The Daily Collegian.

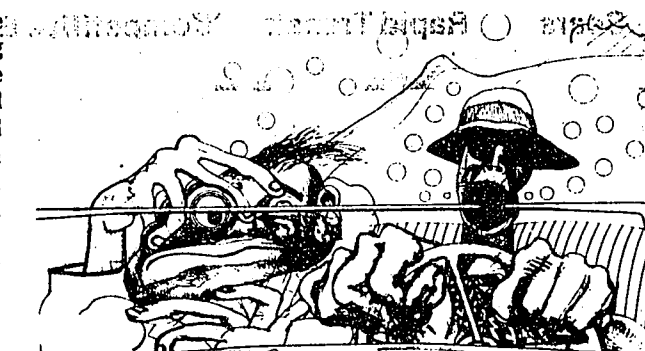


Illustration by Ralph Steadman, from "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas."

At the same time, however, you just do not brush off the growing suspicions of some of your most reliable editors as "professional jealousy," as assistant managing editor Bob Woodward put it.

Nor do you keep your doubts to yourself, as did "a couple of dozen" lower-level reporters who questioned the story among themselves but did not go to the top editors because, they said later, they could not prove anything.

Then there were others, including those most accountable to accuracy, who saw no reason not to believe the story.

"Janet had written a great piece," Woodward said. "In a way, both she and the story were almost too good to be true... This story was so well-written and tied together so well that my alarm bells simply didn't go off. My skepticism left me. I was personally negligent."

So the Post published the story. And nominated it for the

Paula Froke is a 31st-term journalism major and editor of The Daily Collegian.

To grow or not to grow

Anti-growth position shows neither faith in technology nor compassion for less-than-affluent

By ROBERT J. TISINAI
3rd-engineering

The latest villain to be attacked by John Protevi and Eco-Action on The Daily Collegian's editorial page is the "myth" of the benefits of economic growth. They have taken on the task of proving that economic growth brings on ecological ruin, war, and individual unhappiness.

The main threat to world peace comes from an expanding population without corresponding economic growth. This has been true all through history and is still true today, what a country cannot produce or buy on its own, it will attack its neighbors to get.

Now, with half the world starving, this danger is stronger than ever and brings us back to the fact that economic growth must accompany an increase in population. Don't try to claim that this does not apply to the United States. It may not today, but our population is still growing, no matter how slowly, and if our economy does not grow with it, it will merely be a matter of time until we, too, are living beyond our means.

The population of a country expands whether its economy does or not. It is economic growth that makes life bearable for an expanding population, yet it is also economic growth that slows a population explosion.

Look at a map; those countries with the weakest economies and the lowest standards of living are the nations where the population is increasing fastest. Those few countries in which this is not the case, such as Cambodia, are the countries where the economy has been able to stand still. With economic growth, these

countries would have a much better chance of survival; without it, they are all but lost.

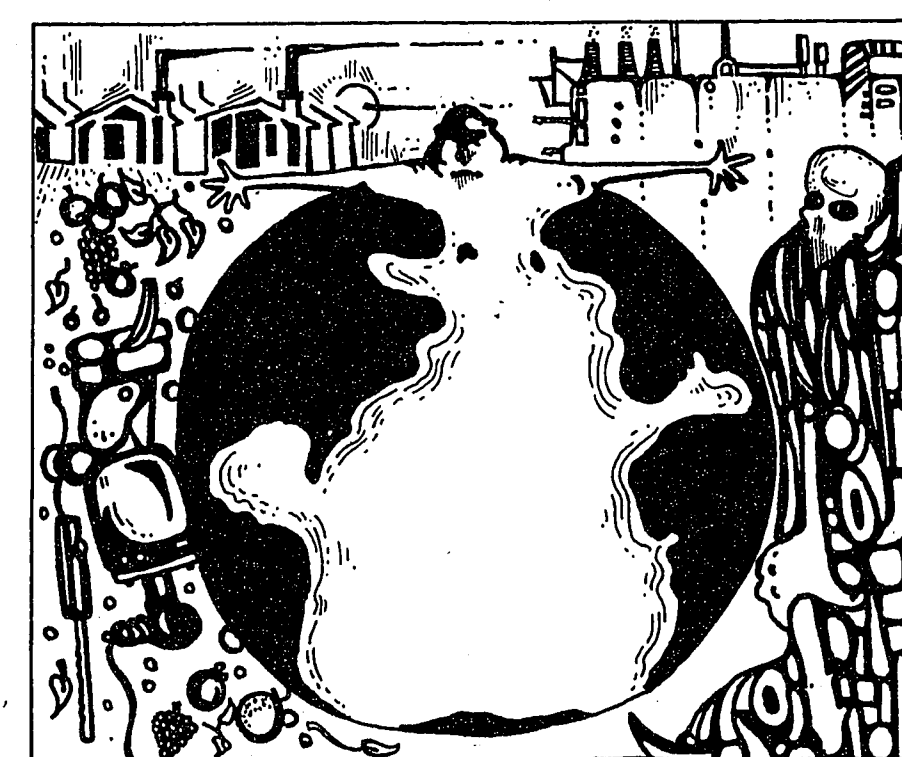
This brings us to Protevi's next point: the danger of war. True, increased competition for the world's resources can increase international tension, but this is by no means the greatest threat to peace in the world today.

Don't forget that when one resource starts running low, we can turn to a substitute. If no substitutes are available in nature, we can invent one; this is how synthetic rubber came about and why synthetic fuel is becoming more feasible each year.

The fact is, there exists no "certain minimum;" intelligent people can select and purchase goods indefinitely, each one making life easier and freeing time for other pursuits. The belief that economic growth will produce no more such goods is reminiscent of the legislator who wanted to close the patent office at the turn of last century, because "everything has already been invented." While some people may reach the point where they feel like a slave to their possessions, this is their own personal problem; not everyone shares it.

Yet even if economic growth were undesirable (which it is not), by what means would it be stopped? Who is to decide what new products may and may not go on the market, what new jobs will be available, which investments will be allowed and which ones will not? The government? By what criteria will these decisions be made, and, given the criteria, what part of the U.S. Constitution grants the government these extraordinary powers?

Who else could be given the responsibility? The people? Ah, but the people already have this power. If consumers do not wish to take advantage of the latest



evil produced by economic growth, they need merely not buy it. Throughout this article, Protevi bemoans the fact that educators are failing their duty to lead students away from their blind acceptance of "cultural assumptions," particularly those regarding economic growth. Another duty, however, is the duty of training their students to think, and it doesn't take much thought before one realizes that most of the "myths" about economic growth presented lately are the myths against it.

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ALVIN WEINBERG Physicist, Engineer, Authority on Nuclear Energy Problems and National Energy Policies

BARRY COMMONER Biologist, Environmental Scientist, Authority on Energy and Environmental Issues

TUESDAY—APRIL 21

4:00 p.m. Lecture by Dr. Weinberg "Alternative Energy Scenarios for the U.S." HUB Assembly Room

8:00 Debate "Resolved: The Nation's Energy Needs Call for a Substantial Role for Nuclear Power" HUB Ballroom

WEDNESDAY—APRIL 22

4:00 p.m. Lecture by Dr. Commoner "Toxic Chemicals: Who Benefits? Who Pays?" HUB Assembly Room

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