

the daily collegian

opinions

editorial opinion

Foolish pride

In the land of No. 1, academics take a back seat to football

The football team lost. We're not No. 1. We're No. 6 — the fifth No. 1 team this season to lose a game and tumble from the top of the heap.

So what. It's only a game.

But it's more than a game.

It's a game that makes enough money to support each of the 30 other intercollegiate sports programs at Penn State.

It's a game that paid for expansion of Beaver Stadium, construction of the indoor sports complex, resurfacing of University tennis courts and upkeep of the University golf courses which are used by everyone, not just the athletic department.

It's a game that draws thousands of people into State College every football weekend — and thousands of dollars into the State College economy.

It's more than a game. It's an identity. Football is Penn State.

But should it be? This is a University, after all, and it ought to be known for academics. That is why we're here — isn't it?

Ask anyone on the street who has the No. 1 architectural engineering program in the country and you'll probably get laughed at.

(For your information, Penn State had the No. 1 architectural engineering program, according to the most recent Gourman Report, rating undergraduate programs.)

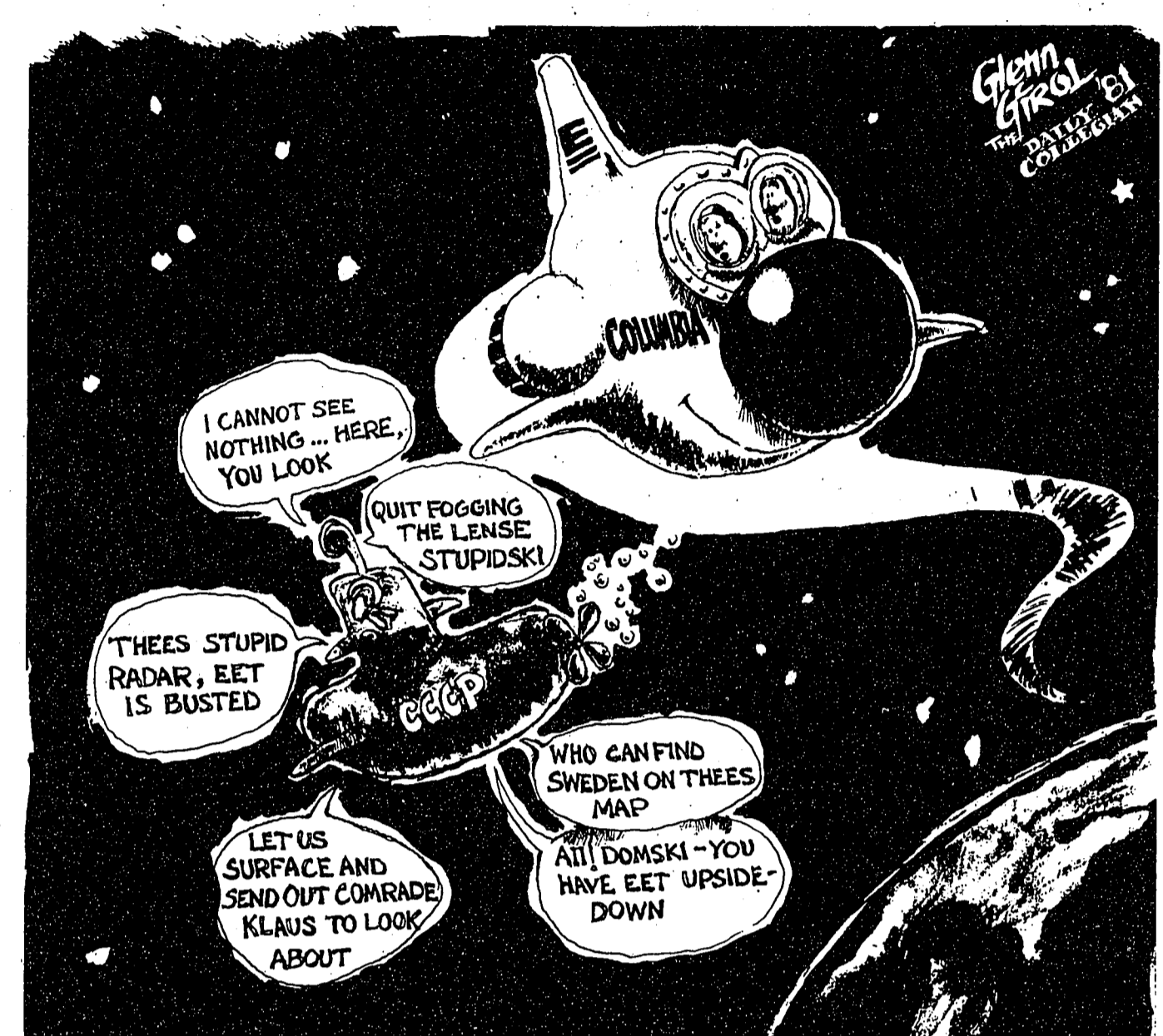
But ask whose football team was ranked No. 1 in football last week, and you'll probably be asked if you've been dozing in Siberia for a month.

College libraries, too, are ranked. But the fact that Penn State's library system dropped from 54th to 59th in one ranking last year has few people outside Fattee crying over their beer. (Notre Dame dropped in the ratings last year, too, and their fans don't seem to care either.) Libraries just aren't as exciting as football; the Associated Press doesn't put out weekly library rankings; and 85,000 people don't turn out every weekend to sit in the stacks.

Yes, football is what makes us "Penn State Proud."

If we didn't have football, we'd be apathetic about everything.

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



-reader opinion

Treat for children

They came skipping up on the porch, laughing and yelling, "Trick or treat!" at the top of their lungs. Then, smiling broadly, they held open their bags secure in the knowledge that the helpless homeowner was morally obliged to treat them.

Living in a private home downtown, I was privy to the onslaught of Halloweeners Saturday evening. All the traditional costumes (ghosts, witches, vampires) as well as some new age outfits (Darth Vader was popular). I was especially intrigued by the bizarre, often unrecognizable creations. A young boy wearing a red suit and a bright blue straw wig informed me that he was a punk rocker, although he admitted his hair was "my stepmother's disco wig."

Many costumes were highly imaginative. Elaborate facial makeup attested to a flair for the dramatic. One well-read prankster called herself "the woman of the Dark Forest, from Shakespeare." Then too, some were very down-to-earth. A little girl in a dress and makeup simply said, "I'm a lady."

Overall, the scene was the same as I've always remembered it, a chilly autumn night, complete with wild disguises and take-home candy. Trick-or-treat, on the other hand, was also a part of the festivities. In my neighborhood we rarely resorted to trickery. But when the Halloween spirit moved us, we were very proficient at the traditional dastardly deeds.

Children in masks, going door to door for candy may seem far removed from Penn State's weekend Halloween celebrations, but the children seemed to be enjoying themselves as much as any of us Saturday night.

Daniel Johnson, State College resident
Nov. 1

Inconsiderate

The answer to the article, "Can They Read?" is obviously NO. Upon waking into Waring Dining Hall today, we noticed that we have some inconsiderate supervisors. Up until today, the dining hall had an equal number of tables in the no-smoking and smoking sections. Today, however, the ratio changed in favor of the smoking section.

These inconsiderate supervisors, including Miss D. Subulsky (assistant dining hall supervisor), moved the no-smoking sign to include their favorite tables. Why can these supervisors be so inconsiderate and privileged? We did respect them until their show of sarcasm. We get more respect from the custodians of West Halls, whom we have the utmost respect for.



Seniors screwed

We are greatly disturbed by an incident that occurred at the PSAT XVIII football game. Upon entering the senior section we found that 150 seats in the front area were reserved for the fraternity and sorority participating in the Balloon Derby. It was our understanding from publicized ticket information in the Collegian that there are no reserved seats in the student sections, especially the senior section which already cannot accommodate all of the senior ticket holders.

We were appalled at the behavior displayed by participating members of the Balloon Derby. We noticed the total lack of consideration for fellow students who had been in the stadium since the gates had opened. The abusive language and actions of the members disturbed the students and alumni seated nearby who had paid their money to watch the Nittany Lions, not other fans! Unfortunately everyone was distracted through the second quarter. Those of us who choose seats in the front area there for a specific purpose — to watch the performance of our No. 1 football team, not to drink or party in the stadium. We do our drinking at the tailgates!

The police were summoned to the area, not to confiscate the alcohol, but to remove seniors who had legitimately entered the stadium by showing their tickets and IDs to the guards. The senior ticket holders singled out as examples were five black women seated in the area. Racist racism is inexcusable. We find it hypocritical for the students who cheer enthusiastically for our talented black athletes on the field to be the same people who make racist comments to those whom they were told to leave.

In the future, better arrangements should be made. We know that all the greets were not seated at all of the games necessarily had game tickets. There is no guaranteed student seating in Beaver Stadium, so groups should have to find their own seats.

In conclusion, ourselves being sorority women at PSU, we realize that the actions of a few don't represent the philosophy of the entire group. Unfortunately, alumni and other students will probably only remember the actions of a few obnoxious members. That type of rude behavior counteracted the good intentions of their philanthropy.

Nina M. Llorens, 10th-sociology
Ann M. Staron, 10th-business logistics
Oct. 29

Right to know

I am shocked and appalled by the recent senatorial passage of the AWACS deal. Not necessarily because of the factors involved in AWACS, but rather because it raises some doubt over American democracy. The event was called a Reagan victory. To me, it looks more like a confirmation that undermilitaristic forces are having an influential impact on the American political system.

Our government is of the people, by the people, and for the people, according to our Founding Fathers. Congress was created to represent effectively — and most important, democratically — all American citizens. The AWACS vote seems to be but a rebuttal of this basic American principle.

For as we knew two weeks before the actual Senate vote that most senators disfavored the deal. Then we observed how President Reagan contacted his opponents and uncommitted ones, attempting to make them (the representatives of the people) aware of his "rational" for selling the arms to the Saudis.

We then heard the news: Reagan got what he wanted, again. Doesn't it make you wonder what means he used to convince his opponents — some of them totally opposed to the deal? What did Reagan do to persuade them? Doesn't this deserve great attention? Shouldn't the public know?

Did our congressmen sacrifice their views — assumed to be the voice of their constituents — against simply going along with President Reagan's personal view? Do they fear opposing him, even though opposition might be a constructive act of representing the people? Or is it just a question of representing the people's consent? For our sake as Americans in a great democracy, let us find the answers to these questions.

We have a right to know.

Richard C. Pelletier, 4th-economics
Oct. 29

Useless?

This letter is in response to a statement made

the daily Collegian

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Paula Froke **Debbly Vinokur**
Editor **Business Manager**

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Seniors screwed

by Bro Cope during one of his routine sermons at the Church of Willard.

Commenting on the sinfulness of college students, Cope said, "That's it. Go to class, fill your head with useless knowledge, go home, get drunk, go to bed with your girlfriend, die, and go to hell!"

Besides the obvious stupidity of this remark, there is one additional discrepancy which I would like to point out. How can Bro Cope, a devoted Christian, call knowledge useless? Even he should be able to see that two terms are incongruous. There is no such thing as "useless knowledge." From a Christian point of view, this fact should be even more obvious.

Just how does Cope think churches are built? Do they just appear out of thin air? Or by some act of God? No, they are the products of many hours of scrupulous labor by engineers, architects, builders, and many other professionals who studied years to learn their trades.

Lisa Miller, 4th-aerospace engineering
Oct. 29

PLO hasn't given world reason to be recognized

A poll taken last week by NBC News and the Associated Press shows that most Americans reject the Palestine Liberation Organization's efforts to project itself as a legitimate representative of the Palestinians.

According to the poll, 6 out of 10 Americans believe the United States should not formally recognize and directly negotiate with the PLO.

Many world leaders have claimed there can be no real peace in the Middle East without the PLO's participation. However, the truth is that the PLO is one of the major impediments to peace.

There are a number of myths concerning the PLO. The first myth is that the PLO has, in recent years, become a moderate group promoting peace in the place of their old terrorist actions.

The PLO has never been, and is not now, a moderate group. Time and again, PLO members have refused to alter the Palestinian Covenant, which spells out exactly what they stand for.

question. Why was such a state not set up by the Arabs themselves before the West Bank was captured by Israel? It seems most Arab leaders are concerned more with making the land Arab soil once again than with the moral injustice suffered by the Palestinians.

Yes, the Palestinians have suffered injustice. Many of them who live in refugee camps are short on both food and proper shelter. However, while much of the world has put sole emphasis on the conditions of the Arab peoples of Israel, many of the Arab countries must share in the blame for their situation.

Israel is guilty itself of helping the PLO gain the stature it has among the Palestinians. If Israel had been willing in the past to negotiate with moderate Palestinians, the PLO would not be as strong as it is today. Instead, Israel ignored the Palestinian problem, allowing the PLO to rally Palestinians around it by saying that Israel was not interested in negotiation.

Israel made a mistake. Today when it looks for non-PLO Palestinians to come to the peace table, few if any step forward. This mistake may be the result of a unique position that Israel finds itself in.

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