

editorial opinion

Raping society

State College is finally facing the question most of the nation has been asking for years and years: What is this world coming to?

What is this world like when two junior high school girls cannot ride home on a school bus with their schoolmates without the threat of sexual assault? What is it like when in a single weekend, at least two women report to the police that they were indecently assaulted on a university campus nestled in good, old peaceful Happy Valley?

No one witnessed the two isolated incidents on campus. But when the two State College Area Junior High School girls were attacked — in two separate incidents within three days last week — they were attacked in front of their schoolmates on school buses.

In both incidents, no one came to the rescue of the girls. And on one bus in particular, students even cheered when one boy grabbed a hand down a girl's pants, another grabbed at her blouse and a third boy held her down.

Who could have ever imagined that this macabre, violatory scene could have been played out in State College, Pa.?

But then New Bedford, Mass. is asking itself the same thing.

Last month, according to reports, a 21-year-old woman in that historic whaling town went into a bar — Big Dan's — by herself to have just one drink. When she met

a friend there, she decided to stay longer. After her friend departed, she was stripped down to her sweater by one man who raped her on the barroom floor.

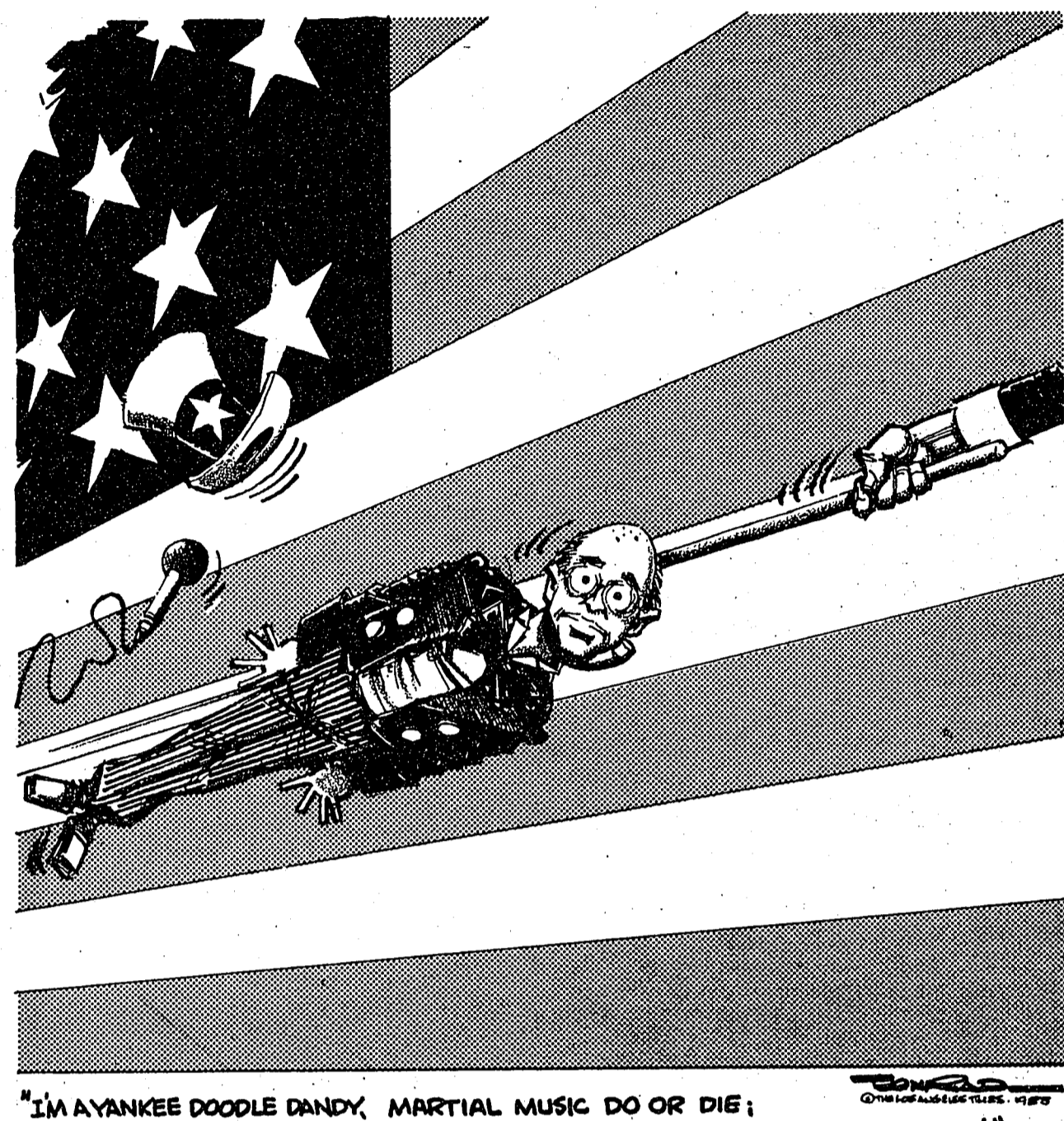
Two other men allegedly joined the scene, forcing her to perform oral sex. When her cries to other patrons standing at the oval bar were ignored, she was lifted on to a pool table and raped for an hour and a half by several men.

Her tears and cries were drowned in a sickening sea of cheers and applause from at least 15 men standing around the bar.

In obvious ways, what happened this past week in State College and what happened last month in New Bedford are greatly different.

However, it seems that the message is the same: that some males have still not learned — and are not being taught — that they've no right to use women for their own brutal sport. And also that many people have still not learned how to escape the horrible cowardice of joining the crowd to subordinate and hurt other people.

Every person who sees a rape occurring and walks away without helping the victim — or worse, stays and watches the horrible crime being committed and dares to enjoy it — is responsible for the rape. If not responsible for the actual physical rape of the victim, then the rape of hope and morality from this society and this world.



IF AMYANKEE DOODLE DANDY, MARTIAL MUSIC DO OR DIE!
ROCK BANDS, TEEN AGE BUMS, BFFR BUSTS 100, NOT ON THE FOURTH OF JULY...!

reader opinion/the minority situation

Good advising needed

I decided that I would get right to the point. I don't really have anything to add of with so I'll just tell you how I feel.

In searching for viable solutions for minority retention at Penn State I can only remember my own painful experience as a Penn State student. I'm not going to give you a sob story about how I couldn't adjust to this mostly-white atmosphere here at Penn State. That's not true. As an

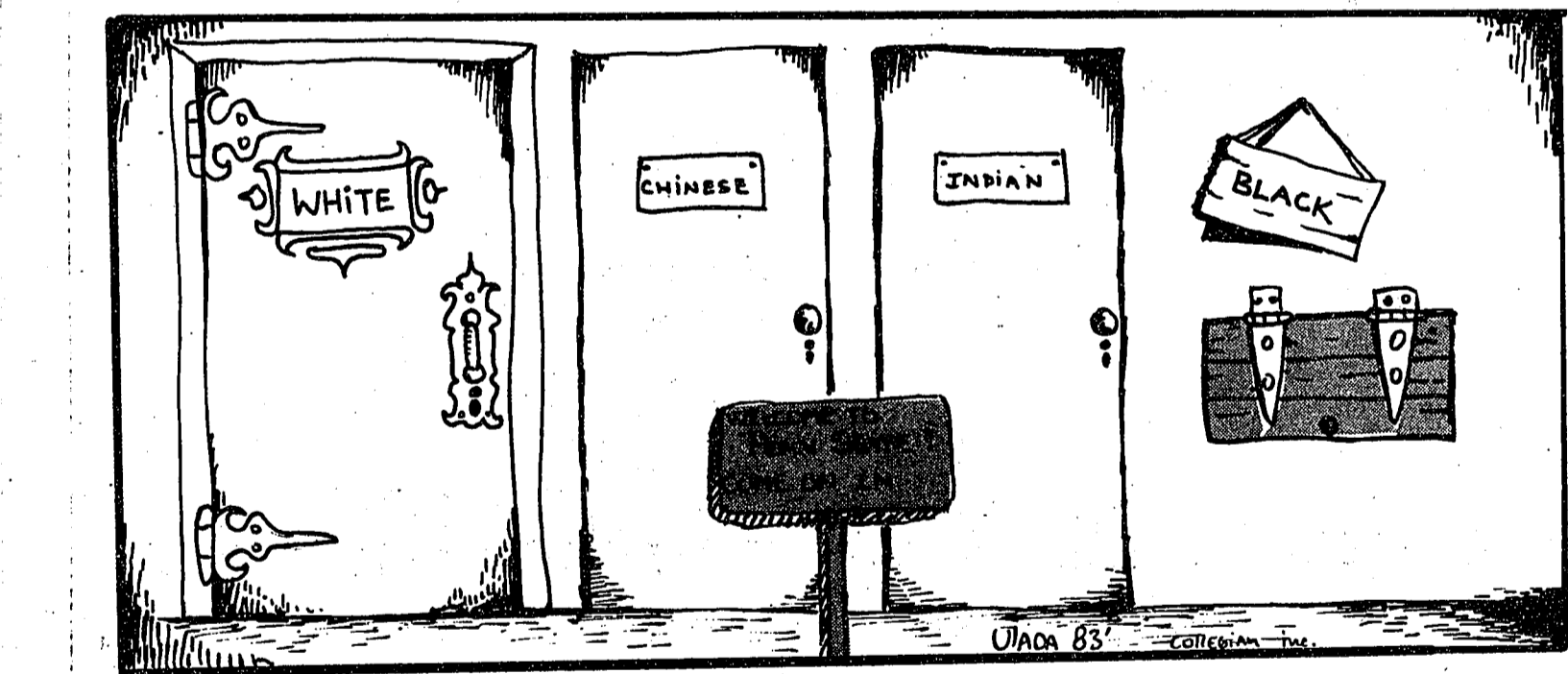
inner-city black woman, I really didn't have a problem in dealing with the white faces I saw. I am not different or unique, I'm normal. What I couldn't adjust to was the academic curriculum I had chosen with my adviser. My adviser was white, that makes no difference. But what was wrong was that she did not investigate my background or try to know me to determine what courses would suit my needs. Instead, I was a number. I also had some problems financially. Even though the financial aid office is most helpful, by the time you

get the personalized help you need to pay for school, you're on your way out. Do these problems sound like the problems that white students have? They are! There are no special problems for blacks and other minorities. Minorities may not be as accustomed to handling them. For example, I didn't know what to say to my adviser when she advised me to take two four hundred level courses, (of course I wanted to take them). What did I know? I hope that you can see that I feel Penn State could do better in the

process they use to give students advisers. I, of course, feel that there could be more black advisers, as well as Chinese, hispanics and others. I am not necessarily saying that the ones we have are not competent, there are just not enough of them. This means that Penn State will have to actively recruit minority instructors and advisers, academic and financial, right?

Catalytic E. Norcum, publicity chairman
State College chapter
NAACP

In the end it may very well be that tax dollars will have to be spent to recruit the "other" type of student to rectify the shameful situation existing at these two schools.
Name withheld by request



Solving the Why of the Black and White Problem

Welcome to the Op-Ed page. If you haven't noticed, today we are discussing the problem with minority recruitment at Penn State. The Black Problem, as it has been called by some. To be more accurate, let's call it the Black and White Problem.

Hey, I see some of you are still here. A lot of you blacks have not turned the page yet. A lot of you whites are already on the sports section. Oh well, I'll talk to those who are still left.

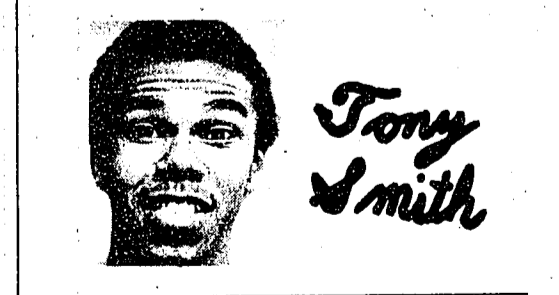
but I will mention the one that is probably the least discussed. A problem exists that is related to the Black and White Problem, only it is more serious. It can be called, for lack of a better name, the Why Problem. A lot of people — some blacks as well as some whites — don't really understand why Penn State (or any school, for that matter) should actively recruit minorities. Why do we need more blacks? More red-heads? More garbagemen? This is obviously a problem. I'll restate it. Why does the University need more blacks? Can you answer that question, President Oswald? Maybe you can. "Because state law encourages it?" Sorry, John, that's a cop-out. Judging from the comments you have made in The Pittsburgh Press, Dr. Oswald, you don't seem to have a full understanding of the situation. More than likely, those who are working under you don't understand it, either. Consequently, it is hard to go out and actively recruit minorities when you don't fully understand why you are doing it. A. Because of the Why Problem, many students get "annoyed" when they hear "all the proposed solutions to the low percentage of black students attending Penn State." B. Surprisingly, several people will not bother to read the Op-Ed pages today not only because they don't know the answer to

the Why Problem, but because they don't think there is an answer. Question 1: Why does the University need more blacks? Perhaps some light can be shed on the subject. I will point out only a few of many reasons which could be used. Answer 1: For the good of the whole. Black is the second most common race in America. While blacks are not all alike, the culture of black America differs significantly from the culture of white America. It is practically impossible for anyone to live in today's society without coming into contact with blacks. If you don't understand blacks at all because of a lack of exposure to them, it could hurt you in the long run. For example, you may wind up losing a chance at a good job, or lose the job you already have, simply because you are inept at relating to people of a different race. In other words, a significant increase in minority recruitment would not only be beneficial to blacks; it would be beneficial to whites. It would be beneficial to everyone. Of course, other reasons also exist for supporting minority recruitment efforts, but because of time and space constraints I will focus attention on only one of them, perhaps the most important one. Question 2: Why does the University need more blacks? Answer 2: More blacks need the University.

Many people live in big cities. Many big cities have disadvantaged areas with inferior or public schooling — inferior to that of rural and suburban schools. Many of the students who live in these areas and attend these schools are black. Often the worst instances of inferior public schooling occur in areas that are predominantly black. Generally, students who attend these predominantly black schools do not score as high on Scholastic Aptitude Tests as those who attend schools with better teachers and better learning facilities (which is often the case with predominantly white schools). It has nothing to do with intelligence. For example, a black student can be just as smart as a white student, but because of a poor education, this black student will not score as high on his SAT test as the white student. A more specific example concerns a friend of mine from Philadelphia, who scored less than 900 on his SAT test while attending a black public school. He later attended a white private school and retook the test. He scored over 1,300. That's a difference of over 400 points. Obviously we have another educational problem here. Let's call it the Social Class Problem. The problem is not specifically a racial problem, but it ignores the racial aspect of the problem is a rather large oversight.

Contrary to popular belief, not everyone in this country has the opportunity to get a good education in high school. With the help of minority recruitment programs and related financial aid programs, many of these disadvantaged students can have at least the opportunity for a good college education. Without these programs, many of these disadvantaged students get screwed. Keeping this in mind, choose your side. You can look at it from the philosophy of every-man-for-himself. In this case, you might be against increased minority recruitment or minority retention in general. "Sure there are those students who didn't have the opportunity for a better education. So what?" you may say. "They shouldn't have been disadvantaged. Let them eat dog food." Or you can look at it from the philosophy of do-whatever-is-best-for-society. In this case, you should be in favor of increased minority recruitment, for it comes closer to being in the best interest of the entire society. A devout capitalist might be in favor of the first philosophy, but a devout Christian believes that those who have are supposed to lend a hand to those who have not.

Choose your side. Tony Smith is a 12-term journalism major and a sports staff writer for The Daily Collegian.



Tony Smith

Racism in Happy Valley

Kevin M. Ramsey (in his March 28 letter) asked the question, "are black students being discriminated against on either the recruitment or student level?" Because of its emphasis toward negative action I wouldn't use the word discrimination, but institutional racism is the major cause of Penn State's minority recruitment problems. Yes Kevin, there is racism here in Happy Valley.

Let us first look at the two essentials needed to get into Penn State: a good academic background and money. Because of the past blatant discriminations against the parents of the now college-age black students, discriminations which denied them the opportunity of achieving "the American dream," money is the major constraint preventing highly qualified blacks from enrolling at this state-related, land grant, equal opportunity university.

Also, as most intelligent people know, if you don't have the money it's often very difficult to live in the "right neighborhoods" and in turn get the "good academic background."

Now, Mr. Ramsey may call setting up programs to help academically prepare these minorities for Penn State, a form of favorable discrimination, but most intelligent people would say that it's finally giving these often very bright individuals an opportunity to achieve.

Mr. Ramsey may call special programs that give financial assistance to minority students who lack these resources as favorable discrimination, but again most intelligent people would say that Penn State is finally giving these individuals what they deserve: the same opportunity to get a good education and achieve, as whites have.

If Mr. Ramsey thinks that everyone in this country has the same opportunity to achieve, he is a very naive person. In his letter he stated that he thought Penn State should "insure that student recruitment is fair and unbiased" instead of "concentrating on the most popular color of the month."

But the system is already biased — biased toward those who were given the opportunity of obtaining a good education and wealth. This is simply not fair to those who were kept down and used by others to obtain their own "American dream," the Afro-American. This, Mr. Ramsey, is called Racism.

I would like for white students to imagine that they had to go to an all-black institute in order to obtain the skills needed to succeed in the "black world." Imagine no rock 'n' roll, no giant beer parties, no large white fraternities or sororities, no happy hours, no Phi Psi 500, no Movin' On, no White "role models" (teachers or administrators), no name rock 'n' roll bands (not even local), no Ragatata or no social or cultural activities that you are accustomed to or enjoy.

Imagine yourself as a constant "minority" (think about all the "white flights" from segregated public schools). Then maybe you will see why Penn State should make a special effort to improve the social and cultural environment for minorities. After all I imagine that many more white students would leave Penn State if they didn't "enjoy it here."

To Mr. Ramsey, and others who feel like him, I strongly suggest that you "put yourselves in the shoes" of other people's shoes" before you comment about issues that pertain to them. I don't think that Mr. Ramsey intentionally spoke with malice about giving people an equal opportunity, but I think he spoke with simple ignorance. Thank goodness some politicians aren't as ignorant and polite

trying to force Penn State to truly "open its doors."

To The Daily Collegian, the Undergraduate Student Government, Black Caucus and the University administration, I say let's try to educate these "ignorant" people (faculty, administrators and students) and push hard, for programs that really do give everyone an equal opportunity to learn.

As the Centre Daily Times' March 1st editorial said, "One can only conclude that any programs to attract black faculty, students and administrators (to Penn State) have been pursued somewhat halfheartedly. The challenge for Penn State is not to settle for excuses but to fashion and push hard explicit policies and programs to attract black faculty and students. It cannot be considered a truly first-class university until it overcomes this shortcoming."

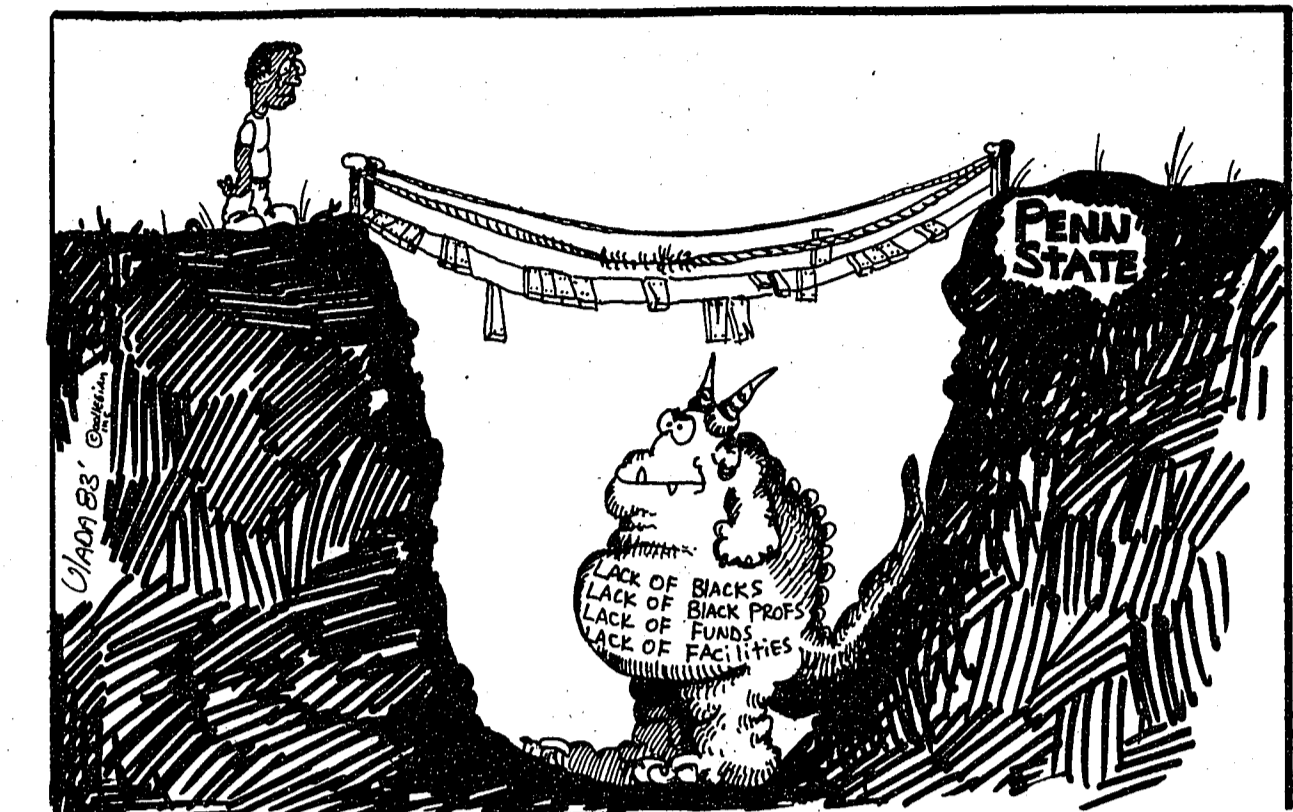
Darnell K. Daley
USG East Halls Senator

Racist U

I, a black resident of State College, have been associated with Penn State for almost thirteen years. I've been a student, and member of the administrative staff and am now a janitor here.

This Op-ed page on minority recruitment and retention is concrete manifestation of the newest face of racism. It perpetuates and propagates many of the current racial stereotypes that we denizens of academia supposedly eschew.

If, to use an analogy, everyone over 6'5" tall, or over 200 lbs. with a six second 40-yard dash, were to be taken to Penn State, they would be taken to Happy Valley, there would be no Op-Ed pages devoted to inane theories on why it happens. The Happy Valley football coach would have little to say



as to the causes of the problems; he'd wisely stay silent, as trained medical professionals did scientific research into the factors involved. A cure would be found, and Penn State football would again flourish.

But, when faced with reality of the indecently short academic life span of black students at Penn State, we somehow feel that unfounded, unsubstantiated opinions are the best thing to have. No one calls for research, nothing is said about bringing in experts with the experience of conquering similar problems elsewhere. We don't even ask the current or past victims or survivors of the disease (in any serious way) what they felt. The question here is: isn't that odd?

The answer is no. Because, as that racist universities those that

State is like saying blacks do like watermelon! It's stupid and stereotypical. As a black who knows that my participation in pro-black and NAACP activities cost me a job, I've seen the naked face of racism here in Happy Valley.

Penn State, don't be lulled by an amateurish newspaper's halfhearted stabs at "relevant" journalism. This minority "problem" will be here after you're gone, unless you press the University administration to make a sincere, realistic commitment to reaching a resolution.

If not... well, did you hear the one about the black guy and the chicken-eating contest?
Gary Abdallah, member
State College chapter
NAACP

Criticism of Penn State not completely accurate

Editor's Note: The following letter, written in response to The Pittsburgh Press and Pittsburgh Post-Gazette coverage on minority recruitment and retention at the University, recently appeared in The Pittsburgh Courier.

The purpose of this letter is to assess how fairly and completely Penn State was represented in the recent articles about black life which appeared in The Pittsburgh Press and Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. We felt these articles about Penn State were accurate to a certain extent.

Where we most differ with the recent articles is with the negative social and atmospheric picture that was painted and implied to exist at Penn State for black students. We do agree that the low percentages of black students and faculty here are unacceptable.

We also agree that the University must put more money into various recruiting programs as well as give more assistance to black organizations to obtain a better cultural and social environment at the University.

Prejudice does exist here, but we are not sure that it is worse than anywhere else and

we could not honestly say that one would be subjected to more discrimination here than if they were educated in another part of the state. We recognize no malice or contempt but ignorance of minority culture, on the part of some white Penn State students, as the major reason for occasional racial incidents (Some white students simply have not had the much exposure to diverse cultures).

Some steps are being taken to improve this lack of understanding. For example, the university recently implemented mandatory racial sensitivity training for its staff members in various departments. In addition, two years ago student organizations, with some help from the university, organized Brotherhood Day to bring about a better understanding among the various racial and religious groups.

That year the guest speakers were Julian Bond (Georgia state senator) and Head Football Coach Joe Paterno. Last year the guest speaker was Benjamin Hooks (national director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). Besides these distinguished speakers we have had the opportunity of hearing such noted black figures as Shirley Chisholm,

Dick Gregory, Andrew Young, Milton Eisenhower, Gene Crier, Guion S. Bluford Jr. (the first black astronaut, class of 1964), Mildred Jefferson, Nikki Giovanni and others over the past few years.

We agree that Penn State needs more black social events, but to imply that almost no social life exists and that Penn State holds nothing but disappointment for blacks is inaccurate. Whether one is satisfied with the social activities is dependent upon the individual.

Penn State has three black fraternities and three black sororities, along with three major black organizations and a few religious groups. Penn State also has many other organizations that blacks can join to meet their needs, hobbies and interest.

We think that the serious student should explore the University. It has many resources to offer, and we think they should be taken advantage of. If academics are a priority to you and you can exist in a "predominately white" community, then don't let the recent negative articles in the major Pittsburgh newspapers discourage you from coming to Penn State.

As many Penn State Alumni (black or white) will tell you, a degree from Penn

State is respected nationwide and may open many more doors for you. Many large corporations recruit to Penn State because they feel these students have proven that they can compete and work with a predominantly white organization, as most large firms are.

There is some pride among black students toward Penn State because we realize that we are the ones who will reap the benefits of attending a university with the reputation that Penn State has. We would like to see more minority students here so that they may gain from what this university has to offer.

We feel that the reporters from The Press and Post-Gazette may have already had their minds made up about black life here before writing their stories. Some students have complained about being quoted out of context.

These students think that the newspapers ignored the good things they had to say and were only interested in the negative. Some of those who were quoted are the ones helping most in recruitment of minorities to the university.

We are by no means a public relations board for Penn State, but we don't appre-

ciate being "used" to hurt our own cause. This damages us and the students who have changed their minds about coming to Penn State, because of the recent articles, when Penn State could have been what they were looking for and the best place to grow and achieve their academic and personal goals. Penn State isn't for everyone, and it does have problems that must be overcome, but it also has something for many blacks to explore. It would be a shame to deny these opportunities and benefits to prospective students because only half the picture was painted.

Darryl Daisey
USG Senator and Black Student Union member
Rhonda McDaniel, president
Black Student Union
Anya Armstrong
Student Advisory Committee on Minority Admissions
Charles Blackwell
USG Senator
Keith Butler
USG Senator and Dept. of Minority Affairs staff member
Robyn Payne
Black Student Union member



Penn State should strive for racial harmony

By JEAN-EMMANUEL PONDÉ
Graduate-political science

Everyone, it seems, has something to say about "the minority issue" at Penn State. Unfortunately, not everyone who expresses his views on the matter gives it appropriate consideration in my opinion. I would like to contribute to this debate by stressing four main points.

1. Let us start with an important, yet often overlooked issue: the classification of "black students." Black students are said to constitute 2.5 percent of the student body. This rough percentage certainly deserves closer scrutiny: Are these figures for University Park or for the Penn State system at large? Do these percentages include black Africans (138) or are they limited to Afro-Americans?

2. America is a democracy. This is no news to anybody. America's brand of democracy is based on the freedom of the individual. My claim is that there is a direct link between minority issues at Penn State, the ideal of individual freedom and America's world moral leadership.

These links, of course, are not detectable to the casual and generally apathetic Penn State. Let us, for the sake of the argument, assume that every U.S. citizen has the right to choose his/her own philosophy of life, including racism. If we accept that assumption, then we must be candid

enough to acknowledge a contradiction between our own philosophy and the actions of the University. For example, a qualified minority student's right to be admitted to a school could be denied because of a recruiter's right to exercise his/her own discretion in choosing students. Clearly, both rights cannot be exercised simultaneously.

3. Of all places, a university is a place where reason is supposed to prevail. Racial prejudice turns its back to reason, because that attitude is arrived at, through a mixture of hearsay, family environment, impulse, excessive emotion or fear.

On the theoretical level, we should distinguish between an attitude of racism adopted after a systematic study of the problem, and such an attitude being the result of a familial legacy of an attitude of racism. While the second instance is a case of prejudice, the first is not. We could then "vulgar" and "scientific" racism, respectively. Ironically, one can never rationally demonstrate the case for scientific racism.

That fact has not discouraged many pseudo-scientists from trying. There is simply no convincing evidence to show the superiority or inferiority of any given race. This situation leaves us with the "vulgar racist" category. It is no exaggeration to say that the right to be prejudiced is nothing more than the right to be present itself as the standard-bearer of the "love-your-neighbor Christian Democracy" against the atheistic, expansionist and "evil" communism.

Finally, America should have to stop preaching the gospel of human rights to El Salvador, Nicaragua, Poland, the Soviet Union and the African states. The United States could not at the same time tolerate domestic racism (it in the name of the freedom of the individual) and condemn "oppressive" regimes abroad. Human rights issues are indivisible.

Such is the connection between minority issues at Penn State and the freedom of the citizen and American world role.