

# opinions

## editorial opinion

### Ideas for a general change

Members of scholarly communities like to discuss who they should be and what directions they should follow. That's why they hold conferences. And that's why last year the University conducted two conferences on general education.

But those conferences were different from most. The discussion didn't end with the conferences. Instead, a committee formed to further discuss the challenges and goals of general education and to make proposals for improving it. Now the results are in.

And for a change, jawboning has been translated into workable ideas.

General education is probably the most esoteric concept in education. Basically—according to the committee's report—graduates should be able to communicate, to perceive the world with an international and cross-cultural awareness, and to integrate the relationships between natural and social sciences and the arts and sciences. These ideas are now represented by basic degree requirements.

After one wades through the philosophical jargon in the report, one can see some good ideas by the Ad Hoc Group on General Education.

Rather than just the University-wide requirements in general education, the committee proposed two tracts—one University-wide tract and one college-specific tract constructed by each academic college. The Colleges of Agriculture and of Earth and Mineral Sciences volunteered to be pilots for the program.

A proposed advisory committee would review the college programs. The committee of six faculty members, one student and the vice president for undergraduate studies would also develop new ideas for providing general education.

In addition, the committee said colleges should provide programs, possibly seminars, that would introduce freshmen to their colleges and majors.

### Blurred budgetary vision

Congress is sending President Reagan a message: We don't think your budget priorities are in the best interest of this nation.

And Congress has backed up that message with recent votes on Reagan's 1984 budget proposals for defense and domestic spending.

It's about time that Congress stood up to Reagan.

Last week, a Republican-dominated Senate Budget Committee cut Reagan's proposed defense buildup in half. Earlier this week, the same committee approved more than \$12 billion in domestic spending over what Reagan had asked.

And on Wednesday, the committee voted to increase money for a host of education programs, including loans for college students, vocational education, improved teaching of mathematics and science and assistance to high schools and colleges.

For his first two years in office, Reagan has had his way in the budget process. The results: ever-growing deficits. And yet Reagan continues to ignore these huge deficits while insisting on building up the military.

The threat of enormous budget deficits—which will surely destabilize the economy—pose a much greater threat to this country than the Soviet menace Reagan is so scared about.

The Senate has taken the right approach in this year's budget process—they have ignored Reagan's unfair, insensitive and potentially ruinous spending requests.

Two days when Reagan's budgets passed through both houses of Congress without careful consideration are over. Reagan will have to fight for every cut he proposes and for every new Pentagon toy.

### the Collegian

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Suzanne M. Cassidy  
Judith Smith  
Editor Business Manager

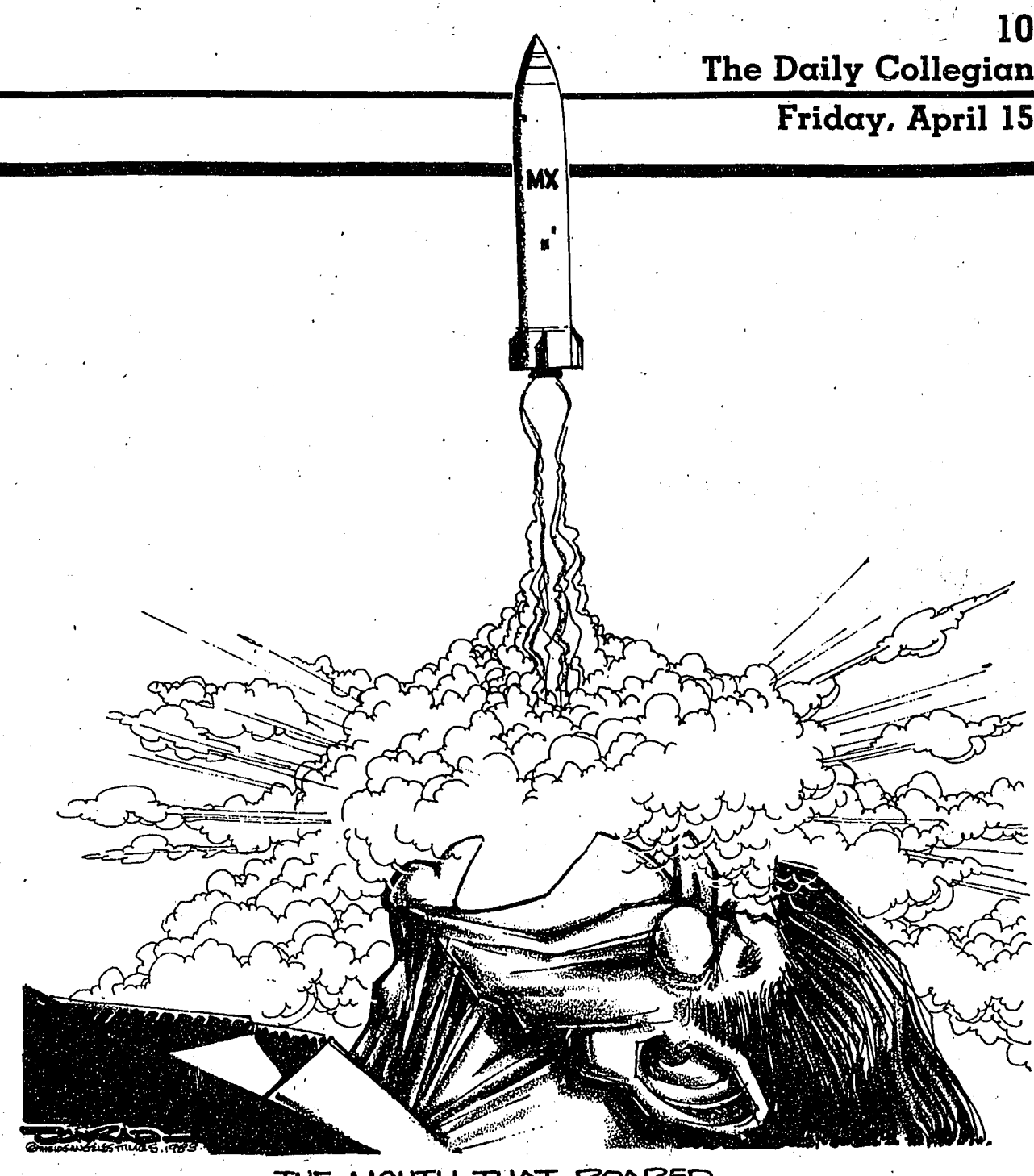
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### reader opinion

#### Qualified?

The Penn State Athletic Department has failed to give the University and the community the basketball program it deserves. The hiring of Bruce Parkhill shows that the athletic department has based its decision upon factors other than basketball.

Parkhill had a mediocre record at William and Mary of 89-75, which surely couldn't have been the major reason he was hired. Being a local resident and a Penn State alumnus are hardly pertinent qualifications.

If the athletic department believes that the local background will help the sagging attendance at home games they are wrong!! What will put fans in Rec Hall is an outstanding team.

Parkhill has stated his beliefs concerning the integration of academics and athletics, University policy that has long been respected. However, it is rather redundant since Head Football Coach Joe Paterno long ago instilled this quality in the athletic program at University Park.

One has to wonder why Penn State didn't take the chance to hire one of the top name coaches who have switched jobs this year, such as Lute Olsen, George Raveling, Abe Lemons and Frank Arnold. These men are all proven winners and could possibly have improved the basketball program at Penn State.

The athletic department needs to realize that the community wants a program at Penn State that they can be proud of and that can possibly bring home another national championship.

#### Myopic

I do not have the patience to dignify Kelly Fracassa's sophomoric ravings of April 7 (ERA: Can't Legislate Equality) with rebuttal. This I leave to cool heads with better debating skills. I would like instead to propose a little exercise in comparative semantics.

I invite the readers of The Daily Collegian, along with Fracassa, to reread his column making the following alterations: Substitute the names of Marty King and Stokely Carmichael for Friedman and Elkie Smeal; replace ERA with Civil Rights Act; wherever you encounter the words men or boys, substitute women and girls, substitute the word blacks; replace the words sexism and sex with racism and race and insert white in front of the word employers.

And don't forget to sing praise to the competent few who have risen above to prove themselves a credit to their sex (race). Now let's look at what we have. Are you paying attention, Fracassa? It doesn't sound so good, does it? It sounds like poll taxes, literacy tests, Selma and Watts.

I submit that if Fracassa held similar attitudes toward blacks and civil rights as he does toward women and the ERA, he would not dare to publish his views in print. He would be fully aware that the black community, to put it mildly, would never stand for it.

Well guess what, Fracassa? Women won't either. Our patience is wearing thin with smug little boys who sit holding forth on issues they have neither the experience nor the wits to comprehend. Just to clue you in, we are struggling for survival in the same wretched economy as everyone else. So to you and your ilk I say "Get

#### Don't fragment

When will all the attention given to minority recruitment stop? Minority recruitment should not exist, yet alone be expanded. Recruitment exists at Penn State for keeping enrollment up and attracting qualified candidates to the University.

Candidates is the key word here. People should be recruited—not whites, not blacks, not hispanics or any other race. The purpose of the Civil Rights movement is to insure proper treatment for everybody in the United States. The utopian world that society now strives for sees no color but has every person living together in harmony.

Minority recruitment defeats this purpose by giving preferential treatment to minorities. This singles them out, thereby setting them apart from the rest of the community.

The calls for more black instructors and a better black social life at Penn State help differentiate, not integrate, all races.

Wake up, Pennsylvania! It is time to stop letting the affirmative action mood of the country cloud clear thinking.

Minority recruitment may help minorities, but it helps keep society fragmented, instead of united.

Tony Pityk, 9th-mechanical engineering April 13

### Death of the average American

The small article didn't take up very much space on the crowded page. It didn't boast a large, bold headline. It didn't have a picture or a special box around it. It was a very ordinary obituary.

It didn't flash around the world, transmitted by high-speed AP wires.

It was quite an ordinary death. The specifics go something like this: Mr. Herbert O. Hiller, 87, formerly of 885 Pristley Ave., Lawrence Park, died Thursday at Corry Memorial Hospital.

Nothing that would make world capitals shiver or financial markets tremble. Yet, Mr. Herbert O. Hiller, (always Mr. Hiller to me), represented more than himself: He embodied everybody's favorite picture of the "average" American.

Club and the GE Retired Employees Association.

No, Mr. Hiller didn't discover the cure for cancer or unravel the solution to inflation or paint a great masterpiece. But maybe what he did do is more important.

He kept his family together; he loved his wife. He planted rose bushes in his back yard and faithfully watered the hedges in his front yard. He served his country in World War I and was a member of the American Legion (Carl Neff Post 871).

For 38 years, Mr. Hiller got up in the morning and faithfully went to work. Every Sunday, Mr. Hiller could be found in his pew at the Methodist Church. Once every two years, his front porch got a new coat of paint. He always donated money during the fire company's annual fund drive.

He was a good American citizen.

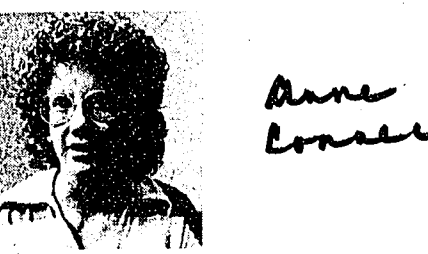
But the order, the stability that Mr. Hiller was an intrinsic part of is slowly fading from the American scene. The question is: What's it being replaced with?

Who will be the Mr. Hillers of the 21st century? What clubs will the new order belong to? What moral and social web will they entwine themselves in? What will they proudly represent?

I know what being an American meant to Mr. Hiller. I don't know what it means to our generation.

I only know that I'll miss Mr. Hiller.

Ann Connors is a 9th-term Journalism/English literature major and a member of The Daily Collegian's Board of Opinion.



As his obituary notes, he lived in Lawrence Park all of his life. He worked at the General Electric Company for 38 years. He was a member of the Lawrence Park United Methodist Church, the GE Quarter Century

### Liberty insured by firearm freedom

"A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."—Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

"Political power grows from the barrel of a gun."—Mao Tse-Tung, Selected Military Writings.

Surpassed only by the issues of nuclear power and strategic weapons control, the topic of gun control has evoked more emotional debate, slogans, name-calling and political maneuver than anything else in recent years.

Massachusetts, during its first legislative session, enacted a severe six shilling fine upon any citizen, freeman or indentured servant who failed to equip himself with a firearm in good working order. (Sorry ladies, but women weren't citizens).

When the anxious British began to increase troop levels in the colonies, the call went out for the citizens to take up arms in self-defense.

During Patrick Henry's impassioned "Give me liberty or give me death" speech he also said, "That a well-regulated militia composed of gentlemen and freemen is the natural strength and only security of a free government."

One of the many arguments against the private ownership of firearms is made from a misinterpretation of the clause "well-regulated militia." Opponents of firearm ownership would have us believe that this militia is an organization of government like the present-day National Guard.

The colonists themselves firmly rejected this notion following the revolution. Richard Henry Lee, in his popular pamphlet "Letters from the Federal Farmer to the Republican" stated: "Should one fifth or one eighth part of the people capable of bearing arms be made into a select militia... those young and ardent parts of the community, possessed of little or no property, the former (the militia) will answer all the purposes of an army, while the latter (the community at large) will be defenseless."

The Constitution ought to secure a genuine, and guard against a select militia."

Finally, he said, "to preserve liberty, it is essential that the whole body of the people always possess arms and be taught alike, especially when young, how to use them."

In short, Lee believed that a militia, like the



The right to own firearms is not the right to shoot burglars or to "defend our homes." Conversely, it should be a little hysterical to suggest that they should melt all our guns into a lump and bury them at sea.

The problem is just not that simple.

Recently the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on the Constitution, chaired by Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, arrived at some interesting conclusions about the Second Amendment. Most of the following discussion was obtained from their report to the Senate.

The right of American citizens (except felons, drug addicts and mental patients) to own firearms is well supported by history, tradition and law.

From the dawn of written history, common law has recognized the individual right to keep and bear arms for personal as well as the common defense. Even opponents of private firearm ownership recognize the necessity of these provisions in their time.

The states themselves called for a protection of the private right to own firearms.

Here in Pennsylvania delegates proposed, "the people have a right to bear arms for the defense of the whole state, or the United States, or for the purpose of killing game and no law shall be passed for disarming the people or any of them, unless for crimes committed, or a real danger of public injury from individuals."

In my opinion, more than for sport, hunting or any other reason, the freedom to possess firearms is the final insurance for our civil liberties. This basic right of free men and women—to break the contract by which the democratic government rules—is placed in jeopardy when the people have no viable means to resist.

This is not to say that there exists in this country, at this time, any urgent and specific reason which requires the necessity of an armed civilian population taking action.

The right to keep and bear arms may have little or no consequence on the quality of life or the liberties that you and I sometimes take for granted, today.

Unfortunately, there exists among us no one who can safely foretell what the future holds for us, tomorrow.

Eric Emory is a 12th-term administration of justice major and a sports columnist for The Daily Collegian.

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### reader opinion

**Good and bad**

A few pressing issues here. I will address the least important one first.

In his letter printed in The Daily Collegian on March 31, Jon Peters charged me with "election bias" and urged that I resign my position as Undergraduate Student Government Elections Commissioner. Well, Jon, here's some good news and some bad news.

I will give up my position in a few days, but not at your request—only because the election is over. As for the matter of "election bias," I think Peters should realize that it's sort of difficult to express bias without expressing an opinion, and my statement in the March 21 issue of the Collegian contained no personal opinion, but merely a painfully obvious fact—that one platform in the recent USG presidential election did deal with relevant issues, ones USG could tackle, while the other dealt with issues USG couldn't do anything about.

So, Jon, unless you argue that USG has the funds and/or political clout to raise Old Main and replace it with an MX dense pack, then you should probably do a bit more thinking before you submit your next editorial comment to a newspaper.

Now, on to more important stuff. You can't have a USG election without an elections commission. As usual, the people comprising the elections commission this year did an incredible amount of work in publicizing and running the election, conducting the debates, attracting senatorial candidates; and, as usual, little recognition was theirs.

Since plastering posters and the like isn't the sort of thing that will bring the Collegian USG beat reporter running to do a front page feature, it looks as if this is the only way to give credit where credit is due: To Carin Goodall, assistant head commissioner, who always knew what the

rest of us were forgetting, to Hildy Hauver, town commissioner, who was faced with the seemingly insurmountable task of staffing six town polling locations for 10 hours for each of two days, and accomplished their feat without almost any problems.

To Ellen Bonder, publicity commissioner, who supplied all the artwork, advertising and other publicity work so vital to this election; to Deirdre Kane, who coordinated the election in all three of East Hall's voting districts; to Craig Kiedinger, fraternity commissioner, who helped greatly with the "dirty work" (that is, putting up posters, setting up the election and closing the polls after the election was over); and to Jim Metzgar, debate commissioner, who, by all counts, handled the two debates flawlessly and fairly—all I can say to all of you is thanks for and congratulations on a job well done.

Special thanks go also to the fine people making up the South Halls Residential Association and its president, Dave Labuskes, who covered the election for us in South Halls with an 11th-hour notice and did all that could to ensure that the election there went smoothly. We owe Labuskes a debt of gratitude.

One more thing: When the final tabulations were made, we found that only 5 percent of all town students bothered to vote. Why? I'd like to present a report to USG before the term ends that, in part, describes how to increase voter turnout. If anyone has ideas on how to get more people to vote in the USG elections, please tell me about them. I'd appreciate it.

In closing, I'd like to thank, of all people, Jon Peters, who became the first person in history to attack me in a letter to the editor. Maybe the second person will have something legitimate to beel about.

James Marra  
Former USG Elections Commissioner

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