

opinions

The Daily Collegian
Wednesday, Feb. 8, 1984

editorial opinion

A clash of lifestyles?

Once again, the University's Office of Housing and Food Service Operations has taken the liberty to displace students from their rooms without asking students for input regarding the change.

Last year, residents of Shunk Hall were told that their rooms would house the football team until the first day of Fall Semester classes.

This year, residents of Atherton Hall were informed that their dormitory would no longer be strictly for graduate housing.

After all, with the demolition of Nittany barracks and the construction of new graduate apartments, what better place is there for displaced undergraduates to live than in Atherton Hall?

Housing has told Atherton Hall residents that the ratio of students living in the dorm Fall Semester 1984 would be two-thirds graduate to one-third undergraduate. During the 1983-84 school year, that ratio would change to one-third graduate to two-thirds undergraduate. By Fall Semester 1986, Atherton Hall would be strictly for undergraduate housing.

By itself, Housing's proposal doesn't sound that bad. Graduate students would be slowly phased out of the dorm scene into apartments and undergraduates would be moved in to take their place.

But what happens to those graduate students who don't want to live in apartments? And will the transition process work?

Frank Arlinghaus, treasurer of the Atherton Hall Association, said students living in dorms have already turned down opportunities to live in apartments. The graduate apartments are more expensive, inconveniently located, and lack common space for socializing, he said.

And McKee Hall, another graduate dormitory on campus, lacks the space for

students displaced from Atherton Hall. Graduates with teaching fellowships have expressed concerns over living with students who may be enrolled in the courses they teach.

The age difference between the grads and undergrads concerns many students too. Arlinghaus said the graduates made a request to housing to move only juniors and seniors, preferably over the age of 21, into the dorm. Those students would be closest to the graduates in age and would not need the guidance of a resident assistant, he said.

But Housing flatly refused that request, he said. The Office of Residential Life Programs has suggested the initiation of an interest house for University Scholar students. Paul Axt, director of the University Scholar's program, said honor students would probably get along with the graduates and adjust to the quieter, more studious atmosphere of the graduate dorm better than most students.

But honor students or not, graduates still believe there is a world of difference between themselves and undergraduate students. At a meeting held last week with the residents of Atherton Hall, Housing officials and representatives from Residential Life uncovered many of the issues at hand. For the residents of the dorm, it may have been a little late for student input, but better late than never.

The issue of graduates living with undergrads is not necessarily the main problem though. What is a problem is the way Housing makes its decisions — without consulting students beforehand — and how it considers problems only after its decisions are set.

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reader opinion

Humanity

I am not a journalist, nor am I an author, but I would like to tell you a story: a story about a bunch of strangers who proved to each other that humanity still exists in this world of ours.

I had never met any of these people before, save one — a guy named Ken whom I took night courses with while we were still in high school. Sad . . . but I didn't even remember his name until I asked him at lunch yesterday. Well, here we are, a bunch of strangers drawn together in Chambers building on a Friday morning by a dying girl whose none of us knew and would never have the pleasure of meeting.

I walked into Chambers before first period and was on my way to the bathroom when I saw a girl lying unconscious on the floor and an older man leaning beside her in a state of panic. Her roommate had run to call an ambulance. I found out later that the older man was Leon Alters, a tech-service man in the building. I thank Leon Alters for his kindness and his prayers which kept us all strong through the ordeal.

Leon started shouting for help because the girl had stopped breathing. I ran over, cleaned her airway and proceeded to give her mouth-to-mouth, for she still had a pulse and CPR was not needed. When she started breathing on her own again we both resumed breathing too. I thank God for giving me the courage to help a girl that was dying the same way my father had died.

By this time, the rest of a small group of strangers had come to help and her roommate had returned from calling the ambulance. My friend Ken started taking down our information. I thank Ken for keeping a level head and for keeping the technicalities out of the way so we could concentrate on other things.

The girl's name was Lisa. Lisa stopped breathing again. One of the people kneeling beside her checked for a pulse. There was none. Two others started administering CPR. Perhaps this is another good example of why everyone

should be certified in this technique. I thank those people for knowing CPR and for keeping her alive until the paramedics arrived.

I was on the other side of the hallway helping to comfort Lisa's roommate when the paramedics arrived and took her over the CPR. They began to take Lisa to the ambulance, and we got her roommate ready to go with them. They left. We stayed. And just as we were strangers began to disburse, a policeman returned to tell us that Lisa was breathing on her own again. He smiled. We cried. I thank the police and the paramedics for their quickness and their competence in helping Lisa to stay alive.

When I turned around, the strangers had gone. The only one left was Leon, with whom I stood in the hallway embracing. We prayed for the strangers who were with us that morning, and for Lisa.

So for those of you who believe that the world supports a theory of Social Darwinism, and for others who believe that everyone who has a smile on their face is going home to beat up their girlfriend, please remember the people that I just thanked and the story of a dying girl who drew a bunch of strangers together, in a moment of humanity and love.

P.S. — When I called the hospital later, I was told that Lisa had died at 9:24 a.m. of natural causes. No further investigation, lion was warranted.

Cory S. Colton, Junior-marketing
Feb. 7.

Space station Earth

The contrast section in last Wednesday's (Feb. 1) opinion page of the Daily Collegian featured views on President Reagan's proposal for an \$8 billion space station.

However, it is the accompanying cartoon that I applaud. It pictured earth in space with the caption: "Mr. President, why don't we just try to preserve the space station we've got?"

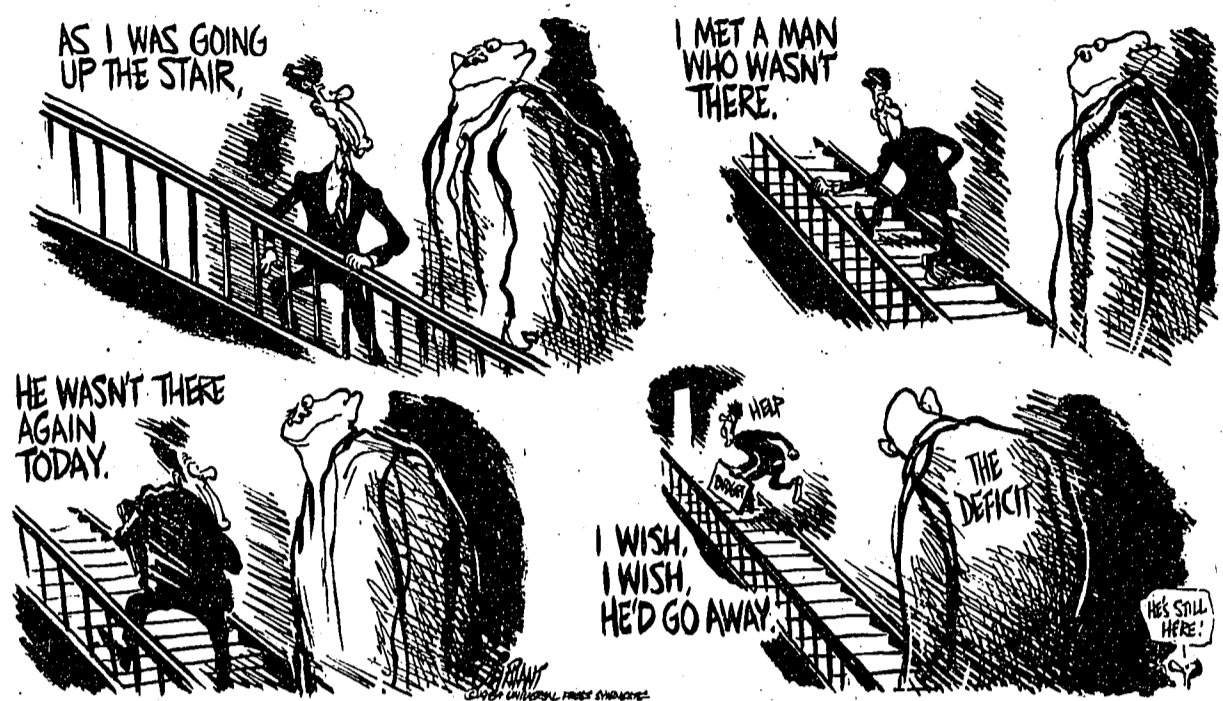
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teacher associations have become entangled in ways to keep drugs out of the schools. Yet some solutions that appear to control the problem on the surface may do more harm than good.

The school boards in two towns in Arkansas have come up with an inventive solution. Students thought to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol are subjected to breath or urine tests. Of course this policy, adopted in Arkadelphia, Ark. in 1982, does have its stipulations.

According to The Phi-Delta Inquirer, the policy states: "The school board will act strangely or smell of marijuana must be reported by teachers. Then, depending on the circumstances, the student can be required by the principal to undergo breath or urine tests to find if alcohol or narcotics are involved. Furthermore, the student may be required to take a lie-detector test to find out the owner of confiscated drugs. This same policy was adopted in nearby Hope, Ark., last month.

Not surprisingly, the Arkansas chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union is expected to file suit over the policies, claiming



Op-ed reminder

This is a reminder that an Op-ed page devoted to the possibility of a totally barrier-free environment for disabled students, faculty and staff within the Penn State system will run tomorrow, Feb. 9 in The Daily Collegian.

Those interested in contributing can submit either a forum (2-5 pages of double spaced type) or a letter (maximum of 1 page double spaced type) to the Collegian office in 128 Carnegie. Deadline for material is noon today.

the daily Collegian

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opinions

Marathon dangers

The annual IFC Dance Marathon is once again rapidly approaching. The IFC should be commended on their altruistic work of providing financial support to the Four Diamonds Cancer Fund. The event, which will take place Feb. 17-19 lasts a total of 48 hours. During these 48 hours of continuous dancing, participants are allowed 5 minute breaks every 8 hours. The purpose of this article is to comment on the unnecessary strictness and outright health dangers of these rules.

The rules for the marathon directly contradict the true purpose of it. On the one hand, the participants are helping victims of cancer gain a higher level of wellness. On the other hand, the participants are asked to sacrifice their own well being in the process. One 1/2 hour in 48 is not nearly enough time for the human body to regenerate. The major problems, not to mention body elimination muscle spasms and all-over body ache, are related to sleep deprivation.

Hallucinations, illusions, mental confusion, irritability, depression, nausea, headache, blurred vision, glazed and itching eyes often occur. Is there a solution that would both raise money for this very worthwhile charity while at the same time decrease these health hazards? We think there is!

One is to separate it into two 24-hour marathons. More people would be able to participate, and more than likely more people would want! Another possibility is to dance in

teams, similar to the old dorm contract lines, two people taking turns. At the very least, longer breaks should be incorporated allowing for sleep periods each night. Regardless which solution is taken, it will better than the stringent rules that now apply. We must keep in mind the purpose of the marathon — to raise money for a deserving charity, not to make PSU known for having the "longest marathon." We better do something before one of those special people, giving of their time and energy for the Four Diamonds Fund, is seriously injured.

Robin Rhoades, nursing
Feb. 7

Success despite...

We, the brothers of Delta Sigma Phi, would like to thank all the people who came out on Saturday, Feb. 4, to our 4th annual Sailor's Ball. Thanks to your support, the event was a success.

However, we were surprised at the number of people who turned out, considering the poor coverage we received from The Daily Collegian. Twice, our personas were flamed or omitted, our large ad had incorrect letters bordering it, and there was no coverage or publicity, even though it was an all-campus event. We hope in the future that the Collegian will be more thorough.

Dean Ziegler, senior-eco-nomics
Mark McNeil, sophomore-mechanical engineering (Publicity Chairman)
Feb. 7

Borough cutting into the 'fun money'

The walk to Shields Building almost seemed worth it. Just when I needed it the most I should have gotten my biggest paycheck of the year — \$85.13 — direct from the Pollock Dining Hall disroom. So, with visions of unthought Christmas presents dancing in my head, I began checking out this miraculous occurrence.



Let's see . . . \$83.15 minus \$2.38 state tax and \$3.70 Social Security tax. That leaves \$77.65. But the amount on the check is \$87.05! Where is the other ten dollars?

For one brief second I actually was naive enough to think that Shields had made a mistake. But then I found it. Under "other deductions" — the occupational tax. What the heck is that? A few phone calls and some reading answered my question.

The occupational privilege tax is a \$10 flat fee paid annually by all persons employed in State College who earn \$1,000 or more per year. Students and non-students; full- or part-time employees; residents of Bellefonte, University Park, State College or Timbuktoo — if you work in State College, you pay the tax. (It is important to note that the tax is only based on your place

employment; it has nothing to do with your place of residence.)

According to the 1975 borough ordinance, the tax is to be paid "by each individual exercising the privilege of engaging in any . . . occupation within the corporate limits of State College."

In the past, this tax was levied against all workers at the same time, Nov. 1. Beginning this year, employers will withhold the \$10 from their employees as soon as he or she clears \$1000.

But don't think that the employers who are responsible for collecting the tax are being inconvenienced. They get to keep 2 percent of the total collected if the money is turned in by Jan. 1.

The 1984 State College general fund budget estimates revenue from the tax at \$80,000. This money goes into the general fund budget. But why does a borough with an anticipated 1984 budget surplus of nearly \$350,000, and allocations for everything from arborists to engineers and snow plows to leaf blowers need to tax students? And why does a community that anticipates receiving over \$427,000 in federal revenue sharing funds in 1984 need to tax students, many of whom live on campus and don't receive many of the benefits? Some incentive to work, huh?

Okay. So maybe I'm just being a cheapskate. I mean, there are lots of privileges to take advantage of in State College, and for only \$10 they're a real bargain! The occupational privilege tax is a \$10 flat fee paid annually by all persons employed in State College who earn \$1,000 or more per year. Students and non-students; full- or part-time employees; residents of Bellefonte, University Park, State College or Timbuktoo — if you work in State College, you pay the tax. (It is important to note that the tax is only based on your place

of residence.)

Admittedly, since I live off-campus, I do enjoy some of the borough's services, including trash collection, water service and the upkeep of an attractive community. But real estate taxes and other fees paid by the landlords of apartment buildings should cover the cost of these essential services for students in apartments.

It's not really that the amount of the tax is going to make that much difference, even for my depressed budget. Of course I wouldn't have done anything sensible with the money like save it. No way. I'm a firm believer in stimulating the economy. In fact I'm sure that \$10 would have found its way to the Mode or Lion's Pride or the Penn State Sub Shop. (Well, to be honest, the Train Station or the Ratskeller or the Saloon are more like it.)

The money that I make in State College (actually, University Park) almost always goes straight to the merchants. So the borough has hurt its own merchants by depriving this spend-crazy consumer's "fun money."

It just seems unfair for students to be subject to the tax when they may not live off-campus, and when the majority don't even live here nine months of the year.

I'd be willing to bet that students were not too far back in the borough council's mind when it passed the occupation tax. It's too bad it doesn't keep students in mind when it passes things like the noise ordinance or the three unrelated persons rule.

Steve Fitzgerald is a senior majoring in journalism and a staff reporter for The Daily Collegian.

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Schools use questionable methods for drug discovery

When I was in high school, I remember it was becoming a major problem. Every once in a while I heard stories about someone coming to school drunk or high. I don't remember there ever being a policy on drugs or alcohol though. One girl I knew who was found passed out in the middle of class was removed from the cheerleading squad, but as far as any official policy went, nobody was aware of any.



In recent years, however, school districts have become plagued with drug-related problems and have been forced to formulate some kind of policy to try to retain a drug-free environment in the schools. Parent-

teacher associations have become entangled in ways to keep drugs out of the schools. Yet some solutions that appear to control the problem on the surface may do more harm than good.

The school boards in two towns in Arkansas have come up with an inventive solution. Students thought to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol are subjected to breath or urine tests. Of course this policy, adopted in Arkadelphia, Ark. in 1982, does have its stipulations.

According to The Phi-Delta Inquirer, the policy states: "The school board will act strangely or smell of marijuana must be reported by teachers. Then, depending on the circumstances, the student can be required by the principal to undergo breath or urine tests to find if alcohol or narcotics are involved. Furthermore, the student may be required to take a lie-detector test to find out the owner of confiscated drugs. This same policy was adopted in nearby Hope, Ark., last month.

Not surprisingly, the Arkansas chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union is expected to file suit over the policies, claiming

that the students' Constitutional rights have been violated. Administrators, on the other hand, contend that the programs are working well and have received little outrage from the communities involved.

The school boards in two towns in Arkansas have come up with an inventive solution. The Constitution protects us from such unreasonable search and seizure. Except in cases of consent or hot pursuit, a person cannot be searched unless the officer has gone before a magistrate, shown probable cause and been served a search warrant.

Acting strangely or smelling of marijuana are loose definitions irrespective of whether or not a magistrate is involved. What exactly is acting strangely? Could not other factors such as lack of sleep or illness cause a student to "act strangely?" I would imagine simply being in an enclosed area such as a school bus or bathroom while others are smoking marijuana could cause one to smell of marijuana. Why must these people be subject to tests? Why should any student?

If the principal has enough probable cause to suspect a student of using drugs or alcohol, he should not take it upon himself to act free from the law. A warrant from a

magistrate will allow proper testing to be done. What gives these school administrators the right to search students?

James Ford, superintendent of the Arkadelphia schools, contends that schools wield some parental power over students. I remember that argument well. That is the same one they used on us when the issue arose whether they were able to physically search students. I didn't go for it then either. Just how much power parents actually do have over their children is questionable under the law. Many court cases have been fought over just how much power parents have in disciplinary matters.

Another gray area concerns that of lie-detector tests. Once again I can argue that it should not be the schools' place to administer such tests in the first place. But even more questionable is the doubt raised on the effectiveness of the lie-detector tests as a whole. And what about the interrogation of innocent student? Surely, such interrogation is emotionally upsetting, especially if done unnecessarily. Constitutionally itself is a hard thing to determine and I will leave it to the courts to

decide this one. Yet I cannot help but make judgments on the harm of such policies such as adopted in Arkansas.

Problems with drug abuse in high schools is not something that occurs in far-off places like Arkansas and metropolitan areas. The same type of problem arose in the State College Area School District four years ago. That school district adopted a policy of searching students' lockers and persons under reasonable suspicion or cause with the principal, faculty member and student present.

The first and foremost purpose of schools is to educate, though many times situations arise that interfere with this goal. Schools have every right, and indeed should be commended, for trying to alleviate the drug abuse problem that haunts them. But those same schools that teach us the sanctity of the Constitution should themselves observe it.

Carol Frank is a junior majoring in political science and a columnist for The Daily Collegian. Her column appears on alternate Wednesdays.