Who are you kidding?

The University had done everyone who ever "waited until finals to cram" a big favor. It scheduled two reading days between final exam period and the end of classes.

Yes, last semester Penn State students were treated to an idea that is a feature of most other respectable institutions of higher learning. Given the extended nature of semesters, these extra catch-up days certainly were a welcome relief from the usual hurried routine of read-as-you-are-on-the-way-to-finals.

And just like fall semester, the University has scheduled two study days for the end of spring classes. However, in its infinite wisdom, the University's generosity happens to occur on a weekend — namely Saturday May 5 and Sunday May 6.

Of course students should be *expected* to study the weekend preceding finals. Or should they?

The University's reasoning, one can argue, is based on logic. After all, it is kind enough to give us every weekend off during the school year. A quick calculation shows the lucky students are given roughly 60 extra study days during the school calendar (30 weekends times two).

And everybody knows students spend those weekends nose-in-book in some obscure section of Pattee — right?

But in all seriousness, by scheduling the study days on the weekend, the University forfeits its apparent good-will and defeats the purpose of the idea.

The purpose, one surmises, was to give the students two other days to study — days that they don't already have. Whether students would have used the weekend in question to study anyway is extraneous.

The fact is that May 5 and 6 would always be available if needed, but should some other weekend activity get in the way — such as a spring wedding or an interview — then it's back to the cramming board.

The University deserves some credit for instituting the idea, but in trying to slip a fast one by the students, it has forgotten what its intentions were.

Luckily for the University, it's still not too late to blame this scheduling problem — like the rest — on the semester switch.

the daily Collegian

Thursday, April 5, 1984
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Alecia Swasy, Editor
Susan M. Melle, Business Manager

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reader opinion

Communicating concerns

As a clerical employee of Penn State and a member of Nittany 9 to 5, I believe it is important for me to clarify for the benefit of University employees and students the objective of the petition circulating at this time which is to recommend the establishment of a clerical advisory committee.

The following is an excerpt from a letter to Mr. Fortunato dated March 27 from Nittany 9 to 5:

The membership of Nittany 9 to 5 would like you to know that we are not at this time seeking recognition as an employee representative for collective bargaining purposes as implied in your memo.

However, we do advocate that clerical employees of Penn State need some way of communicating concerns which affect all clercial employees. The petition now circulating on campus addresses this problem by recommending a Clerical Advisory Committee — not made up of Nittany 9 to 5 members, but comprised of clerical employees elected in each college or administrative unit (elections similar to those conducted for the Faculty Senate).

In order to facilitate understanding and communication between the University and its clerical community, we felt it imperative that central administration and/or personnel administration should be included in this advisory committee so that advising (not bargaining) could be a two-way proposition.

We are sincere in our efforts to be instrumental in finding a suitable vehicle to improve communication channels between Personnel Administration and the clerical employees at Penn State.

It is my understanding that we have a right under the Constitution and Pennsylvania law to recommend the formation of such a committee without reprisal, and that clerical position, indeed any Penn State employee position, should not be jeopardized for signing this petition.

Again, let me reiterate that many clerical employees at Penn State would sincerely welcome the opportunity to discuss with administration officials problems that affect all clerical positions.

Catherine A. Gohn, secretary-College of the Liberal Arts
March 30

Why take a back seat now

Why should prayer in the public schools of the United States be a controversial question? Or, for that matter, why should we consider it improper to speak to our God, the almighty God, anywhere, anytime, anyplace?

After all, wasn't it He, God, who directed our Pilgrim Fathers as they sailed a stormy sea to reach a place where they could worship him?

Wasn't it almight God who directed our forefathers as they fought to win freedom from a tyrannical mother country?

Didn't God guide the hands of those brave men who signed the Declaration of Independence from that country?

Could our men, regardless of how courageous they might have been, saved our Union if God had not lead them?

Since almighty God has always been our guide, the central figure in all our national affairs, why should we ask him to take a back seat now?

Let us take such great men as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson and Sir Winston Churchill as our examples. They depended largely upon God to help them in national affairs.

Let us have prayer in our public schools.

Grace Harris
Moshannon PA
April 3

Radio ga-ga

In the ARHS report in last Wednesday's Collegian, it was mentioned that there was a dispute between Mr. Diano, president of the West Halls Residence Association and my organization, the West Halls Radio Organization.

This is true, but the subject of the dispute is not how to operate WHR — West Halls Radio. It is *whether* to operate WHR. Mr. Diano closed the station, and recalled all the keys, after the burglary on Feb. 28. He made it plain that he did not wish WHR to operate, at least for the rest of the year.

My organization was formed in response to this, to operate WHR. The station has two extra turntables which could have been restored to service cheaply. WHR could have been back in operation after semester break — I know this because, as Chief Engineer, it is my job.

Had Mr. Diano wished WHR to continue, he would not have closed the station; he would not have denied the staff access to the station; and he certainly would not have vetoed the appropriation for the money to put it back in operation.

I wish that the reporter had contacted me, before putting my name in the paper, to learn my side of the dispute. In any event, the West Halls Radio Organization is holding a meeting in McKee Lounge on Thursday at 9:00 p.m.

She, and the public, are invited.

Reginald Arford, West Halls Radio Organization
April 4

Home sweet home

(Concerning Glen Berman's letter about life in Atherton Hall.) It is evident in his letter that his view of Atherton Hall is limited. Contrary to Mr. Berman's belief, there are graduate students who are not preoccupied by the imperfections of Atherton Hall and enjoy the living conditions.

Let us "put the cards on the table:"

1. You find it desirable to live in a building which is not ultra-modern. You do not favor the standard campus paint color nor the furnishings within the "ancient ruin" of 40 years. In fact, the atmosphere at Atherton Hall is quite conducive to study.

2. You would rather complain about common inconveniences of life than cope with them. Reading lamps, of which one is provided in each room, assist the overhead lights in providing adequate lighting for reading. Windows, of which one is provided in each room, provide cool fresh air to lower the temperature.

3. You unsubstantiated exaggerations provide evidence of your limited view. A whisper from 75 yards heard as a holler? Temperatures of 80 to 90 degrees with the windows open?

4. You find the dining services below your palatal desires. You resent the fact that you do not have the convenience of apartment living which include a kitchen. You resent the unfamiliar odor of someone preparing something to snack on; a similar odor emanates from your room when you make your special garlic popcorn.

5. You wish immediate improvements. When such action was taken in refinishing the bathroom door, you were disturbed. Housing is taking your advice and is waiting until after May 14 to make the needed improvements.

As someone who copes with inconvenience and enjoys the many conveniences, my view of Atherton Hall is not limited to only the difficulties. My advice to you is to wake up and see reality. Atherton Hall is a pleasant place to call home while in a graduate program at Penn State.

Charles Baylor, graduate-communication disorders
Francis Arlinghaus, graduate-math
Robert Davis, graduate-environmental engineering
April 3

Life's acting doesn't end, roles keep getting bigger and better

I'm nominating myself for an Academy Award. Two weeks ago I starred in a movie called "Job Interview," playing the role of "graduating senior ready to conquer the newspaper world," which actually translates to "student groveling for job." Technicalities. Here's a clip:

Sherry Albright

Scene: Dressed uncomfortably in conservative business suit, our star is racing over perilous mountain roads. She has only a half an hour to get to her interview, which is another hour away. In the pouring rain, she pulls off the road twice to fix windshield wipers that won't stay on the windshield.

Star arrives at interview with five minutes to spare. She is soaked, hair flat, make-up streaming down her face. Looks like Janet from Rocky Horror Picture Show, when she first gets to the castle.

Editor: "Glad you could make it, Sherry. How are you?" (God she's a mess. What a waste of my time.)

Star: "Couldn't be better, ma'am. Nice to meet you." (Look lady, I know I'm a mess. Make one smart comment and I'm out of here.)

Editor: "Why do you want to be a reporter?" (Because she flunked out of beauty school. Snicker.)

Star: "I want to be a reporter because I like to write and I enjoy meeting new people." (What a dumb question. After four years in journ school, my parents would kill me if I become a beautician.)

Editor: "Do you think you're dedicated enough to be in this business? Let me tell you about dedication. If I hear a fire alarm while I'm making love, I stop everything to check out the fire." (Did I shock her with that one?)

Star: "Hire me and I'll give you 110 percent of my life" (Stop everything! I know I'm not that dedicated. Bet your husband hates fires, snicker.)

My Oscar is the job, and I don't know if I got it yet. The point is, the editor and I tiptoed around each other, playing our roles. She saw my formal, businesslike act, which I don't play well at all because I don't do it all that often.

It seems ironic that a job interview has to be an act. I've heard that hiring is based 90 percent on personality during an interview. So if this editor likes my businesslike act and hires me on that basis, am I trapped into that role? One of us is in for a rude surprise.

People act everyday of their lives, constantly slipping in and out of different roles. In one day, I play a student, semi-athlete, roommate, occasional partier. Next year, I might be a reporter. Someday I'll star as a wife and mother.

I know I'm exaggerating. We're not schizophrenics. All these roles combine to make our total personality and while our acting isn't really lying to each other, we're also not being totally honest either.

Sometimes you act because you can't say what you're really thinking for fear of offending someone. That's called tact. Imagine going to your high school reunion and being totally honest.

"Candy, how are you? You're not looking good at all, kiddo. Putting on a few pounds or are you pregnant again? Sure wouldn't fit in that old cheerleading uniform anymore."

And sometimes you have to play a role to suit a situation. For example, it's not kosher to play a Klu Klux Klan member at a Catholic wedding (only the bride can wear white.) If we were totally honest all the time, we'd live in an obnoxious world.

Kids learn to act at an early age. They know who the soft touches are and just how to stroke them. We all know the "grandparent act," the one where you cuddle up on your grandma's lap and act adorable, knowing she'll slip you a five or a chunk of chocolate cake when your mom's not looking. God supports child actors. That's why he gives them things like china blue eyes, innocence and the phrase "I don't know."

Your acting improves with age, because it's more challenging when you grow up and you have to juggle the roles in your past and the few in your present.

I remember an afternoon at my house. A certain father looks out his kitchen window and sees his daughter motorcrossing her bike through the neighbor's flower garden — the same neighbor whose dog visits his yard three times a day.

Now, because he's a parent, he throws open the door and yells, "Stop that and get over here right now!" But the real person inside of him is wishing that the kid knew how to run the lawnmower.

The kid bikes over, working herself into the strange-voices-in-my-head-told-me-to-do-it-act, sees her father's face and knows the old man will be glad to perform an exorcism. So she simply whines "I don't know why I did it, Daddy." The kid wimped out and used the old standby. No originality.

Meanwhile, laughing at memories of his own youthful vandalism days, Dad has to play tough and ground the kid for 30 years, still wishing he had taught her about lawnmowers. Another paternal Oscar.

To borrow a cliche, that was then and this is now. Where does all the acting end? That's the joke — it doesn't. The roles just get bigger and better and people get more experienced at seeing through the acts.

In the meantime, I'm going to brush up on my businesslike, interview routine in hopes of using it again. If by some chance I do get the Oscar for my role in "Job Interview," I think I'll hand it back. The editor is a much better actress — the fire alarm line was the clincher. See you at the Awards.

Sherry Albright is a senior majoring in journalism and a columnist for The Daily Collegian. Her column appears on alternate Thursdays.

Shortsighted view

I was disappointed in your editorial of March 30 ("A no-win situation") in which you took a pessimistic view of a recent court ruling on zoning, particularly the occupancy standards of the Borough's zoning ordinance. Your editorial makes some assumptions that I believe are faulty.

Assumption No. 1: The Inserra brothers were prosecuted because they were students.

The fact is the Inserra brothers are property owners in the Borough of State College and are expected to follow the law just like any other property owner, including lawyers, doctors and faculty members. I believe that if the Inserra brothers had been stonemasons, you wouldn't have spent a dime's worth of ink on the story.

Assumption No. 2: Enforcement of the law is an attempt (to quote you) by "State College residents to dictate the actions of their student neighbors."

The fact is enforcement of the law is an attempt to ensure that our neighborhoods are reasonable places for everyone to live in. The law protects each member of the neighborhood. I can't believe that the 35,000 students at this campus would rather scream the night away than study. Your own editorial page for many years has carried letters from students complaining about noise in the dormitories — noise so loud it interfered with study habits. Why do you assume that misbehavior is the norm?

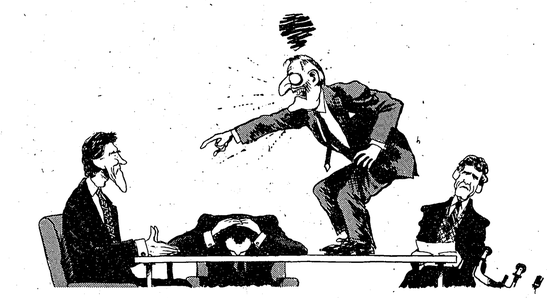
Assumption No. 3: The bad actors are the students; students are bad actors. If you can prove that, you'll force me to throw away nine years of positive experiences — with students. All I'm saying is that every time there's a complaint in a neighborhood, don't assume a student is the source of the problem.

Assumption No. 4: "A string of unrelated events construed with a few assumptions can easily be molded into a false accusation."

The fact is the people who developed the evidence against the Inserra brothers didn't do it overnight and didn't collect it without cause. Nobody's going to take the time to accumulate evidence against a neighbor who doesn't provide a reason. People have more constructive things to do with their time.

So, please, cast the situation in a positive light. We are all neighbors and we all have a stake in a good community. If we could start from that basis and agree that we are striving for an "everybody wins" situation, we'll have more room to talk. To say it's "no win" without first playing the game is shortsighted.

R. Thomas Berner, Member of State College Borough Council
April 1



Cutting through the election hoopla

Every four years we go through the sacred right of the presidential election, with debates, primaries, and conventions. Everything is built up to be exciting and suspenseful until the decisive day in November arrives.

One false move or comment could send a candidate plummeting in the all important polls. Each candidate's public and private life is examined under a microscope to the satisfaction of the media. We are all subjected to intense scrutiny of our own ideals and that of the candidates in the name of our ultimate ideal of democracy.

Carol Frank

Actually, the tremendous amount of campaigning and arguing is starting to get to be a little much for me and its only April. I don't mean to be cynical and sarcastic, after all I am a political science major who is supposed to understand and respect the workings of American politics. Yet every once in a while all this election hoopla gets to me.

I can only watch Gary Hart and Walter Mondale yell and scream at each other for so long. After a while I can't get interested in the Democratic debates which have come to be so predictable by now. Mondale knocks down Hart, Hart retorts back to Mondale and Jackson laughs at both of them. Democracy in action.

The sad part is that to understand the real issues at stake you must look beyond the campaign rhetoric of the candidates. But this takes time and effort — something which the average American does not like to give up.

Understanding the policies and platforms of candidates is not an easy thing to do. You must shuffle through the "talk" and try to find the real stance.

Most Americans have little to do with politics and regard all politicians as corrupt or stupid. This used to bother me a lot, I could not understand how people could be so unaware and disinterested in their own government — which they have the right to control. Yet suddenly I am beginning to understand their reasoning.

Why pay attention to a bunch of bumbling politicians who all seem to believe they have the answers to America's problems if they could only be elected?

I became very interested in the Democratic presidential race after Gary Hart's win in Maine, hoping that this campaign would be exciting and competitive, one that would not be of all things predictable. If this campaign has not turned out predictable in the sense of who will be the Democratic candidate it has become predictable in other ways.

We all can be assured that Mondale will continue to throw cliches out at us such as asking Hart "Where's the Beef." We can also rest easy on the fact that petty little things will always enter into a campaign, such as Gary Hart's real last name and the real reason for him changing it.

Why do such shallow things always come to the surface in campaigns while the real issues remain hidden underneath a thick fog? Are we really afraid to face the real issues of a campaign, only to resort to insignificant details which we feel we can relate to easier than the budget deficit or foreign policy?

I don't think I am stretching the truth too far to say that most Americans care little about the workings of the American government. We our only kidding ourselves to believe otherwise. This is something which aggravates me the most — when the majority of the United States citizens vote on irrelevant, media blown issues instead of the underlying, important issues.

Few of us are immune to losing sight of the important issues in an election year. It is very easy to just forget about the whole mess instead of trying to unravel it all. Many times I wish I hadn't gotten involved in it myself and find I am tempted to turn the channel whenever I see a presidential debate on — tired of seeing and hearing the same rhetoric. Yet I'll keep the channel tuned in hoping to gain further insight into untangling the campaign talk.

And as the campaign winds down in Pennsylvania, we can only wonder what kind of campaign tactics we will become subject to. Many people are even asking if Pennsylvania really matters at this stage after Mondale's win in New York. Let me tell you it does matter.

It may not matter in the total outcome of the Democratic race or even the presidential race in November. But it will matter to you and whether you care enough to make yourself more aware of the government which is a an integral part of your life.

We cannot disconnect government from our lives because it intertwines with our everyday life. The only way we can possibly hope to improve government is to at least understand it better. The next time you see a debate on television — watch it. You may learn something not only about the candidates but about yourself and your own views. And a little knowledge never hurts.

Carol Frank is a junior majoring in political science and a columnist for The Daily Collegian.

Phi Psi 500 ● Phi Psi 500 ● Phi Psi 500 ● Phi Psi 500 ● Phi Psi 500 ●

David, George and Phil:
AΦ's are out to win the race and we'll show the Phi Psi's who it is that sets the pace!
Love, The Alpha Phi's
U-154

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