

# opinions

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The Daily Collegian  
Friday, April 6, 1984

## A sense of decency

Some things are better left unsaid — and untelevised. The same sense of decency that prevailed in Texas when the state Board of Corrections refused to televise the execution of convicted murderer James David Autry did not prevail when it came to televising a rape trial.

Not only was the victim humiliated when the brutal details of the gang-rape were described on local and national television, but her privacy was further invaded when the woman's name was made known to millions of people around the country — directly as a result of the televised trial.

The case was allowed to be televised — in this case nationally by the Cable News Network — because of a 1981 Supreme Court decision that upheld a Florida law permitting broadcast coverage of trials. Thirty-seven states have approved coverage.

At issue in this case are two problems. First, the judge failed to require the broadcasters to edit out the woman's name.

On Feb. 23, the first day of the trial, both prosecuting and defense attorneys mentioned the victim's name, and the broadcasters, with no facility for editing any remarks, telecast them.

It was technically possible to delay the live broadcast 7 to 12 seconds so that the broadcasters could edit the name, but Larry LaMotte, the executive producer of CNN, said the judge did not ask that the coverage be edited. As a result, the woman received national coverage — and so did her name.

Beth Huber, from the Women's Resource Center, said rape victims may not report rapes if they fear being further humiliated by having their identities made public.

"We think that this will have a detrimental effect on other people reporting rapes," Huber said. "If women know their

name could be published, they are going to be afraid to report the rape."

If rapes are not reported, police cannot look for criminals.

It's obvious that the woman's name should be withheld during future televised rape trials. William C. Young, the judge who presided over the New Bedford case, said the publication of the woman's name "was an abysmal error of judgment."

But the New Bedford case illustrates a second, even larger problem — should rape trials appear on television at all?

During most rape trials, the victim's reputation is subjected to close scrutiny. Past history and sexual relationships are disclosed throughout the trial, much of which are merely humiliating allegations. The defense often concentrates on defaming the victim to prove the defendant innocent.

Huber said the mere fact that the case could appear on television could scare women.

"It's hard enough for a woman to report a rape under normal circumstances," she said. "But when she sees how this woman got raked over the coals — how her past and her sex life were brought out — she is bound not to report it."

Pennsylvania law does not allow for broadcast coverage of trials. Maybe this law is too absolute — an education of our justice system is to be gained from watching that justice system in action.

But coverage of rape trials often becomes exercises in unnecessary sensationalism — humiliating and slandering a victim. Televising a rape trial does not help the public, and certainly hurts the rape victim.

State Supreme Courts should be urged to make the law more specific by eliminating broadcast coverage of rape trials.



## opinions

### Noxious music

I awakened last Friday night sometime after 1 a.m. and listened to a spraying of the neighborhood with noxious music, supposedly from university dorms a block away.

Next morning, it was encouraging to read in the Centre Daily Times that, of 18 fined offenses reported, half were "making loud noise," all but one with music.

If this is evidence of stringent enforcement of the noise ordinance, it is worth commending. A publicized crack-down could, if not eradicate this and other such nuisances (e.g., exhaust-open cars and motorcycles), at least discourage them by advertising strong community opposition.

To my mind, those fines were just fine.

### The purpose of influence

In the March 30 issue of The Daily Collegian, Carin Charters asked, "How can we as students expect to be unbiased electors of the Levison/Saylor ticket?" Since when are electors supposed to be unbiased? Voting is a right, and with that right comes a responsibility to develop bias. This means weighing the positive and negative aspects of each candidate in order to choose the best person for the position. After all, developing bias is not only part of voting, it is also part of everyday decision making. It is an unavoidable and necessary process.

Ms. Charters' letter refers to an editorial that appeared in the Collegian on March 28. She protested that it was unfair because "although your article may be an opinion, many people probably voted for the candidates which the Collegian presented as more favorable because they were influenced by the article." Well! Is it not the purpose of an editorial to influence its readers and to convey a belief?

As far as objective presentation of the candidates goes, the Collegian dedicated an entire page to a "USG Voters' Guide" each day of the election. This listed the candidates in alphabetical order and gave them each an opportunity to portray his platform's ideas and proposals. If there was any poor representation of the candidates, and I don't think that there was, it would be the candidates themselves who are at fault, not the Collegian.

I feel that the coverage was fair, and I disagree with Ms. Charters' opinion that "the Collegian presented us with a one-sided view of the candidates" causing an unfair election.

Meryl Levenberg, freshman-general arts and sciences April 3

### Hazardous waste

Recently, there have been many efforts nationwide to reduce environmental contamination due to toxic chemicals. Surveys requesting information from businesses about the use of toxic substances, workshops covering all aspects of hazardous wastes and news articles reporting

incidences of environmental concern are all working to alert the public and stimulate action.

There are 16 businesses in the Centre County area generating large quantities of hazardous waste. One survey conducted by the Sierra Club of State College received response from only two such firms about the chemicals used in their facility, indicating that many businesses do not feel that the citizens of our community have a right to know which toxic chemicals are being utilized.

Many workers associated with companies that are generating hazardous wastes are unaware of their effects, and many communities of their existence.

As inhabitants of this mother earth we are committed to her preservation. It is everyone's responsibility to protect her from industrial and commercial exploitation, and to realize the importance of knowing the issues and acting when necessary.

Currently the Disclosure Act, which gives employees and communities the right to know what substances their businesses use, is under consideration by the full House of Representatives. This act, commonly known as the "Right to Know" Act (HR1236) if passed, would be a major advance toward the reduction of environmental contamination through public awareness.

One way of contributing to the fight against toxic waste contamination would be writing your representatives encouraging them to support HR1236.

Another would be to get involved on National Day of Action, May 5. This day has been designated as a national campaign against toxic hazards, giving Americans the opportunity to express in any creative manner their concern about hazardous wastes.

If you wish to get involved in this contact the Sierra Club or EcoAction. Your participation is imperative in the fight for a better tomorrow.

Darlene Snow, sophomore-environmental resource management March 30

### Get it outta here!

After trudging through the snow on campus for the third day in a row (last week), I realized that the University's snow removal policies are terrible.

I know that this most recent snowfall was a freak spring storm and that there are many roads, parking lots, and sidewalks on campus. However, a university of this size should be equipped to handle such situations.

Parking Lot 80 was not plowed until late Friday morning and even then it was only partially cleared. Lot 83 and other student parking areas will probably never be plowed. Many times this past winter, the student parking areas were never plowed after a significant snowfall.

University officials are causing many unnecessary headaches for students by refusing to provide adequate snow removal. Just what are we paying \$15 per semester for anyway?

Kevin G. Stepiński, senior-mechanical engineering March 31

## reader opinion

### The Chicago 'machine'

In his column on runoff primaries, John R. Nordell, Jr. distorted the facts regarding Chicago's 1983 mayoral election. Nordell made several false assumptions about Chicago demographics and politics which indicate he has an outdated view of the city.

Nordell implied that Mayor Harold Washington has no mandate to govern because he is black and Chicago is a "city of mostly white Democrats."

Sorry, Mr. Nordell, but while working class ethnics are now in the minority in Chicago, white ethnics moved to the suburbs in the post-World War II years. Blacks, Latinos, and Asian immigrants settled in Chicago neighborhoods. Blacks now account for almost 40 percent of the city's population, and Hispanics of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and other descents comprise another 14 percent. In fact, Mexicans have replaced Chicagoans of Polish ancestry as the city's largest ethnic group.

In the mayoral election, Harold Washington received overwhelming support from the black community. However, he could not have won the election without support from two other groups: 1) 79 percent of the city's Hispanic voters chose Washington over Republican Bernard Epton; and 2) many "lakerfront liberals," young white professionals, and the stalemate exists because politicians who respect the benefits of a tightly controlled political machine in the past are not willing to give up the spoils without a fight.

Luann Hamilton, graduate-geography April 3

### Fooling the people

Our Democratic ship of state is really a raft, but happily a raft is unsinkable.

The ongoing Presidential campaign and subsequent 1984 election will test the validity of Lincoln's statement: "You can fool all the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time."

It will also reveal the maturity of the American voter. Ben Franklin's statement: "Experience is a hard school, but fools will learn in no other" has already been amply proven.

Ken Tomkinson Orlando, FL April 3

### The real losers

Concerning Reginald Arford's letter to the editor in Thursday's The Daily Collegian dealing with West Halls Radio, I feel a few facts should be made known.

After the Feb. 28 burglary of the station, the room the station was located in was locked due to the impossibility of running the station without operable turntables.

Mr. Arford came to West Halls Council as chief engineer, not as General Manager, requesting funds to restore the operation of the radio station. The agreement was made under the understanding that WHRA was to remain under the jurisdiction of WHRA, and with no dissenting votes West Halls Council granted Mr. Arford the funds needed to put the station back in operation.

Mr. Arford also agreed to work closely with WHRA executive vice president David L. Harvey to explore future alternatives for the radio station (one of these being a divestiture of the station from council). Less than a week after the mutual decision to cooperate was made, Mr. Arford took it into his own hands, without council's approval or knowledge, to petition the USG Supreme Court to grant him an organization to have sole broadcasting rights of radio programming in West Halls.

His attempted take-over was granted by the USG Supreme Court and consequently the residents of West Halls are the ones that lose. WHRA and I would very much like to put WHRA back on the air early next week when the replacement turntables arrive from the insurance company.

Because of Mr. Arford and his new organization — WHRO — if WHRA would put West Halls Radio on the air, WHRA could potentially lose its status as a student organization and the residents of West Halls will really be the losers.

By the way, Mr. Arford is not even a resident of West Halls.

Steven S. Diano, WHRA President April 5

## the Collegian

Friday, April 6, 1984  
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Atelia Swasy Editor Susan M. Melle Business Manager

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## El Salvador:

### Left-wing death squads are as prevalent as right-wing variety

Roberto D'Aubuisson of El Salvador's ARENA Party is seldom mentioned in the press without an allusion to the Romero murder. White claimed to have evidence that was "100 percent conclusive that D'Aubuisson and his group are responsible for the murder of Archbishop Romero." This "evidence" is a set of documents seized from D'Aubuisson in 1980 after a left-wing junta seized power.



Former US Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White has been quite persistent trying to link D'Aubuisson to the Romero murder. White claimed to have evidence that was "100 percent conclusive that D'Aubuisson and his group are responsible for the murder of Archbishop Romero." This "evidence" is a set of documents seized from D'Aubuisson in 1980 after a left-wing junta seized power.

the Romero assassination? Zilch. They don't mention Romero or D'Aubuisson or even allude to the murder. All they turned out to be were preparations for a counter-coup as a Cuban-style government assume power. Strike one.

In another attempt to link D'Aubuisson to the murder (among other things), White claimed that six wealthy Salvadoran exiles living in Miami were directing and funding D'Aubuisson and the death squads. Supposedly D'Aubuisson had Romero killed at their behest. But again White ran into problems. Three of the "Miami six" don't even live in Miami and one has been dead for over two years.

One of the accused, Arturo Mueyhshond, forced White to do an embarrassing about-face by threatening him with a \$10 million libel suit. Unable to back up his charges, White meekly replied, "It has come to my attention that there may have been some confusion regarding the proper identification of one person... I take the first opportunity... to point out that it appears the source may have been in error by identifying the Mr. Mueyhshond involved in death squad activity as Arturo Mueyhshond." Strike two.

After being burned once or twice, you'd think White would get the message: don't accuse someone of fishy activities if all you

have is fishy evidence. Unfortunately this wasn't the case.

White also produced an anonymous informant who was supposedly "in a position to know about the matters he discussed" — those matters being D'Aubuisson's death squad connections. He also claimed to be an eyewitness to a meeting in which D'Aubuisson plotted Romero's murder.

The New York Times ran a front-page story on this informant who also was interviewed (concealed in the shadows, of course) by Walter Cronkite on the CBS Evening News. Hot stuff, right?

For a while, yes, the Times later reported that it couldn't substantiate the informant's claims, and worse, that the informant was paid \$50,000 to make them! The funding came from a left-wing group called the Center for Development Policy which, by the way, sponsors White's Commission on U.S.-Central American Relations. Strike three — White's credibility is out the window.

Nevertheless, a lead on the parties responsible for the Romero murder does exist. It surfaced when a Costa Rican daily newspaper, "La Nacion," interviewed Pedro Lobo, a former FMLN guerrilla leader.

According to Lobo, the Salvadoran rebels had Romero killed "to create a new martyr in El Salvador in order to further radicalize the longstanding struggle there."

Lobo claims to have witnessed the plot, identifying the brains of the operation as the late rebel leader Cayetano Cerpio and his late assistant Melida Anaya Montes. (Both were murdered in Managua, Montes died of multiple stab wounds — the Sandinistas called it suicide.) Lobo said other brains of the operation were Castroite Joaquin Villalobos and a female member of the ETA Militar, a violent Basque terrorist group with proven KGB connections.

Hmm. Interesting. An identified eyewitness account. Did the media show any interest? No, but then again what else is new? Practically all we hear about in Central America are the atrocities committed by the far right. Rarely, if ever, do we hear of rebel atrocities, and there are many.

The Salvadoran Human Rights Commission stated that the rebels killed 10 times as many civilians in the first six months of 1983 as the death squads. The rebels assassinate not only government officials (left-wing death squads, anyone?) but often each other in power struggles. In total, the rebels are known to have killed over 5,000 non-combatants in this war, but the press treats all

casualties as if only government forces or the death squads are responsible.

Once again we get this pattern in the media and elsewhere of publicizing the brutality of the regimes we support and ignoring the brutality of their, and our, Marxist enemies. The Vietnam occasionally committed "excesses" (only we could massacre peasants), the Sandinistas are "struggling to build socialism," Mao Zedong and Fidel Castro received outright praise, and now this.

I don't know whether D'Aubuisson is involved with the right-wing death squads or not, and by the looks of the evidence neither does anybody else. Some media analysts have actually admitted this. But if we're going to dig into the dirty or bloody line of the regimes we support, then I suggest we dig into that of the enemy as well. It would be nice to get a true perspective on a Marxist revolution for one. Who knows? Rumormongering through the rebels' dirty laundry may produce the killers' of Archbishop Romero.

Kelly Fracassa is a graduate student in business administration and a columnist for The Daily Collegian. His column appears on alternate Fridays.

**THANK YOU!**  
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