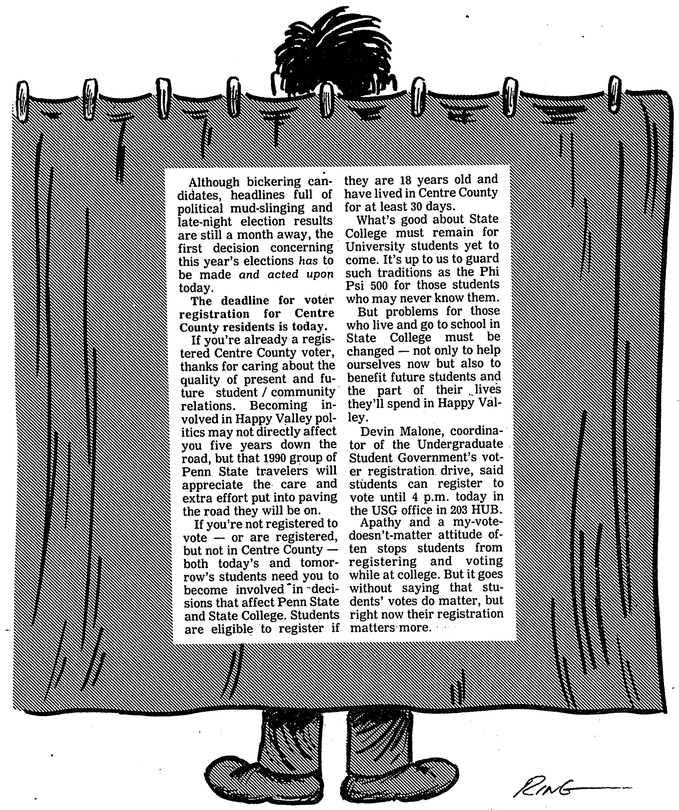
editorial opinion

Today . . . or not at all



Although bickering candidates, headlines full of political mud-slinging and late-night election results are still a month away, the first decision concerning this year's elections *has* to be made *and acted upon* today.

The deadline for voter registration for Centre County residents is today.

If you're already a registered Centre County voter, thanks for caring about the quality of present and future student / community relations. Becoming involved in Happy Valley politics may not directly affect you five years down the road, but that 1990 group of Penn State travelers will appreciate the care and extra effort put into paving the road they will be on.

If you're not registered to vote — or are registered, but not in Centre County — both today's and tomorrow's students need you to become involved in decisions that affect Penn State and State College. Students are eligible to register if they are 18 years old and have lived in Centre County for at least 30 days.

What's good about State College must remain for University students yet to come. It's up to us to guard such traditions as the Phi Psi 500 for those students who may never know them.

But problems for those who live and go to school in State College must be changed — not only to help ourselves now but also to benefit future students and the part of their lives they'll spend in Happy Valley.

Devin Malone, coordinator of the Undergraduate Student Government's voter registration drive, said students can register to vote until 4 p.m. today in the USG office in 203 HUB.

Apathy and a my-vote-doesn't-matter attitude often stops students from registering and voting while at college. But it goes without saying that students' votes do matter, but right now their registration matters more.

reader opinion

Responsibility

On Friday, Sept. 13, an advertisement appeared in *The Daily Collegian* for the pornographic film "Insatiable." The ad carried the usual picture of star Marilyn Chambers, topless and barely bottomed, beckoning seductively to the reader. This particular ad even had an invitation stating: "HOW WELL AN X-RATED MOVIE GOES OVER AT PENN STATE DEPENDS ENTIRELY UPON AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION. FEEL FREE TO SCREAM, YELL AND BARK AS MUCH AS YOU DESIRE."

Has cheering for campus porn become as much a part of the Penn State tradition as cheering for football?

The issue of pornography is complex and extremely controversial. First, what is pornography? It is not easy to define and one can get tangled in trying to differentiate "offensive" porn from "nonoffensive" erotica. Few would argue that porn is an artistic expression — one need only look at the pointless "plots" and poor production. In essence, pornography is supplied sexual fantasy. It is blatant and robotic rather than creative and humanistic. It is physical fantasy removed from the context which separates human beings from animals — the context of intelligence and sensitivity. Outside of this context, sex is degrading. Those who disagree should consider how they would feel if, instead of some anonymous body on the screen, it were their mother or sister.

We need also to consider the statement made by the fact that the pornography is being shown on campus in classrooms. The administration normally takes responsibility for what goes on in its classrooms. Excellence in the classroom is a source of pride; the administration readily accepts applause for this. Does it similarly accept the screaming, yelling and barking for pornography?

The porn films shown on campus are sponsored by the Penn State Movie Co-op. This is a facade behind which hide two major campus organizations. The "co-op" is in actuality the Association for Residence Hall Students (60 percent) and the Undergraduate Student Government (40 percent). ARHS and USG sponsor pornography. As co-director of USG's Departmemt of Women's Concerns this appalls me. What does it mean when the same organization that establishes a department to deal with issues of sexism sponsors pornography which degrades women and men to the level of screaming, yelling, barking animals? What does it mean?

A dichotomy exists in the American mind between "belief" and "action." There are cultures where this isn't the case, where there is but one word to express two ideas, where they are inseparable. It is one thing to claim belief in something, but it's quite another to act on that belief. The University, through the administration and USG, tells us it believes in a nonsexist environment, but its actions belie this. An analogy is the issue of apartheid. The University "believes" it is wrong, but when it comes time to act on that belief, "fiduciary responsibility" gets in the way. Pornography makes a large profit for ARHS and USG. Once again, fiduciary responsibility wins out over social responsibility.

I suggest that the administration, ARHS and USG take a critical look at the image they are projecting. Put the "Movie Co-Op" mask aside. Two very influential groups are sponsoring pornography at Penn State while the administration sits back and says nothing.

I do not advocate censorship. I am not so naive as to think anyone is going to bring an end to pornography. As long as there are those desperate enough to participate behind the camera and in front of the screen it is going to exist. But I do advocate thinking about the issue and the image it fosters of men and women — and of the people and organizations who sponsor it. If pornography is acceptable enough to be shown on campus, then it is acceptable enough for people to accept the responsibility for showing it. Don't hide behind the Movie Co-Op. Patty Martin, president of ARHS, David Rosenblatt, president of USG, and Dr. Bryce Jordan, University President: are you willing to accept responsibility for pornography at Penn State?

Susan Sturgis, senior-social work
Carol J. Gilmore, co-director
USG Dept. of Women's Concerns
Sept. 19

Cure it

It is surprising that with all of the recommendations the University President's Task Force on Alcohol released last week that all of them were designed to cure the symptoms, and not the cause, of the problem. Anyone can get alcohol if he or she wants it, so no matter what the policy of the University is, students will have it. Instead of cracking down on fraternities and tailgate parties, the University should spend some time on an alcohol awareness program. One of the simplest and most effective ways to get many people to hear your point of view is to announce it on the radio and in the papers. Creating more regulations against alcohol will only worsen the problems. Only with the cooperation of its students will Penn State reduce the problems related to alcohol.

Robert C. Rogers,
freshman-electrical engineering
Sept. 25

Qualifications:

Reagan's never-before-released selection process

Well, there he goes again. Ron has graced the American public with his extraordinary command of the English language as well as with his continued attempts to persuade us that he does have the country in his best interests.

Last week he asked Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Margaret Heckler to relinquish her post.

He wasn't the bearer of just bad news, though. That's not his style. In fact, Ron never comes out and says he has bad news. He just masks it in rhetoric and patriotic mumbo-jumbo.

Ron had a better and bigger task for Marg: ambassador to Ireland. Wow.

In case you might think otherwise, things still aren't too cozy across the Pacific. Their religious conflicts haven't been discontinued. The only thing that has been discontinued in Ireland is the news media's attention toward it; and that's why we don't hear anything about it anymore.

So asking Marg to become ambassador to Ireland now is like asking Joe Friday to move off his Los Angeles beat and head down to South America to crack down on cocaine pushers.

But to add to the excitement, the president has called the move a promotion. Heckler takes a $10,000-a-year paycut and loses a leadership role over 145,000 employees. That's a step up? What's your idea of a demotion, Ron?

But even these two blunders weren't the greatest. Blunders always come in threes. Here's the topper.

Doesn't it seem a little strange that the person responsible for directing social welfare programs in the United States would be the most qualified individual for the job of an ambassador to Ireland?

Never fear. Our leader does have an absolutely justifiable, reasonable, and unquestionable answer as to why the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services is more than prepared for this job.

He said that she is qualified because she has Irish blood in her. That seems like a fair and just method of determining job qualification, doesn't it?

Now, exactly where her Irish blood comes from, I don't know. I also don't know if it comes in a jar or box. And I'm not sure if it's red, like most blood is, although I would guess in this case it might be green. But it's in her. The president said so.

Margaret said she wanted to take a couple of days before making a decision on the move; probably to call her mother to find out where she got this Irish blood from.

But wait. Just like a commercial for Ronco's Vegematic, there's more.

The headline to top all headlines is that the president's pronouncement of Margaret's qualifications has led to a leak of some private, never-before-disclosed papers regarding his decisions about why he appointed several other key White House staff members.

Naturally, this reporter sought out the source and persuaded the ground hog who began this veritable mushroom of an issue to turn the papers over to me. My mission was a success and you are the benefactors of my victory.

Needless to say, we'll be marching to Washington, D.C. to speak out about these horrifying series of events.

Here goes:

Caspar Weinberger: selected to head the Department of Defense because he shot his next door neighbor in the nose with a beebee gun when he was seven years old.

George Bush: chosen as running mate in 1980 election because he's quiet, boring, and nobody knows how stup. he really is — just what a vice president should be.

Sandra Day O'Connor: appointed supreme court justice, because (what did you expect?), she's a woman.

William Casey: director of the Central Intelligence Agency because he's known to have the largest collection of Halloween masks and disguises in the world.

George Shultz: Secretary of State because Ron's a big Charlie Brown fan and he thought George was related to the Peanuts creator and could get him to do a private show in the Oval Office when things got slow.

Jeanne Kirkpatrick: former ambassador to the United Nations because she has more chins than Ron.

Edwin Meese, III: attorney general because he once hanged a woman in effigy for having an abortion. (Ron's not fond of physical violence but he appreciated Ed's sense of moral responsibility.)

James Baker: former White House chief of staff and current secretary of the Department of the Treasury for no apparent reason.

Donald Regan: former secretary of the Department of the Treasury and current White House chief of staff because Ron really got off on how similar their names are.

William Bennett: secretary of the Department of Education because he disowned his son for not divesting his stereo and Spring vacation in Fort Lauderdale (another moral victory in Ron's book).

Malcolm Baldridge: secretary of the Department of Commerce because it's a nowhere job and it needs a nobody to run it.

Patrick Buchanan: White House communications director because he's right-wing, right-ward, right-handed, and right-on.

James Watt: Environmental Protection Agency director during Reagan's first term because he sold the property where his own mother lives to be strip-mined (one more moral imperative Ron had to reward).

John Block: secretary of the Department of Agriculture because only a farmer could send his fellow farmers into bankruptcy and default and still make the President appear blameless.

Elizabeth Dole: transportation secretary because O'Conner was tired of going to the ladies room alone.

Robert McFarlane: National Security Adviser because Nancy thinks he's cute.

Larry Speakes: White House spokesman because Ron thought his name would be kind of funny for this position.

The list went on for several pages but these were the key people. The president had made some comments under some people's names. Nothing important, just stuff like, "leave it to Deaver," refering to a note he sent to his assistant, Michael Deaver, asking him to do something.

Despite the outlandishness of these comments, several of Reagan's appointments have met with fierce opposition on Capital Hill when it came time for Congress to approve his appointment. Congress spent months investigating Edwin Meese's background before approving him for the attorney general's post.

During the 18th century in this country, a president appointed his cabinet members based on a system known as patronage — how friendly the president and the potential appointee were.

Fortunately, we moved away from that system and toward a system based on merit. Some of Reagan's appointments give the impression the system has changed back to the old ways.

The march will begin at dawn.

Michael Kutner is a senior majoring in finance and a columnist for The Daily Collegian. His column appears every Monday.

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Gail L. Johnson Michael A. Meyers
Editor Business Manager

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opinions

Reality:

Once upon a candy cane . . . Search for truth in the Land of Whimsy

To: Everyone
From: Me
RE: National Anti-Apartheid Day

On Oct. 11, this Friday, at noon there will be a rally in front of Old Main. From 4 to 8 p.m. there will be a concert on the HUB Lawn. Its purpose is to protest continued PSU investment in South Africa. If you can make it, please do. Schools across the country will be making similar protests.

Young Hans Boswell lived in the Land of Whimsy where the GNP grew by 5 percent a year, and the interest rates were equal to inflation at 1 percent a year. Like others of the leading Whimsical Party, he believed in the Gospel of Supply Side.

His father had worked hard and, saving all the candy canes he had made at the Everlasting Gobstopper Factory, had managed to send young Hans to the University of Flight and Fancy where he majored in engineering. He had no intention of being a mere gobstopper maker!

And then one day, there was a recruiting drive by the National Secrecy Agency (NSA, for short). The man spoke of a great tennis ball factory that produced foreign intelligence and kept the Land of Whimsy's communications safe.

Hans realized that the "tennis ball factory" was a *euphemism*, for the lecturer's nose grew by three inches every time he said it.

The lecturer told him of the great benefits of the NSA. "Shop, dine and sightsee in fashionable Georgetown," and "Urban planning at its best awaits you in the new city of Columbia — just around the corner," enticed him. He was shown pictures of men with voluptuous maidens, and generally given the impression that he would be beseiged by female-person-types if only he would work for the NSA.

He left the meeting, enticed by this, and by the, *ye, gods!*, the gobs of candy canes to be made. Yet, he was troubled, just a bit, by the idea of having to lie about his work —and yea, indeed, he did not even knoweth the scope of his potential job-to-be.

He walked by the Christmas Tree Forest, the Nation's Treasury (the only known source of candy canes), where he met B.H. Liberal. He was taken aback by the appearance of the gentleman in question. Long, flowing hair, a red bandana, torn blue jeans, an army jacket and intense, enigmatic blue eyes that projected something called sincerity.

Liberal held a placard reading: SUPPLY SIDE IS FANTASY.

"Why this is true, I say verily unto you," Hans told him.

Liberal laughed. "Get real, dude."

"You speaketh weird," Hans reproached him. "This is the Land of Whimsy!"

"I am from the Land of Reality," Liberal returned. "I sayeth, I mean, I'm saying that you also live in the Land of Reality. Whimsy is a Fantasy made up by the Warlock of Bonzo!"

Hans stared at the stranger, uncomprehending.

Liberal shook his head. "You don't understand," he said.

"Nay." The young man stared back.

A group of pinnochio-nosed citizens walked by.

"You're living a lie," Liberal shouted. "My nose isn't five yards long!"

They walked on. An older woman yelled back, "My dear man, short noses are simply unfashionable this year."

Liberal and Hans were left alone. Liberal's eyes furtively glanced about. He pulled a wad of fluff from his pocket. "Want to snort some cotton candy?"

"But that's illegal!"

Liberal laughed. "Of course it is! Anything truly liberal is illegal. For example, in a land called Pennsylvania, oral sex is illegal."

"My god, what evil people they must be!"

Liberal nodded sagely. "You may look upon me as a missionary, sent here in these dark times." Cotton candy disappeared up his nose.

Hans watched, fascinated. A light, chocolate syrup drizzle began to fall. His mind wandered over his day and the strange encounters he had had.

He felt his nose.

"A friend of mine has a problem," he said. His nose distended an inch.

Liberal frowned. "Not you too," he said. "Just like the rest of them." He sighed. "If you're going to talk to me, don't lie, okay?"

"Okay," Hans answered. "It is I that have this problem. I went to heareth the lecturer speak at school. The knight from the NSA who was recruiting squires for the King's 'Tennis Ball Factory.'"

He looked at Liberal.

Liberal snorted some more cotton candy.

"Anyhow," Hans continued, "I was sorely tempted to apprentice myself to them. But I was troubled by the thought of lying." He paused. "Yet, I would not really have to lie; I would merely keep quiet and maintain secrecy."

A passing dragon nodded to the two.

Liberal looked to Hans, shaking his head. "You don't understand, man. Secrecy means concealing the truth. Isn't that a form of lying?"

"But the lecturer's nose was not that long!" Hans protested.

Liberal laughed. He looked up at the Great White Castle floating in the clouds. "The Wizard knows of ways to make people appear sincere," he said. "He has the ability to pull what is called "a fast one" on the masses."

"Let us suppose that I believe you," Hans said. "If I do not work to save the Land of Whimsy, who will?"

"Must you lie and cheat to save the Land of Whimsy?"

"Verily I say, if we do not, then the Cookie Monsters will devour our chocolate chips and Fig Newtons. They will lay waste to our Christmas Trees!"

Liberal fixed him with a stare. "Are you not the same as the Cookie Monsters if you act the same? Will you not be as evil?"

"No!" Hans shouted. His nose reached the magic carpet stop, a block away.

Liberal said nothing.

"Well, maybe a little," Hans amended. His nose shrank, a little.

About a micron.

"But if no one volunteers . . ."

Liberal shook his head and his face held an expression Hans did not recognize. We will call it sadness. "If you don't," he said, "then the Wizard will summon demons or impose slavery. Already your women must be barefoot and pregnant . . ."

"But they are attractive . . ."

"To you," Liberal answered.

"But they like it . . ."

"Of course — they're brainwashed!"

Hans fell silent. Clearly this person was citing things that were distorting his world view. Clearly, what he said was truthful, yet it could not be really, verily true, or else the Land of Whimsy, guided by the Wizard would not have allowed things to be as they were.

Just then a demon appeared next to Liberal.

"You're under arrest," it grated, breathing sulfurous Dorito fumes.

Liberal was teleported away — undoubtedly to the old *Gone With The Wind* sets where political prisoners were held for reeducation.

Hans shook his head and walked on. The NSA couldn't be all that bad, he thought. But he kept his mouth shut, and his nose could not betray him.

John Orr is a sophomore majoring in English and a columnist for The Daily Collegian. His column appears every Monday.

Face facts

I would like to offer my opinion on the proposed alcohol policies.

Let's face facts: The majority of college students drink alcoholic beverages, at least on an occasional basis. Most have learned their limitations and know when to stop drinking. Parties give us a place to relax and let down our hair a little. They help us to become more social creatures and shrug off the pressures of school for a while.

True, some people have trouble coping with the responsibilities that go along with alcohol use. However, these people represent the exception rather than the rule. The idea that the new policies are meant for everyone's benefit is absurd. These regulations will effectively ban most alcohol-related parties by introducing more legal loopholes to close them down. Students will not stop drinking alcohol because of these regulations. Those who still wish to drink will only be forced off-campus to private apartments and houses to drink beer.

The acceptance of the policies recommended by the President's Task Force on Alcohol would be like deciding to cure a broken finger by cutting off the entire hand. It does more harm than good. We must show the administration that we will not lie down and let the University further restrict our personal freedom.

The creators of these new alcohol restrictions are trying to deny us our basic human right to the pursuit of happiness. The end result will be the further alienation of the students from the University. If anyone reading this believes what I am saying to be true, then you should make sure that your voice is heard. Otherwise, you will have no right to complain when your freedom is taken away.

Put down that beer — Big Brother is watching you.

Daniel DiPaolo, senior-biology
Sept. 24

The New York Times

The *New York Times* is made available to students and staff of Penn State at reduced rates Mon. thru Fri. The daily rate of .25 is 50% below newsstand. Fall subscriptions will start on the date you indicate and end on Dec. 10th. Subscription information is sent and begins two days after receipt of order. Make check payable to JORDAN ASSOCIATES and mail to P.O. Box 1307, State College, PA 16804. Further details 234-1788.

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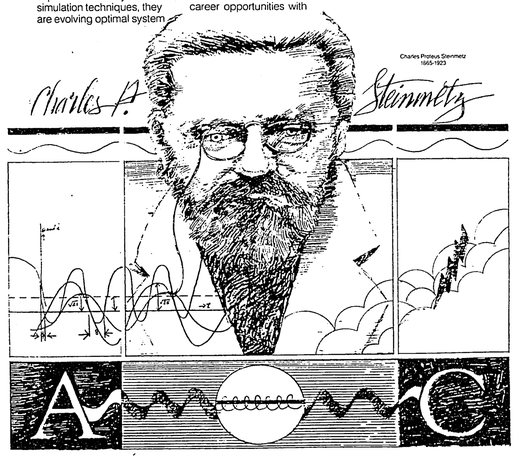

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