

opinions

The Daily Collegian
Thursday, Oct. 30, 1986

editorial opinion

Keeping a sharp eye on vandalism

A word to the wise: Partiers, better watch your step in State College neighborhoods. You might think it's a riot to "borrow" a fraternity's stereo or take target practice at someone's window, but other people do not share your amusement — namely the victims of the pranks.

To protect their houses and their neighbors' homes against vandalism, fraternity members and pledges have formed a Crime Watch program.

Besides having the police on the lookout for trouble, University fraternity members and pledges will patrol the streets of State College every weekend as part of the first-ever nationwide fraternity crime watch.

The State College police should not have to spend their Friday nights sitting in their patrol cars in fraternity neighborhoods babysitting people who have had "one too many" and are trying to find their way home.

It is a great burden off the police to have fraternity brothers watch their own turf and call the police if and when there is a problem.

And when fraternities work with the police, it will also help ease relations between the two groups. Crime Watch is the perfect opportunity for fraternities to present themselves as contributing members of the community rather than isolated, self-reliant and temporary residents.

But fraternity members must also keep in mind their role in crime watch. They are not vigilantes. Their purpose is to watch for

trouble and then call the police. They must not think their job is to capture the vandal, take him down to the station and book 'em.

Interfraternity Council Community Relations Chairman Eric Graves said participation in the program is overwhelming. Thirty-six of the 52 fraternities have signed up to participate in the crime watch so far.

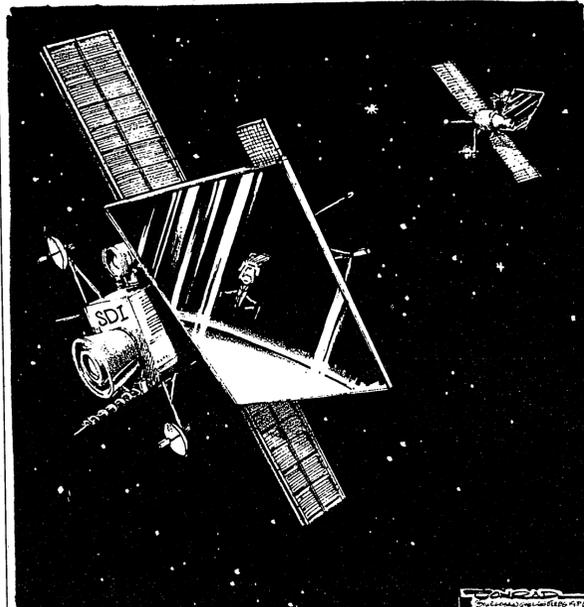
Crime Watch's purpose is to protect every fraternity in the neighborhood from vandalism and disorderly conduct. Because crime is a community problem, all fraternities with houses should sign up to participate in the program.

Just knowing Crime Watch exists may prove to be very effective in deterring crime. If people know someone is watching, they may think twice before vandalizing property or disturbing the peace.

But for this program to work, fraternity members must be dedicated to the Crime Watch.

This involves a weekly commitment from 10 p.m. until 2 a.m. every Friday night, regardless of the weather. This will mean leaving the warm house, the fantastic party, the endless drafts and that hot scope to go out on the streets and make sure those wild and crazy partiers aren't having a good time at someone else's expense.

Fraternity Crime Watch has the potential to be a great success to deter crime. But it will take the dedication and cooperation of both the police and fraternity members to make it work.



I HAVE SEEN THE ENEMY...

reader opinion

Public service

This letter is in response to the "Scalping Scam" editorial which appeared in *The Daily Collegian*. Referring to intelligent business-minded entrepreneurs as "capitalists" demonstrates the editorial staff's ignorance to the important economic functions that these businessmen perform for their communities. Instead of calling for stricter enforcement of victimless crime laws, let's look at the services these law-abiding citizens perform.

Just as most businesses carry inventory so goods will be available to buyers, so does the scalper. His inventory is tickets and represents a large cash investment. It is only fair that he be compensated for this investment since this money could be earning interest in a bank.

The scalper is never guaranteed a profit on his tickets. Like other businesses, the scalper takes risk when he buys merchandise for resale. Would you risk hundreds of dollars if you could not make a profit?

If Penn State has a bad season or if the weather is bad, few could even care to lose significant amounts of money.

Nobody forces "desperate Nittany Lions fans" to buy tickets from a scalper. These people know well in advance that tickets could be selling for several times their original price on game days and when they venture

Environment

U.S. Rep. Bill Clinger claims to have a good record on environmental issues. Yet, when the most important votes were cast, Clinger voted for the polluters.

His cumulative rating of 42 percent with the League of Conservation Voters demonstrates his lack of concern for environmental issues. Clinger has consistently voted to weaken the Superfund, which was created by Congress to clean up toxic waste sites. He voted to eliminate the industry tax — the main source of revenue for Superfund.

He also voted against allowing victims of industrial waste to sue for damages in federal court. Clinger surly knows that the best way to stop pollution is to make it economically unsound to pollute.

I hope the voters of the 23rd District won't be fooled this time. I know Bill Wachob can do a better job. His record in the Pennsylvania legislature was very pro-environmental.

Darin Cox
Franklin, Pa., resident

Endorsements?

The political campaign of Bill Wachob has been dealt a serious blow: it has been endorsed by the Undergraduate Student Government. You consider this endorsement as a plus for Wachob, but consider some things.

The turnout for the USG elections last Spring was as low as 20 percent. Few, if any, students can tell you who represents them in the USG Senate.

Worse yet, few could even care. Don't think this is the students' fault either. For the past few years, disinvestment has been a hot issue. The leadership of the USG has taken it

What do you think?

The Daily Collegian welcomes letters from students, faculty, staff and area residents concerning issues and topics of interest to the *Collegian's* readership. With the semester past the half-way point, many important

issues still confront the University. Authors must present letters to the editor (no more than 1 1/2 pages, double-spaced) or forums (up to three typed pages, double-spaced) to the *Collegian* in 126 Carnegie Building.

opinions

Blind support:

It's impossible to understand how some people can believe in government-backed torture

It is with narrow-minded people as with narrow-necked bottles: the less they have in them, the more noise they make in pouring it out. — Alexander Pope.

I'll be the first to admit that I know next to nothing about absolutely everything. Yes, when it comes to ignorance, I'm a certified genius. In fact, I know how to say "I don't know" in 11 different languages. I take my life very seriously and I'm always trying to expand my knowledge of how much I don't know.

There are advantages to being aware of one's own ignorance. For instance, it tends to keep me on my toes. I don't think I'd be comfortable with the security that would come from thinking I know all the answers — it scares the hell out of me.

I was in the dining hall a few weeks ago and I overheard a conversation between two men who, according to them, must have all the answers. Typical ejaculations from their mouths were: "We should just send in the CIA to Nicaragua to torture a few hundred people," and "Those f---ing commie spics deserve to die" and "I'd like to go down there and do it myself."

And, of course, they believe we don't



already have military personnel in Central America doing those exact same things — our government told us so.

While in Alaska this summer, I did not have steady access to current events so I did a lot of thinking in my spare time. Out of all that thinking came the realization there is some common thread that connects all human beings.

And though I couldn't identify it, I think it has something to do with our ability to feel. We all feel, whether it be joy or grief, happiness or pain.

And if my bold assumption is correct — and I think it is — those two guys in the dining hall need to do some serious re-thinking because they're no different than

"those f---ing commie spics" who the United States is not killing, for democracy or any other reason.

I've met those guys many times before, though in different personages. They come in different sizes, shapes and sexes, but they express similar sentiments about different subjects. But common among them is the denial of — and the ignorance to — that which we all share: the ability to feel. At least I think so.

I wish I had the ability to understand how so many people — men and women alike — can espouse a belief in government-supported torture as they do. I mean, if I had that ability, it would make me extremely angry to know the feelings of other human beings were being discarded like scraps of meat, when I know we're all the same in at least one way.

It wouldn't be so bad if I didn't know these people, but because I do I have a hard time believing that they, my fellow Americans, would want to drop bombs on people, shoot bullets through them or stick bayonets in them. (Impersonal nuclear weapons attacks are a wholly different issue.)

If nothing else, just try to imagine the sounds made by a suffering person, some-

one feeling the pain that you inflicted . . . it's not a sound I'd like to hear. Take a moment to hear it in your mind.

And still, there are people among us who profess the desire to be the agents of such pain. I heard one ex-Marine say this about the incessant fighting in the Middle East: "Man, I'd love to be over there right now, fighting with them Israelis — they know how to fight! When they catch someone they don't like, he's dead meat. They ain't afraid of blood."

Right now, I don't feel as ignorant as I did at the beginning of this column. I feel something and though I'm not sure what it is, I think it may be anger. Whatever it is, it has been building inside me for a long time and it's emerging now.

I've seen too many people toss around those violent sentiments to feel anything other than anger, and those people, I think, will grow old within their small circle of ideas, which they have not discovered for themselves. And the result of their "knowledge" will be more pain for people they don't even know. There's that sound again. Have you ever said anything like the

people I've quoted in this column? Have you ever wondered what it would be like to rip through the flesh of another human being simply because he lives in another part of the world and has a different set of ideologies?

Can you honestly say that, if you were given a choice to be or not to be in a situation so apparently desired, you could perform the kind of savage acts that so many of us talk of so freely? Or is it simply talk?

If it is simply talk, shut up. If you mean what you say, if you honestly believe you are capable of killing another human being under the guise of preserving peace, start with me because I'm too ignorant and incapable to live in a world devoid of compassion, empathy and love.

One day your violent choice will not be mine. Will it be too late? You can fight it. — U2.

John Buehner is a graduate student and a columnist for *The Daily Collegian*. His column appears every other Thursday.

the Collegian

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Relationships:

To have true friends requires honesty, openness and a minimal amount of game-playing

Oct. 30, 1982

Just another mischief night. My friend Stacey dragged me along to this Halloween party in a not so nice part of town. She was hot for this guy who was going to be there and, being an adventuresome (crazy? stupid?) soul, I let myself get talked into going. Not a bad party, actually. I met this guy named Chris — interesting, kind of loolooking, nice body. We went back to Stacey's house and talked (yes, talked) all night.



There are too many lonely people walking around. Some are part of a group, but that doesn't matter — there's a difference between knowing a lot of people and having others know you.

According to Erik Erikson's stages of the lifespan, most of us in early adulthood (18-24) are in the Intimacy vs. Isolation Stage (assuming we've gotten past toilet training). Do we choose to form meaningful relationships (not necessarily sexual) or do we choose to keep who we are inside, hidden from everyone — friends, lovers, etc.

I would have liked to take a not-so-random survey on this question, but emotional topics like this make many people uptight. Besides, those in the latter group probably wouldn't answer me anyway, that's why

they're in that group. So, given the situation, I will assume that both types are represented here today.

What is a true friend? (Sorry, I know this is elementary stuff but I think many people, in this age of appearances, need to be reminded.) Someone you can emotionally dump on when you think your life is falling apart and doesn't tell you to get lost or get drunk, but listens. Someone you can be your obnoxious true self around without worrying that they'll never speak to you again. (I could go on but I'm sure you get the idea.) To form close friendships is a basic psychological need. Yet, some of us, although we would like close friends, merely know a lot of people. What's the problem?

A common complaint is that there is nobody around worth being close friends with, just a bunch of jerks. There is some validity in this point, but blaming others will not help you; it's possible you may not give others the impression that you are capable of being a friend.

To have true friends requires one to be a true friend. To be a true friend requires honesty, self-disclosure and, most importantly, a minimal amount of game-playing. The games we play with others are a result of the images we have in our minds of how we should act and who we should be. If these images represent who we really are, there are no games. (Only you know when you're playing.) We all play to some extent, but like everything else it's harmful in extremes. You have to know when to stop. Why do we need to play games? One reason is that we don't want to reveal our true selves which may not be liked or accepted. A better one is that we don't want to get hurt. If people attack who we are not (our "image"), it is not a personal attack, right? Personal attacks are the most painful hurts.

A good defense is the best offense. That's what walls are for.

It's a natural step from the superficiality of some friendships to the superficiality of some relationships. A relationship should be a friendship (as in real friend). Unfortu-

nately, it seems as though a minority of relationships fall into this category. Let's imagine that you treat your boyfriend or girlfriend no differently than a close friend. (Throw in sex if you'd like, but that shouldn't make any difference for our purpose here.) How might things change between you?

Possessiveness. Do you get jealous if your close friends have other friends who are like to go out with? How about if your boyfriend/girlfriend goes out with someone of the other sex?

In the latter case, our insecurities often cause a red flag to wave in front of our eyes and we do something stupid. You don't try to control your friends, but a relationship is different, right? Why?

My opinion on possessiveness is that if two people have a strong relationship, no other person can come between them. If seeing other people causes a break-up, or a sometimes does, one of the parties involved was unsatisfied with the relationship and probably wanted out anyway. Either that, or those damn insecurities make us act stupid again.

Honesty. Something like 75 percent of all people in relationships have had at least one outside sexual experience while in the relationship. I doubt many of them decide to

tell their boyfriend or girlfriend. Why not? Would it mean the end of the relationship? (I know the answer to this one is often "yes.")

Think about it, if your feelings toward him or her haven't changed, what harm is it doing? The greatest harm is in the lying which will de-stabilize any relationship. We generally don't try to possess our friends and are honest with them; what would it be like if we really did apply to these relationships? What have we got to lose by being true to ourselves and our own feelings?

Oct. 30, 1986
I've been close friends with Chris for exactly four years. He's still interesting, loolooking and has a nice body. No one else lets me ramble on all night about things going on in my mind — on his long-distance phone bill.

I wonder what he'll say when I tell him obviously that he inspired this column. He may never speak to me again. That's what friends are for, I guess.

Abby Felgus is a senior majoring in psychology and pre-medicine and a columnist for *The Daily Collegian*. Her column appears every other Thursday.

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