

opinions

The Daily Collegian
Thursday, Nov. 6, 1986

editorial opinion

Improving education for the future

A cold wind blew into Penn State and every other college campus in the country last weekend. But the chill is more than just a sign of winter's tightening grip; it's a sign that our colleges and universities aren't doing their job.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching issued a harsh critique of the nation's undergraduate colleges on Saturday that said today's universities are better at handing out degrees than at educating students.

The report addressed nearly every aspect of today's higher education system, including the Scholastic Aptitude Test, athletic recruiting and training budgets, and a proposal to require all seniors to write a thesis before graduation. Many of its 83 recommendations hit home here at Penn State.

The report criticized major research institutions that push professors toward research when they would rather teach. At Penn State, there is clearly a

need for a better balance between teaching and research.

Undergraduates obviously lose out on the education process when their teachers are too wrapped up in the push to publish to care about them. At the very least, universities should equally emphasize teaching and research from college professors. Good instructors and researchers should be allowed to focus on their areas of expertise in and away from the classroom and should be rewarded for their work.

As the report urged, universities should fight overspecialization of students, require upperclassman to take seminars in which social and ethical aspects of their major field would be explored, and bolster general education requirements, something Penn State is already in the process of establishing.

The foundation studied the educational programs at the nation's 2,000 four-

year colleges that enroll more than 5 million students — students who may not be getting the education they need or deserve. These and probably more students face increases in tuition and living expenses each year for an education that may not be worth what they are paying.

While portions of the report seem harsh, improvements in undergraduate education — at Penn State and at every other university in the nation — are clearly needed.

We hope administrators and officials at Penn State — as well as those at other colleges — take the foundation's report to heart.

They should look at the recommendations and see which apply to their universities and then take the necessary steps to make the changes. In the end, improvements in the higher education system will not only benefit students and universities, but will also benefit society as a whole.

Students should take advantage of all the dining halls open in their area when they find themselves waiting in line. On the particular night we mentioned in our previous letter, 800 people went to dining hall "C" while only 300 went to "A." We decided that more signs could be posted to remind students of this.

The ovens in Johnston Dining Hall will be used to aid those in Findlay with heavy dinners.

At the end of our meeting everyone seemed pleased with our discussion and its results. Once again, we encourage other students to first talk with the supervisor of their dining hall whenever they run into problems. It worked very well for us.

reader opinion

Save the squirrels

In the three years I have been at University Park, hardly a day has gone by that I haven't seen someone watching, photographing or feeding the squirrels of State College. It has always amazed me the amount of trust they have for you as they come up and eat out of your hand.

On Wednesday, Oct. 29, someone abused the trust by hanging a squirrel from a noose and threw the body into the gutter on Southgate Drive. The enjoyment of these animals is our privilege and responsibility.

If you have any information regarding this or any other incident of cruelty to animals, please contact the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Centre Hall at 364-1725. But for now, take some time out today to stop and notice the squirrels.

Several weeks ago, Sen. Robert Dole appeared with Rep. Bill Cinger. The Daily Collegian devoted the top half of its front page to this visit. I could find nothing newsworthy about Dole's visit except he can't tell jokes as well as President Reagan.

One week later, Estela Rocha, a Nicaraguan teacher, spoke to a group of similar size. She gave first hand accounts of life in northern Nicaragua, specifically of U.S.-sponsored war waged against everyday people. Not a single word was written in the Collegian about this speech.

This type of selective reporting is typical of our "free press." Two weeks previously, the Collegian elected to ignore the visit of Nicaraguan priest Bernard in day care, I find it outrageous that even on campus, preschoolers lack the funding they deserve while our government funds Contra attacks on day care centers, schools and health centers in Nicaragua.

The irony is clear; even as the nation's teachers receive grossly inadequate salaries (teachers in the Cedar Day Care start at \$6,000 to \$8,000 per year depending on qualifications). They, as taxpayers, fund the killing of teachers in Nicaragua.

With disinformation being an admitted tactic of the Reagan administration, the CIA continually sows propaganda in the world's newspapers (see the September/October edition of *Common Sense*), substantial evidence of administration law breaking regarding Contra aid, and a Congress lacking the will they had during Watergate, a vigilant press is demanded. Your silence is complicit with the forces of ignorance pushing us into a new "Vietnam."

Terry Griffith
Class of 1972

Ignorance

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Dining response

On Friday, Oct. 24 our letter was printed in *The Daily Collegian* that pointed out Findlay Dining Hall's difficulty toward the end of dinners. The same day we received a letter from Ursula Guss, assistant director of Food Services, to set up a time when we could meet and discuss our suggestions to cope with the problem.

We met with Guss and Dale Kuhns, Findlay Dining Hall supervisor, and Richard Donahoon, assistant Findlay Dining Hall supervisor, the following Wednesday. Their first message was that they are always open to suggestions. Anyone, anywhere across campus, is welcome to see the supervisor of the dining hall they attend whenever they have questions or comments.

After this was clear, we turned to the suggestions we had for students who receive sub-par meals when they arrive late. Our first idea of further research was unnecessary; Kuhns was well prepared with pages-on-pages of statistics Food Services keeps for every meal.

Further discussion showed the solution to our complaint already existed. We came to the consensus these two things should be done:

- Students should take advantage of all the dining halls open in their area when they find themselves waiting in line.
- The ovens in Johnston Dining Hall will be used to aid those in Findlay with heavy dinners.

At the end of our meeting everyone seemed pleased with our discussion and its results. Once again, we encourage other students to first talk with the supervisor of their dining hall whenever they run into problems. It worked very well for us.

Ken Shoegrass
sophomore-engineering
freshmen-engineering

Lady Lion?

Several weeks ago, I saw Penn State and State College for the first time and was most admiring of the spirit of the Penn State students at the game — to say nothing of that terrific team itself.

My female soul was appalled when

dealing with dangerous criminals who just have to be children."

Terry Roach's prosecutor expressed a similar sentiment: "If we're going to have the death penalty, he (Roach) ought to be put to death."

In the words of David Bruck, a criminal defense lawyer, "Even countries with abominable human rights records recognize that principle (that people should not be executed for crimes committed as minors)" and "a decent society places certain absolute limits on the punishments it inflicts — such restraint is required by our self-respect."

Even if the controversy is eventually decided in the favor of those who see we should not execute our children, it will be too late for many of those who are now on death row.

Like young Ronald Ward, many of them have reached the end of the appeals process and can do nothing but wait to die while adults sit back and let it happen or idly debate the issue: do we really want to execute our children?

Angela Vietto is a sophomore majoring in English and a columnist for *The Daily Collegian*. His column appears every other Thursday.

opinions

New right paranoia: The bus of Morality makes a stop at the Betty Ford Celebrity Rehabilitation Center

I can still hardly believe it, it all seems so much like a perverse, twisted dream. The first thing I can remember was waking up on the cold stone floor of what seemed to be a prison cell. The walls were dancing, the floor was spinning and my head was pounding all over. I groped my way to the bunk against the wall. It appeared that I had not slept on it at all, spending the night on hard stone.

I crawled to the bars of the door, stuck my head through. "Where the hell am I?" I cried at the top of my lungs.

A head popped out through the bars of the cell to my left and stared curiously at me. It had long, flowing hair and a beard, both dark and graying, wire-rimmed spectacles, and a tie-dyed bandana. For cripes' sake, I thought, it's Jerry Garcia.

"Hey cat, that scream was heavy. What's the problem, man?"

So I asked him as calmly as I could where the hell I was.

"Dude," he began, "we're doing time at the Betty Ford Celebrity Rehab, man."

My insides were screaming for a mental timeout. The last thing I remembered was peacefully going to sleep in my room, and now I wake up in a jail cell next to a cult figure/LSD merchant.

"Hold it," I said, "I'm in no need of rehabilitation and I'm not a celebrity either."

"Sure you are, man. Those groovy curls of yours get further around than you



"Hey, Jerry, what're they gonna do to you?"

"Trial, man. I gotta take a bottle test against Ed Meese and that's gonna be used as evidence."

"Holy hell, Jerry, what're you gonna do?"

"Oh, it's cool man. The Bhagwan works here as an orderly. He'll just switch our bottles." I couldn't help but chuckle at that thought.

An angry groaning came from the cell on my right. We both looked over, but I couldn't see who occupied it.

"Who's that, I asked."

"That's Ozzy Osbourne, man. You know him?"

"Yeah, yeah. Why's he here?"

"Backmasking, man. And evil satanic lyrics. You should see it. They drip his melted records onto his bare back and douse him with holy water."

"My, God," I said, appalled.

"Oh, they got something bigger planned for him, man, cause he won't give in. Rumor has it there's a stake set up outside."

"You've got to be kidding."

"No way, man. It gets better. See that guy across the hall, that's Bob Guccione. Jerry Falwell got hold of a film of him, three teenage girls and a dog."

"Ooh," I winced. "Don't even tell me what they're gonna do to him."

The troll took me to a small, white room with a doctor's table... I noticed what had to be the world's largest enema bag, currently empty, hanging from a stand. Next I felt those damn hands lift the back of my gown up and out of the way.

"Yeah, well, I gotta crash, man. Talk to you later, dude."

That seemed like a good idea. My head was still pounding mercilessly and my body was sore all over. Maybe if I slept hard enough I'd wake up back home.

No such luck. A few hours later, a rattling on my cell door woke me. A haggard old nurse with icy, bony hands tossed a white hospital gown at me and told me to put it on. She said "my time had come" and then walked away, the ugly old troll.

"Looks like this is it, man. Good luck," Jerry said.

I turned to him and with a pleading and philosophical look all around, raised my arms and asked, "Why?"

"It's the New Right Paranoia, man. Looks like the bus of Morality is making a stop at your station."

The troll returned, shoved me in her desired direction. The touch of her ice-cold, gnarly hand on my bare butt nearly sent me

jumping through the ceiling.

She took me to a small, white room with a doctor's table to which I was tied face-down and spread-eagled. I noticed what had to be the world's largest enema bag, currently empty, hanging from a stand. Next I felt those damn hands lift the back of my gown up and out of the way.

A green-gowned figure entered the room. He stared coldly into my eyes and dropped his surgeon's mask. My God! It was a man who looked like President Jortani!

Laughing wickedly, he grabbed the enema bag and held it before my eyes. Then, with an evil cackle, he produced a bottle of Everclear Grain Alcohol from beneath his gown and slowly filled up the bag.

That's when I fainted.

Todd S. Christopher is a sophomore majoring in English and a columnist for the *Daily Collegian*. His column appears every other Thursday.

the Collegian

Thursday, Nov. 6, 1986
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Anita C. Huslin
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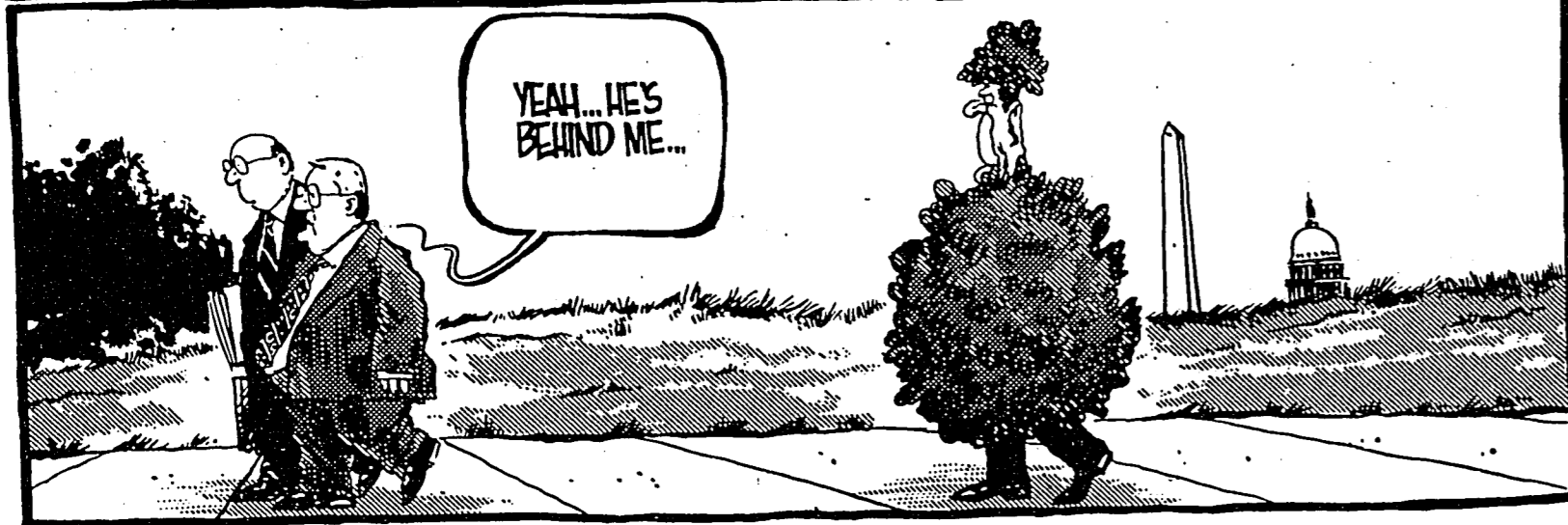
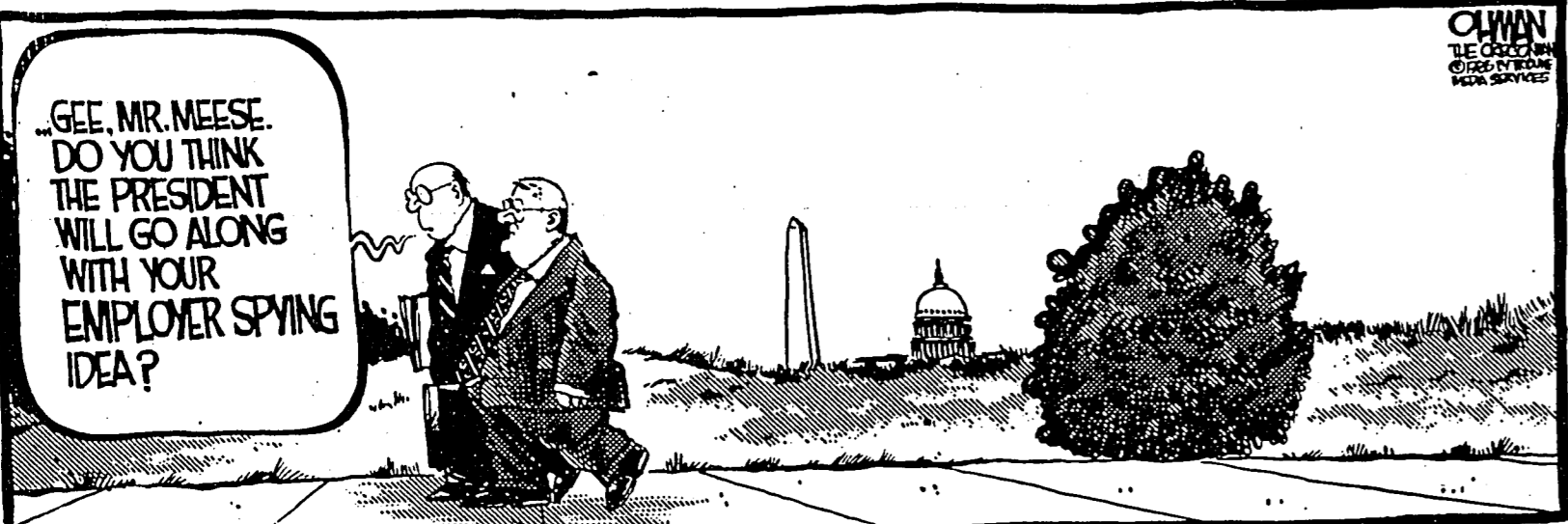
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editorial policy and University affairs. Letters must be typewritten, double-spaced and no longer than one-half page. Forums must also be typewritten, double-spaced and no longer than three pages.

Students' letters should include sender standing, major and campus of the writer. Letters from alumni should include the major and year of graduation of the writer. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification of the letter. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Names may be withheld on request.

The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters for length and to reject letters if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste. Because of the number of letters received, the Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all the letters it receives. Letters may also be selected for publication in *The Weekly Collegian*. All letters received become the property of Collegian Inc.

Letters and forums from University Park and State College: Please deliver any submissions in person at the office of The Daily Collegian, 126 Carnegie Building.



Execution of children:

Even countries like Libya and South Africa set their death penalty age-limit at 18

Ronald Ward is 16-years-old and he has known for a year that he's going to die. He thought the end would come in April, but he was spared a little more time. Now he's not sure how long he has left.

No, he doesn't have cancer, leukemia or AIDS, and he certainly isn't going to get a trip to Disney World from the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Ronald Ward is on death row in Arkansas.

Although he maintains that he was forced by two adults to commit the murders, he was convicted of murdering two elderly women and a 12-year-old boy in 1985. Had Ward committed this crime somewhere else — for instance Wisconsin, Libya or even South Africa — he would not face death.

In Arkansas, as in 29 other American states, underage criminals can be executed, a practice almost unknown anywhere else in the world. In 16 of these states, there is no minimum age at all for the death penalty. Theoretically, in these states, even a six-year-old child could be executed.

The other 14 states have a set minimum which is under 18, with 14 being the most popular, and the lowest being Indiana's 10. There are currently 30 young people facing execution around the United States for crimes committed as juveniles.

Why, if even countries with human rights



records as wonderful as South Africa and Libya set the legal age of execution at 18, do Americans execute our children?

One of the most common opinions is represented by Oklahoma's Assistant Attorney General, David Lee, who in 1981 argued in favor of the death penalty for juveniles. "If it's a horrible murder, I don't see why they shouldn't receive the death penalty."

Oh, come on! Show me a murder that isn't horrible! Any murder, even if it's clean, fast and painless, is the greatest crime we can commit. Following Lee's logic, all murderers should be executed, but we see this is never the case, now is it?

But maybe you would like to know about the gruesome crimes these children commit anyway, so you can decide for yourself whether they're as deserving of the death

penalty as the crimes of many murderers who get nothing more than extended prison stays.

In 1977, when Terry Roach was 17, he took part in the murders of two young people, a 14-year-old girl and her boyfriend. All three of the murderers were under the influence of drugs at the time of the murders. (I will mention in the interest of accuracy that the girl was also raped. Although I do not consider it relevant, since no rapist would ever be executed on the strength of rape alone, even if he ruined the lives of a hundred women.)

Despite the fact Roach was borderline mentally retarded and was shown to be suffering from the early stages of a disease which affects the mind's ability to judge, he was executed for his part in this crime by the state of South Carolina in January 1986. Wayne Thompson was only 15 when he took part in a murder which arose from a violent argument, and in which several adults took part. For his part in this crime, Thompson has spent the last three years on Oklahoma's death row, awaiting the lethal injection which will technically end his life.

In reality, his life ended at 15.

Wisconsin senator who is fighting to lower his state's legal age of execution to 14, says of the death row children: "We're

dealing with dangerous criminals who just have to be children."

Terry Roach's prosecutor expressed a similar sentiment: "If we're going to have the death penalty, he (Roach) ought to be put to death."

In the words of David Bruck, a criminal defense lawyer, "Even countries with abominable human rights records recognize that principle (that people should not be executed for crimes committed as minors)" and "a decent society places certain absolute limits on the punishments it inflicts — such restraint is required by our self-respect."

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mediated murder, would seem more likely to one day become a law-abiding citizen than people like Charles Manson or David Berkowitz, neither of whom, incidentally, face the death penalty."

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