

editorial opinion

Practice what you teach

At the onset of each semester, faculty members outline the consequences students will face if they are caught cheating. Students are told that academic integrity is one of the most important lessons of university life.

Student cheating, however, is not the only black veil shrouding the academic integrity of this university.

On occasion, faculty members have also succumbed to academic dishonesty.

Cheating, dishonesty and plagiarism cannot be condoned from anyone. But, when faculty members — figureheads and leaders at this University — claim credit for work that does not belong to them they are setting a poor example for students.

According to a recent survey published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, one-third of scientists surveyed at a major university suspect a colleague of fraud. Examples of such behavior varied in form and degree.

At Penn State, Charles Hosler, University vice president for research and dean of the graduate school, said he knows of three faculty members asked to resign in the past 10 years because of academic misconduct. Additional cases may not have come to his attention if they were resolved individually, he added.

Three cases in 10 years may not sound like an alarming statistic, but it represents a significant blemish on the integrity of this University — a blemish which may grow larger still if the University administration persists in its "publish or perish" mindset.

In recent years, faculty members have come under considerable pressure to conduct research and publish their findings to meet tenure requirements. Though Univer-

sity President Bryce Jordan has repeatedly stated that the primary function of faculty members is to teach well and advance the forefronts of knowledge, the emphasis placed on Penn State's ranking among research universities nationwide appears to transmit a different message.

Perhaps then, it is time for the administration to take a good, hard look at the pressure it has placed on faculty members to produce research-oriented material and uphold the University's ranking.

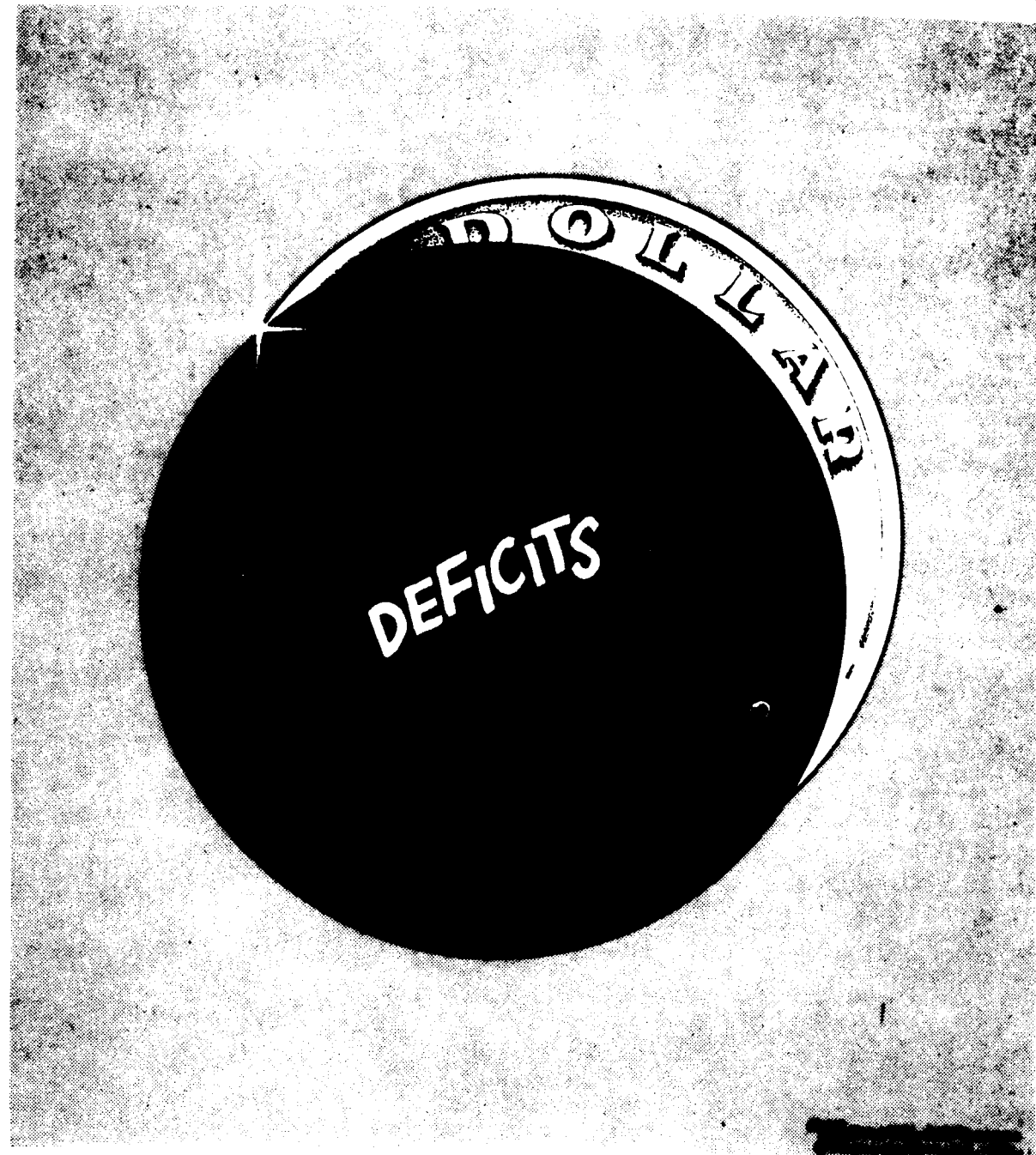
Penn State's policy for dealing with offenders merits another look as well. In the three instances of academic misconduct mentioned above, the faculty members were asked to quietly resign so their dishonesty would not taint the University's name.

"When you publicly punish a faculty member for fraud, you're punishing the University as well," Hosler explained. "I don't feel its the role of the University to publicly punish people."

Jordan concurred with Hosler stating that the University's policy teaches students to follow federal laws on privacy rights and teaches them to be humane.

That policy, however, fails in its primary function — to deter other faculty members from falling prey to the same misconduct. By shielding those who are caught from the public eye, it leaves no impression on potential offenders.

If the University wants faculty members to recognize the importance of academic integrity, it should make every effort to show that it is serious about cracking down on misconduct. But to emphasize that concern, it must be willing to soften its "publish or perish" mindset.



reader opinion

On the gulf

"It's time to leave the Persian Gulf." According to whom? This response is in regard to an editorial opinion article in the Oct. 22 issue of *The Daily Collegian*. Ronald Reagan and U.S. military leaders deployed American naval forces to the Persian Gulf for a reason: to ensure neutrality and free, unmolested navigation of the seas.

In the War of 1812, and again in World War I, the United States involved itself in conflict to protect freedom of the seas, ensuring free navigation for all nations. The goal of this nation has not changed.

The editorial statement is full of biased exaggerations of American involvement in the Persian Gulf conflict. The article states that "Iran persists in attacking U.S. warships . . ." however, there have been no documented instances of Iranian attacks on U.S. warships. The same line goes on to say that the United States is "shooting down jet fighters and bombing radar stations." This is another exaggeration — although missiles were fired against Iranian planes, none were shot down. The radar stations were given ample warning to evacuate personnel. There were no violations of the explicit "rules of engagement."

Is the author of the editorial in question naive enough to believe that withdrawing U.S. naval forces from the Persian Gulf will result in cessation of terroristic activities by Iran? If the United States doesn't stop these terrorist attacks, who will? Maintained American naval presence is the only deterrent to the continued terrorist attacks made by Iran on international shipping in neutral sea lanes. For example, Iranian gunboats fired on an American observation helicopter, and American Special Forces sank the aggressor gunboats. Since then, no American aircraft have come under fire.

The editorial also criticizes the operation against Grenada and accuses the president of misleading Congress. Left out is the fact that Grenada was a completely

successful mission, due mostly to its secrecy and the "element of surprise." It is unlikely that the mission would have been so successful had the legislative branch and the media, hence the public, been informed of the operation ahead of time.

Throughout history, this fine nation has sought to protect neutrality of the seas. Removing naval forces from the Persian Gulf now would indicate that the United States is no longer seeking neutrality of the seas.

Matthew Brott
sophomore-geoscience
James Iannucci
sophomore-mechanical engineering
Randal Tokar
sophomore-history

Arias' prize

Unlike Rick Wetzel (Oct. 22 reader opinion), I was happy to see Arias win the Nobel Peace Prize, although I fear he won by default. It has been a few years since someone from our side of the Atlantic won the prize outright, so a recipient in this hemisphere was predictable. Who, then, in the Americas deserves the highest honor in pursuit of peace?

Those who currently represent the "U.S. interest" in Central America, or for that matter, those who have represented it for the past 140 years, have pursued many things, but "peace" would be a grotesque euphemism for all of them, by my reading.

In the 1850s, a century before Bolsheviks stormed the Caribbean, U.S. Marines set afire San Juan del Norte out of retaliation for Nicaraguan insults to a U.S. ambassador. Later that decade a deluded American appointed himself president of Nicaragua. Once deposed, he tried the same in Honduras. From 1912 to 1925, then 1926 to 1933, the Marines occupied Nicaragua (just south of the Halls

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of Montezuma), imposing law and order (peace?) by military force.

Only a man named Sandino and a few followers complained that Nicaraguans should make decisions for Nicaragua. So before the Marines left, they organized a National Guard led by Somoza, a U.S.-educated profiteer who had Sandino shot in the back after signing a truce with him. Somoza's son maintained ties with Washington, D.C. while benefitting almost exclusively from his productive nation, until not even Americans could stomach his heartless neglect for his people.

In the 1980s, the United States has turned to funding counterrevolutionaries that have little popular backing, less civilian leadership and no party platform. "Sure, it's not very peaceful," the argument goes, "but we have to stop the communists."

Assuming Communist expansion is ample justification for war, we may exclude the politburo and Castro from the Nobel list. But just war is, after all, war, so Kirkpatrick qualifies only for a thousand cheerleaders in Managua and a unit of Contras as her namesake.

So who is left to pursue the cause of peace? Those who suffer most by the lack thereof: the Central Americas. By choosing Arias, the Nobel commission implicitly acknowledged that as long as (North) American blood is not being spilled, the United States will not, as a priority interest, pursue peace in the region. Also acknowledged is the reality that the protagonists of peace in Central America must be Central Americans (in the United States we call this self-determination).

Unfortunately, these nations also will need the cooper-

ation of nations whose primary goals do not include peace. But rare events such as Nobel announcements perform the public service of distinguishing between those who prioritize peace and those who prioritize alternative ideologies.

There are apparently those who still believe that democratic (or, more accurately, anti-communist) ideology is necessarily compatible with peace; however, our "democratic" policies since 1850 have failed to bear this out. Furthermore, insofar as our blood does not currently stain the soil, maybe it is time to entertain the ideology of those whose blood does — the Central Americans.

Dave Dixon
graduate-political science

Booting experience

I wish to respond to Matthew Beechold's letter of Oct. 22 which criticized Todd S. Christopher's column of Oct. 16 called, "The art of booting."

I suffered from nausea and vomiting on the Wednesday and Thursday of the week in which the column appeared. Needless to say, it was not a pleasant experience. I was touched by the column because it made me view my suffering in a totally different light. I would like to thank Todd for reaching out with his thought-provoking, light-hearted insight. Todd's column made my day.

Robert Luysterborghs
sophomore-administration of justice

The U.S. presidency

Except for a true love of country, what would drive a person to serve in the White House?

During the 1976 presidential elections, our sixth grade social science class did an extensive (extensive for 12 year olds) study of the United States' presidency. One of our projects was to team up with another classmate, assume the roles of president and vice president, and develop a political platform. I took the initiative and became president. I figured such a brilliant mind and latent leadership abilities as mine should not be wasted on the vice presidential position, which my partner Cindy was quite content to assume.

Then we had to develop a platform. This was where the trouble began. I brought up a few issues and asked Cindy how she felt about them. "I dunno. You're the president. You decide," she replied. She was busy flirting with Dave J. — the sixth grade smooth operator. I decided. She said, "That's fine." Then when I stood up before our class to present our platform, Cindy continually interjected, "I never said that." I came off looking like a liar and an ass. Cindy and Dave went to the Halloween dance together. I decided right there and then to cross "President" off my list of potential careers.

The president's job is an awesome responsibility and a thankless occupation. I hon-

estly cannot imagine why anyone would want to be president. With the title comes responsibilities that cannot even begin to be covered by one mortal. I can't balance my checkbook much less the national budget. (Although I do have lots of experience in deficit spending!)

The worst part of being president would be the constant scrutiny of every possible aspect of one's life by an entire nation. In what other occupation does a man have to go on TV to explain to the nation about his colon surgery? Somehow I think the media got a little out of hand when they started showing anatomical diagrams of the surgery on the evening news. Tell me the president is doing well or that he died, but leave his colon out of it! Would you expect Joe Swartz down the street to whip out anatomical drawings and give you the play by play when he has surgery? And you probably know Joe a bit better than the president.

More recently Nancy Reagan's breast has been front-page news. Call me a prude, but I really don't see how this is anyone but Ron and Nancy's business. I'm sure this is a traumatic enough experience for any woman, but to have the whole nation looking at her on television and thinking, "Nancy only

has one breast now," is a bit overwhelming. Despite my sympathy, I had to laugh when I read a letter from a friend who was writing as he watched the news.



"Update on Nancy: They think they got it all, Ron brought her pink roses and Don Regan volunteered to cut off the other one. (That was sick and cruel. Also humorous. That's the way life is.)" he wrote.

The president assumes all of this as part of his job. He also knows that when he opens his morning paper he will most likely see himself attacked in political cartoons and editorials. Can you imagine being caricatured in a national publication regularly? I look grim enough in real life — I'd hate for a cartoonist to get a hold of my weaker features and exaggerate them. And the

writer correspondingly attacking my weaker actions and character flaws would not help my self-esteem.

But, you protest, the man is an asshole. I will agree with you to a point there, but most leaders come off as assholes in one way or another. It's the only way they can get up in the morning. They must possess a certain strength, perchance blindness, to the criticism bordering on abuse by the masses or they would have severe persecution complexes. They must also possess a certain "take charge" attitude, often interpreted as a spastic impulsiveness.

When I think of the presidents or leaders of the various clubs and organizations I've been involved with, the majority could be classified as assholes to a point. I would not want to be close friends with these types. (They would make me feel nervous or inadequate.) Still I applaud their enthusiasm, misguided or misinformed as it may occasionally be, and I'm content to let them run the show while I sit in the back of the room and read my economics textbook. I may grumble and moan at some of my leaders' decisions, but I will not attack the character or integrity of this figurehead, especially if I voted for him. Neither will I criticize and berate every decision he

makes just because I didn't vote for him. The presidential figure is the one symbol of those he represents and should be supported as such.

I don't mean that all of a president's policies and viewpoints should be accepted as the final word and opinion with which all the constituents must agree. Our government is built upon the principle of letting everyone have their say.

We deserve the best our country can offer in a president — a virtual superhero is what we expect, but we should not be suprised when our leader occasionally gets trapped within the confines of humanity. It's a job where the headaches seem to far outweigh the glory. Maybe I'm an idealist (I've been called worse) but the only motivation I can imagine that would drive a person to run for president is a true love for their country and an honest desire to improve the quality of life for all its citizens. Approaches to this improvement vary in concept and success rate, but the motivation behind the efforts cannot be faulted.

Laura L. May is a senior majoring in animal bioscience and is a columnist for *The Daily Collegian*. Her column appears every other Monday.