

Editorial Opinion

Clear focus

Administrators must solidify plans for building a new cultural center

The University has finally gotten the ball rolling on something they promised students almost three years ago — a new Paul Robeson Cultural Center.

In 1988, administrators accepted a list of demands from about 170 students who took over the Telecommunications Building in protest of Penn State's indifference to minority concerns.

After three years of stalling, Penn State has wisely decided to put \$2 million toward expanding the HUB, and more importantly, to building a new cultural center.

The University plans to raise the additional \$16 million needed to complete the \$18 million dollar project by lobbying the state and conducting fund raisers.

Although the two projects will be linked financially, administrators must remember their original promise and to whom they made it. Hopefully both projects will be completed sooner by pooling funds, but a new cultural center is more pressing.

The cultural center is far too small to meet the needs of the many organizations that hold functions there, and while this is also true of the HUB, the temporary structure of the center itself is out of date.

During any stage of planning and construction, the University should not bypass the African-American community. African-American students and faculty must be a part of the process if the new center's structure, lay out and interior design is to reflect the African-American community and culture. The center should not be designed like other University buildings with traditional European architecture.

In order to make the project successful student organizations must continue trying to work with the administration on this project.

Although the University has finally put some funding toward its 1988 promise of rebuilding the cultural center, it must make sure that it finishes what it started.

'100-hour budget'

Vietnam syndrome has domestic part

In the lightning-quick Persian Gulf War, President Bush made sure the mistakes of Vietnam weren't repeated. Popular support was rallied, a clear objective stated. Exulted Bush: "By God, we've kicked the Vietnam syndrome once and for all."

But the Vietnam syndrome includes a domestic component that must also be kicked: a federal budget that hasn't been balanced since 1969, a Congress that stealthily increases revenues by slipping new programs into 2,000-page spending

bills, and a chief executive gun-shy when it comes to imposing spending and tax cuts.

In his budget battle this year, Bush should imitate the duration of the "100-hour war" in the Persian Gulf. A "100-hour budget" deal would force Congress to make tough decisions or face the wrath of the American people being brought down on it by their president.

The preceding is excerpted from a March 8 editorial by The News Herald, Panama City, Fla. The opinion does not necessarily reflect that of The Daily Collegian.

the Collegian

Monday, March 18, 1991
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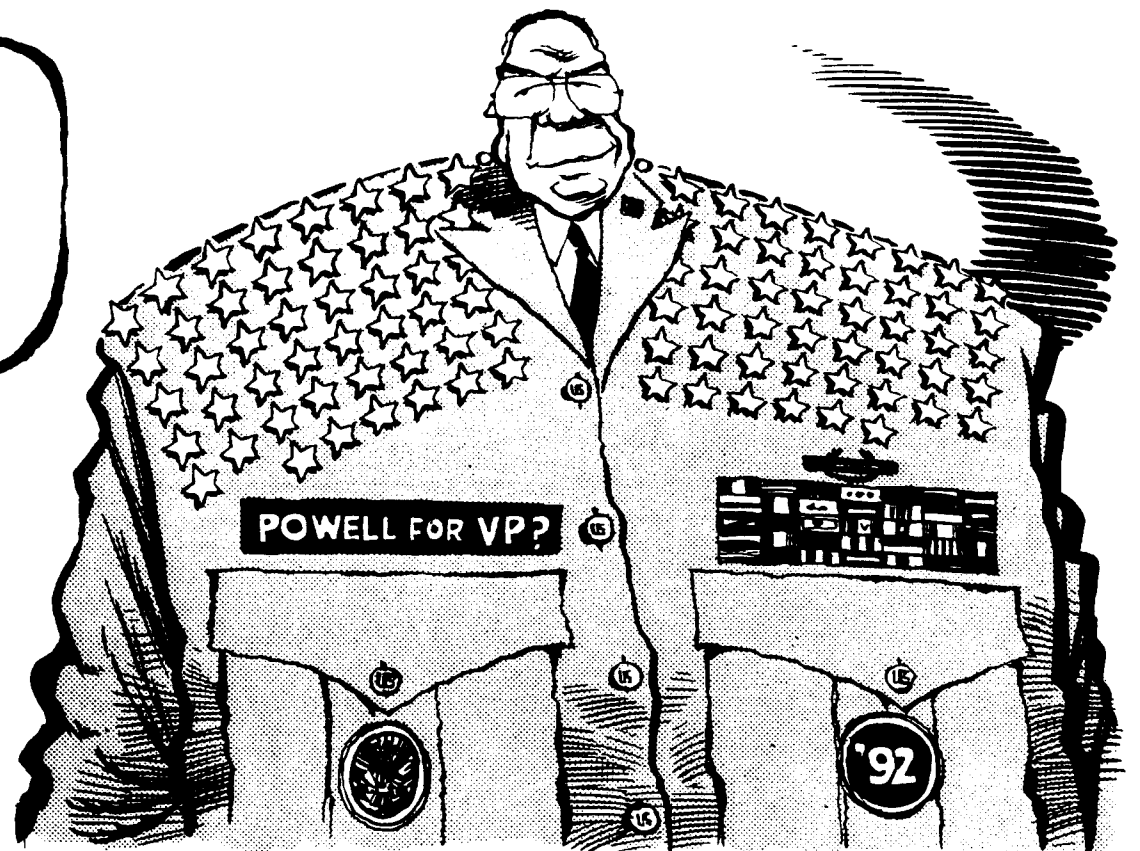
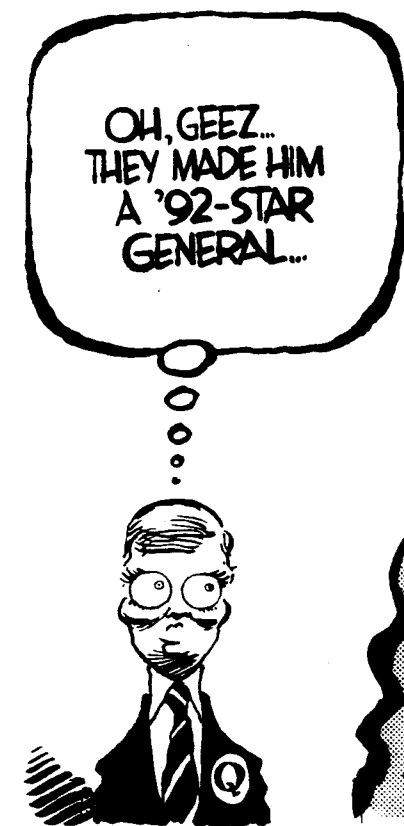
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Reader Opinion

Hard work obscured

Certainly, as the editorial of Feb. 27 indicated, more programming can be offered for Black History Month by the University. Improvement can always take place. However, while the offerings of this year's Black History Month program may have been less in number than in past years, the editorial glossed over what had been done by the University.

The funding for this year's programs came from University resources such as Black Studies, the Paul Robeson Cultural Center, the Program Development Fund of SORC, and Student Activities and Religious Affairs. Without those monies, which covered honoraria, rental of facilities and equipment, transportation, room and board for guests, etc., the programs of this month would not have happened.

The Office of Student Activities and Religious Affairs began thinking about the idea of a commemoration of Malcolm X back in August and realized the Black Caucus was brainstorming about the same. Thus these two offices began in September to plan the collaborative, three-day commemoration of feature-length films, panel discussions and lectures of Feb. 18, 20 and 21.

With consideration of the theme for Black History Month the panel discussion segment addressed Malcolm X's legacy to black women's empowerment, among other topics.

Also obscured by the Feb. 27 editorial, which stated that the focus of Black History Month "has remained almost exclusively on Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X..." was the fact that no programs in recent memory had been done at all on Malcolm X. Moreover, nothing on the official Black History Month calendar dealt with Rev. King.

Yet it is agreed upon that other deserving historical personages and periods should also be highlighted. I invite the writer of the editorial to join in on the planning for such programming with the Black Caucus, the planners of the Black History Month/Black Arts Festival, student and administrative groups.

As regards the invitation issued by the editorial to faculty and administrators to "play a more prominent role in participating on panel discussions" and plan events, some have already accepted that role.

The aforementioned Malcolm X panel discussion included the acting director of Black Studies, the assistant to the dean of the Smeal College of Business and the vice provost for underrepresented groups. Two University departments, including the Office of Religious Affairs, appropriately assumed a large portion of the cost for the overall event and arranged for much of its media coverage.

As a result, local and out-of-town papers such as the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette covered this

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WRITE

event. Also, a radio station in New York interviewed the director of student activities and religious affairs about the commemoration. The interview was broadcast as far south as Alabama, leading to contacts with Talladega College. Talladega requested information on the Malcolm X event to justify their lobbying with the U.S. Postal Service for a Malcolm X commemorative stamp.

Also, flyers were distributed to dorms and campus bulletin boards by the staff of this office. Due to these contacts and the aggressive person-to-person promotions of the Black Caucus, a predominantly black audience during the Malcolm X events also included a sizeable number of white persons. Their presence counters the editorial's assertion that "the specific lack of white student attendance at these programs is also disturbing."

Let us fall into a classic worst-case scenario of "the wrong people fighting for the wrong people for the wrong reasons," let us get the facts about what the University does for Black History Month and with minority students all year long.

At the same time let us support existing programs. Let us also transcend the luxury of bitter protest to the higher ground of hard work and careful planning for new programs addressing overlooked persons and periods.

The challenge of the Feb. 27 editorial, "Anyone can talk about the need for equality and peace. But actions are the barometer of progress," is a two-edged sword, cutting in the direction of not only the University but also its students.

Kenneth Clarke
assistant director, Office of Religious Affairs

The child within

Being raped would be one of the most horrible things that could happen to anybody. I would not wish it on my worst enemy.

However, I must state with clearest conviction that abortion does not solve any woman's feeling of trauma, despair or fear. Rather, abortion compounds those problems with deeper feelings of being pressured by misguided family and friends, being financially exploited by the abortion clinic, being physically assaulted by the abortionist's instruments, with additional medical complications to follow. All these negative consequences may occur and all the while you still know that you have done harm to another completely innocent bystander — the child within.

Many people wonder what pro-lifers do for women in crisis pregnancies. Many pro-life groups exist primarily to help women in crisis. A woman does not need or even really want to get an abortion. What she needs is emotional support, financial stability, medical attention and a home to live in for as long as she needs support. If you are in a crisis pregnancy or have recently had an abortion and don't know where to turn, call the local Crisis Pregnancy Center or Birthright. They're there to help any woman in need of support. They care about both women and children.

While I know that no rape victim is responsible for being physically violated against her will, how much more innocent is the life growing within her? No, he or she simply becomes the second innocent victim of rape. How many of us today know for a fact that we were joyfully welcome from the first moment of our conception? I believe a silent, unknowing majority of us were conceived in less than ideal circumstances.

I was adopted shortly after birth. The only thing that I know about my biological mother is that she was experiencing a crisis pregnancy. That could have been anything: a teen pregnancy, single motherhood, financial distress, and possibly even rape. Yes, I may have been conceived during a rape.

Today, 20 years later, while I feel no need to find my biological mother, I owe her a great deal — I owe her my life. If I ever do meet her, all I can ever say to her is, "Thank you. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to live." My biological mother gave me such an awesome gift; the gift of life and for that I am eternally grateful. Without her I would not be here today, and you would not have had the opportunity to read this letter.

Maria Pardini
junior-elementary education

From ties to slogans: Trying to understand USG candidates

If you are not planning to vote in the upcoming Undergraduate Student Government elections and are sick of USG politics, do not read this column.

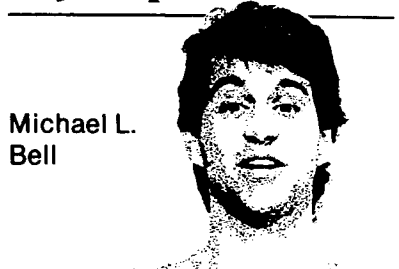
This is a service-oriented piece about the approaching elections. Because many of you out there care very little for USG politics (probably for good reasons,) this column will be an easy-to-read explanation of the poor folks running for USG president and vice president.

Before I get into the messy details though, I feel the need to explain one important point. These are my opinions based on what I saw at the first debate last Thursday. I tend to see things very differently than most people, but I've never been convicted of libel.

Roger A. Czulewicz / Janine Salomone: This is the only ticket without a neat slogan. Their basic working philosophy is the "Administration should work for the students, not vis-a-versa." A bit idealistic and wordy, but it might work.

Here are some of the problems Roger and Janine would tackle: inadequate and unsafe parking, misdiagnosis and understaffing at Ritenour Health Cen-

My Opinion



Michael L. Bell

ter, an opened University budget and improved USG communication.

One bonus for this ticket is the fact that neither Roger nor Janine have been tainted by past USG involvement.

A former USG-Seth Williams groupie told me he would support this ticket if it weren't for their lack of experience. But this activist-junkie's head is so cluttered with neo-liberal chants that he can't see the real meaning of past USG participation — an open and oozing sore on a person's political future.

Interesting Note: Roger has one of those mouth's that is permanently set in a wry little smile. I'm not sure what this has to do with USG presidential

elections, but it makes him look quite the politician.

Courtney Malveaux / Saul Treiman: This ticket's slogan is "Penn State, it's time for you to GET SERVED." I'm sorry, but this ticket scares me.

As I watched Courtney and Saul during the debate, these were some of the words I wrote in my notebook — "the kick ass ticket," "the mean vote," "law and order."

When the candidates were asked to explain their platforms, Courtney and Saul used a furious tag-team style delivery. Courtney would shout, "Priorities..." and then lash into a tirade about USG pouring money into radical speakers. Then it would be Saul's turn to shout, "Priorities..." And so on.

From what I could understand, these are their priorities — enhancing USG Department of Women's Concerns with a focus on improving Ritenour and more women self-defense classes, establishing a Department of Student Finances to provide information about loans and financial aid and creating a Department of Academic Affairs to ensure the quality of class instruction.

In pure political terms, this is the con-

servative choice. Courtney is sick of USG catering to left-wing issues and he wants to preserve the presence and growth of ROTC on campus.

Interesting Note: If you are pissed at the world, vote for Courtney and Saul.

Leslie Osborn / Michael LaFlam: The "Power of Change" ticket.

The most interesting thing this ticket had to say was a strange analogy about USG sitting in the backseat of a taxi driven by the administration. And that's where they lost me.

This is the Politically Correct choice with a grand vision. Leslie truly believes that her leadership as USG president will last into the next decade. That's a tough order even for U.S. presidents.

And here are some of those lasting objectives: creating a Department of Higher Education Affordability to fight tuition increases and excessive fees, gaining more student representation on University policy-making committees and initiating comprehensive USG strategic planning.

Interesting Note: This is the ticket whose last names go together the best, at least to my ear. "Osborn / LaFlam"

— it just sounds political, doesn't it? And they have such a neat logo too.

Mark Stewart / Merryly Werber: This ticket's campaign slogan is the most interesting and baffling — "Creating the Impact!" It gives me a headache every time I try to figure it out.

This ticket takes the road well traveled for their operating philosophy. They see the role of USG as "service to students." I guess that's only right and proper, but it's so boring.

This ticket's campaign platform is anything but boring. You better sit down for some of these: extending meal plan points downtown, bus transportation to away football and basketball games, progressive student health services (again), 1-800 number for scheduling classes and a 24-hour computer lab downtown.

Interesting Note: Mark sported the most fashionable tie. He wore a crisp navy and green tie that conveyed the right balance of power and confidence.

Jim VanHorn / Kim Thorsen: This ticket's campaign slogan is simply insane — "Fahrvergnugen." All I see coming out of this slogan is a nasty copyright infringement battle.

This ticket promises to: establish a Student Legislative Action Coalition to lobby Harrisburg, eliminate USG bureaucracy, lobby the Board of Trustees for important changes and student control of the HUB.

VanHorn could be the most sincere candidate running for the presidential spot. But there's a good reason why people should look more closely into this ticket.

In Wednesday's edition of this newspaper, VanHorn announced he will seek a party nomination in the primary elections for State College Borough Council. I wonder what his real reasons are for running in both elections.

Interesting Note: VanHorn showed poor taste in sporting a yellow tie, which fell out of fashion after the October 1989 stock market crash.

These are the choices. When you boil out all the bullshit, there is really not that much difference between the five tickets, except over the sexual orientation clause. But that's how elections are supposed to be, right?

Michael L. Bell is a senior majoring in history and a Monday columnist for The Daily Collegian.