

Editorial Opinion

Remain in control

Students must not celebrate sports victories with unruly acts of violence

How does the saying go — it's all fun and games until someone loses an eye?

Well, how about until eight police officers are injured while trying to control a mob of "celebrating" Penn State football fans. That's exactly what ended the fun and games last week after the Kickoff Classic.

Fans may have been excited about the Lions' 34-22 win over Georgia Tech, but damaging expensive university property and running around in riotous packs was not the way to celebrate.

Some of the students who stormed Beaver Stadium in the resulting coup de goal post may claim that police officers were too violent in their crowd control techniques. However, the problem is not with the police officers using mace, but with hundreds of students, possibly intoxicated, throwing rocks and threatening police officers.

This team didn't beat perennial giant Notre Dame or cross-state rival Pitt — teams which in the past have inspired spontaneous, jubilant but nonviolent celebration.

And what happens next? The last two post-game celebrations — Notre Dame 1990 and Georgia Tech — have come after away games.

A similar home-game situation, theoretically involving more than 93,000 fans, could result in many injuries and threaten the well-being of excited but controlled spectators.

Let's be realistic.

This is September in Happy Valley. It is a time for Penn State football fans to rejoice over victories and celebrate responsibly.

People cannot act like stereotypical drunken college students after every win. And presumably the team will perform another drubbing this week.

Nobody faults spirited celebration. But spirited celebration doesn't mean destroying University property and hurting others.

Just remember the next time, or 11 times, the Lions win this year to celebrate and show school spirit — just don't do any damage. Go out and say, buy a Penn State sweatshirt.



Reader Opinion

Listen to the others

Losing one's life for refusing to cover all but one's hands and face goes well beyond being a "harsh" punishment, as I was quoted as saying in the Aug. 22 Collegian, in regard to a comment made by an Iranian official. While some Iranian women may choose to conform to religiously based dress codes, other Iranian women, both in Iran and elsewhere, have fought for the right to choose their style of dress. We must listen to the voices of all women in cultures with which we may be unfamiliar and support their rights to live as they choose.

Let's look at the reasons for this ban. One, skateboarding is cited as dangerous. How can anyone accuse skating of being dangerous when there have been no studies on it and there are no statistics to back up such a claim? In fact, many doctors have said they treat more injuries related to mainstream sports such as football than related to skateboarding.

Oh, but skateboards hit pedestrians! So do bikes, cars, buses and even Frisbees, but no one is trying to ban them on campus. And contrary to what many believe, we skateboarders do have control over those boards. We can control them as well as any rider can control his or her bicycle.

The second and greater reason is because of damage to University property. True, skateboarding does chew up the edges of a few curbs. And cars cause potholes, bike sprockets gouge the ledges in front of Old Main, football and soccer games kill the HUB lawn, automobile exhaust destroys our atmosphere, construction destroys nature.

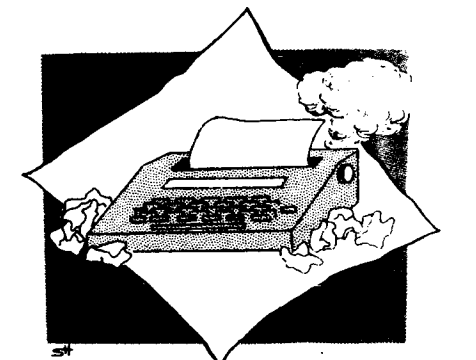
Apparently all of these types of damages are acceptable, but a chipped curb is not. The curb still functions as a curb, skating merely causes aesthetic damage. Neither of these reasons are any more deleterious than cars or bikes and even on their own, they don't justify a ban.

So why are skateboarders being singled out and banned from campus? Because we are different? Because we are "weird"? Because we are loud? Because skating is not socially accepted like football is? Because our sport doesn't have a set of rules or a scoring system? Because we are having fun and you can't let that happen? Because we are a minority and thus easy to pick on?

My guess is that all of the above reasons are true and that now this damage to benches and curbs has given the administration an excuse to do away with something they don't like. Why don't the legislators try to meet and talk with some campus skateboarders to try and work out a solution to this problem, rather than just going off and banning something they don't understand? Tell us what you want and listen to what we want, too.

If the Office of Physical Plant has a problem with us skating in certain places, tell us where we can skate. Give us a spot of our own and we'll leave yours alone. I'm ready and willing to work toward a compromise, but a skateboarding ban is unfair and unjust. I've been skating for four years, and I'm not going to stop now.

Peter A. Larsen
sophomore-architecture



Not our fault alone

I thought the only reason I would ever write an editorial to The Daily Collegian would be to criticize one of Chino Wilson's thoughtful articles, but I assumed too much.

Today, I picked up the paper and read that skateboarding may be banned on campus. I must say that I was wondering when this action would be considered by the University. Due to the "unhealthy" image skating has received over the years, it was only a matter of time until this proposition came up. What bothers me was that no unique concerns were raised in the article. I would hope that safety and damage to University property would be considered for all types of transportation on campus, not just skateboarding.

It seems to me that walkers and bikers cause more damage to University lawns than all the skaters on campus could do to a few benches or curbs. I guess the cost of thousands of pounds of grass seed and the miles of rope to protect these destroyed areas was not worth mentioning.

Are University officials willing to ban biking, or even walking on campus? No, but these same officials would consider banning another legitimate form of transportation — skateboarding.

Serious safety concerns were also voiced by two police officers. These officers act as if pedestrians are being maimed by "renegade" skateboarders. I think it is safe to say that more people are hit by bikes than skateboarders. In spite of this, the skating minority is being singled out as a hazard.

Next time I get hit by the Loop, I hope the director of University Police Services considers a complete ban on this form of transportation.

Stephen T. Gosnell
senior-agriculture business management

the Collegian

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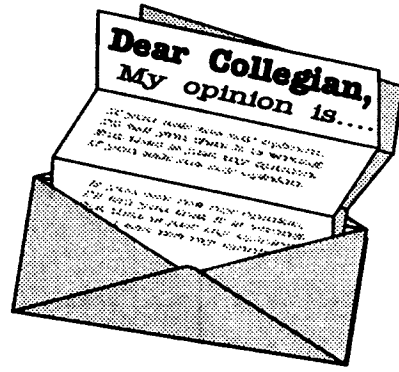
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An unhappy alumnus

I was not "Penn State Proud" this morning when I read about the "celebration" after the Kickoff Classic victory. Winning a football game is not an excuse for a drunken brawl, if, in fact, that is what happened. If these were non-students, they should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. If the arrested individuals were students, they should be suspended for a semester.

Larry M. Skvir
Class of 1970



Missing the others

I am a skateboarder. I have been riding my "little wooden toy" for over four years. It is my sport, my recreation, my hobby and my transportation. Skateboarding takes commitment, balance, coordination and dexterity. It is also a clean, ecologically sound and efficient form of transportation. Now it appears that skateboarding will soon be banned on campus.

Solving the rape crisis: a battle for both men and women

“Once a person close to you is raped, you can't view the world through the same rose-colored glasses anymore. I used to love watching new students wander around campus at the beginning of the semester. They always looked slightly dazed and amazed. Most of them really do know exactly where they're going — they just have more important things clogging their minds.”

“Wow, look at all these gorgeous women,” John marvels on his way to English 15.

“Look at all these gorgeous men,” Jane tells herself on the way to Psychology 2.

These kinds of thoughts lead to some of life's most excruciatingly joyful experiences. Unfortunately, in this twisted world that we've created, these thoughts can also lead to pain, fear and degradation.

According to USG's Department of Women's Concerns, Jane has a one-in-three chance of being raped during her lifetime and an 84 percent chance of knowing the rapist. (Quick definition — rape equals sex without consent.)

My Opinion



Nick Capo

And John might be one of those men who admit on anonymous surveys that he would rape a woman if there was no chance of being caught. Who knows?

For women, dating in the 1990s seems much more dangerous than ground combat. I need both hands to count the number of women I know who have been raped.

But we've all got hormones raging in our bloodstream, so we go to parties and bars in the hopes of meeting those gorgeous men and women. Then, we meet alcohol — the demon chemical from Hell.

If a woman doesn't know her own

limit, she literally becomes a walking target. Her impaired judgment and lack of physical coordination increase her vulnerability to a rapist. And as Claire Walsh, a Florida-based consultant on sexual assaults, warns, “A date rapist will follow through no matter what the women wants because his agenda is to get laid.”

I want to digress for a second and emphasize that fraternities are not dens of frothy-mouthed rapists. In our society, any place with lots of men and lots of alcohol isn't totally safe for women. (But members of a brotherhood often forget that their brothers must earn loyalty.)

Women have to be on guard when they go out to blow off some steam. Sure, it's not fair. But if you don't take precautions — like staying with a group of friends and drinking in moderation — the probabilities will eventually catch up with you. Until we, as men, manage to police our own ranks, you, as women, are in danger.

Not too long ago, a friend told me she'd been raped by a guy. I helped her contact a counselor for victims of sexual assaults and listened to her

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story. There really wasn't much else I could do.

She didn't want to pursue legal action for various personal reasons. And even with immediate physical evidence, getting a date-rape conviction from a jury is almost impossible (but well worth a try).

That's when I tasted the helpless rage felt by many victims, counselors, family members and lovers. They knew this guy's identity and where he lived, and they really couldn't do anything about it. (One enraged counselor basically suggested that somebody put on a ninja suit and take some “direct action.”)

Men don't have to follow Stalin's example and purge our ranks, but we must flush a dangerous myth out of the sewers of the male mind.

“No” doesn't ever mean “yes,” even if the women has had a few too many

drinks. As Dean Kilpatrick, director of the Crime Victim Research and Treatment Center at the Medical University of South Carolina, asks, “Why does a woman's having a drink give a man the right to rape her?”

Part of the problem revolves around the distortion of male sexuality. Rape is a crime of violence and somewhere along the line, dominance and sadism became tied to sexual expression for all too many men. Misogyny is so subtly ingrained into the fabric of our society that most parents still teach the “This is a man and this is a woman” myth.

The other part of the problem is, as author Barbara Ehrenreich calls it, the “Crisis in Intersex Conversation.” Nobody realized that once we dumped the baggage of sexual repression and Puritan morality (almost an oxymoron), men and

women would have to try to understand each other.

We need to rein in the sexual frustration generated by the breakdown of communication between the sexes. A difficult but necessary task in a society where many men and women can't seem to get past “the sex thing” and really talk to each other. (Banal conversation doesn't count.)

I still miss watching the river of students flow by the steps of Pattee Library, but the recurring image of a red bullseye on every third woman was too depressing. And this past Sunday, while I watched the women's volleyball team crunch Arizona, I couldn't help but wonder which four of the 12 women on the court were in for some tough times.

Maybe this mess will change once we learn to talk openly, without embarrassment or sarcasm, about sex and love.

So why don't we start talking?

Nick Capo is a non-degree graduate student and a Wednesday columnist for The Daily Collegian.