



THE DAILY
Collegian

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Letters

We want to hear your comments on our coverage, editorial decisions and the Penn State community.

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■ **Postal mail/In person**
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Letters should be about 200 words. Student letters should include class year, major and campus. Letters from alumni should include year of graduation. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Members of organizations must include their titles if the topic they write about is connected with the aim of their groups. The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters. The Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all letters it receives. Letters chosen also run on The Daily Collegian Online and may be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters become property of Collegian Inc.

Policy can adjust greek culture

Times are changing for greek life at Penn State University.

Under a new policy passed by the IFC President's Council on Nov. 10 and to be implemented next semester, fraternities will undergo some new strict regulations for social functions. In other words, the term "frat party" might evolve a bit.

Fraternities who wish to hold social functions will now be limited to three days a week: Thursday, Friday and Saturday, effectively doing away with Wednesday socials, except during select important weeks. When parties do occur, fraternities will have to adapt to new policies, including requiring photo identification for those registered on the 300-person guest list, doing away with "away bars" and hiring two professional bouncers to help maintain control of the party.

There's no question about it: If truly enforced,

the new policies are going to drastically affect the atmosphere of greek life at Penn State. IFC President Luke Pierce said that these measures are to put a focus on risk management — admirable — but we can't help but think there is also a desire for a shift away from the "Animal House"-type excessive drinking reputation that has plagued greek life for too long.

And we cannot help but suspect that the IFC saw an opening for significant reform in the wake of freshman Joe Dado's death after authorities say he drank at two fraternities and a downtown apartment.

We applaud the IFC for identifying the need for reform and taking action, but what remains to be seen is whether or not these measures are the right ones and if they are appropriately stringent. Further, will they come to fruition smoothly?

With such a handful of game-changing policies to spring on all of greek life at once, one would be naive to think that everything will be universally accepted.

We expect there to be some growing pains associated with these new rules, but we also anticipate that these new measures will weed out members of greek life who are in it for the wrong reasons.

It's also important for non-greeks who take part in the greek social scene to respect the new regulations — and those who must enforce them — when they find themselves in fraternity houses.

Luke Pierce called these new measures, "pretty groundbreaking." We agree, and we commend the effort. We hope next semester that these new policies are taken seriously and help correct the problems they were drafted to address.

Capitalism an unfair target when considering global ills

When I read Gabrielle Bedeian's Dec. 2 letter "Acting against consumerism valuable in fighting world ills," I was saddened to see a Penn State student show such a lack of basic understanding of how the world works. She asserts "consumerism and capitalism need to end before our world does" and then lists a long line of problems that she attributes to capitalism. But would any other system do better?

She mentions peak oil, which has been a "crisis" for decades despite new oil reserves being found. But even if peak oil were real, it would be a consumption problem. Capitalism, through prices set by supply and demand, actually helps to check consumption. One can hardly lay the blame for climate change on capitalism, either. Climate change is a problem because of how we power our societies, not because of the economic system we use.

She blames war, terrorism, poverty, genocide, extinction and population explosion on capitalism, but all of those problems existed long before capitalism. In fact, capitalism has helped to reduce poverty more than any other economic system. And some of the most genocidal regimes in history (e.g. National Socialist [Nazi] Germany, Soviet Russia, Communist China, North Korea) all used some form of totalitarian socialism.

A basic examination of history, and some common sense, actually show capitalism to be one of the greatest forces for good we have, as long as we ourselves use it for good (and more often than not, we do). I hope most students realize this.

Ryan Lynch
Class of 2006

'Exceptional care' necessary in discussing freedom extent

In her Nov. 30 column "Freedom shouldn't be abused," columnist Julie Wolf began with a complete misunderstanding of freedom and how the rights of "free" people are preserved.

The First Amendment of our Constitution does not "guarantee" freedom of speech, religion or the press as she suggested.

Far from being "guaranteed," these rights only exist to the precise degree that people are willing to exercise them and to vigorously defend them from would-be tyrants who, as history makes clear, are always lurking about, waiting for opportunities to infringe the rights of the people.

Whether or not she or I happen to agree with the particular message displayed on these students' T-shirts is beside the point. The First Amendment was not written as a protection for popular speech. Rather, it was written so that unpopular and dissenting points of view could be expressed openly.

As such, we must take exceptional care when going along with limitations of our precious freedoms because one day we might be the ones having our points of view censored or hidden away in some "free speech zone" under the guise of tolerance and political correctness.

Thomas M. Golebiewski
Class of 2002

Student sees health care bill as beneficial for graduates

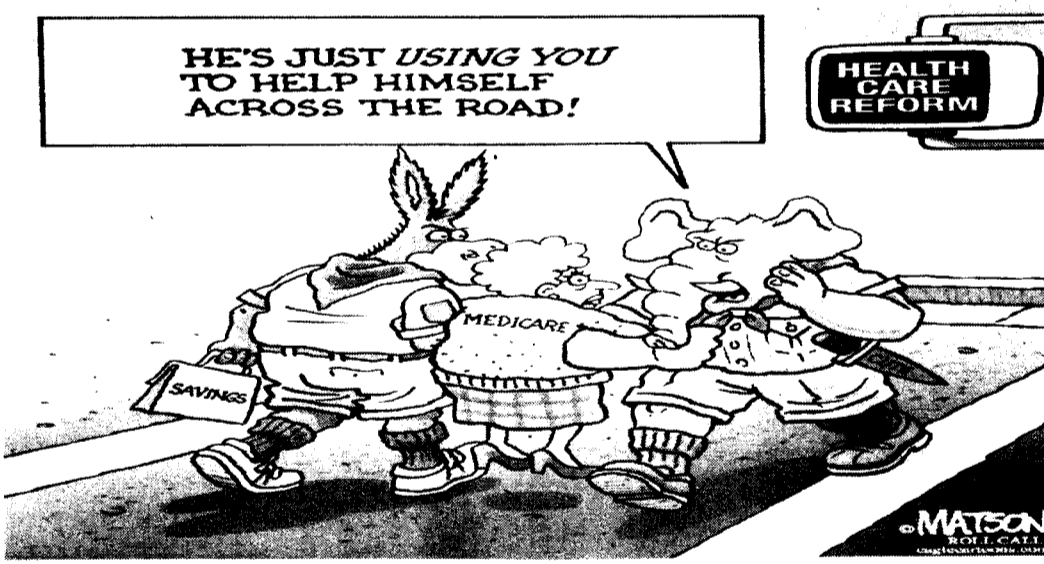
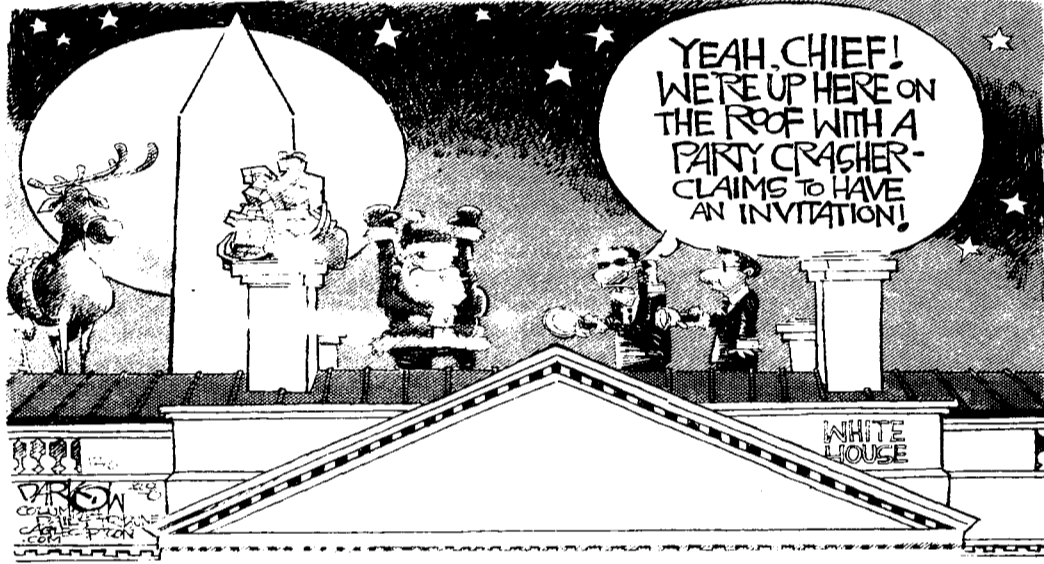
With the drawn out debate over health care, college students need the reform President Barack Obama's plan promises.

Graduating from college should be a time filled with great excitement about the new opportunities and independence opened up with an education. However, with the current economic strains, it puts a lot of pressure on focusing to find any kind of job, whether it comes with benefits or not. By having a reformed health care system, this would bring security and stability to those students fresh out of school and into the turbulent job market; they can focus on their jobs without the unnecessary anxiety of sacrificing or paying out-of-pocket (on top of paying off loans) for their health care.

Additionally, being young and healthy gives a false sense of security. While many major medical problems probably will not happen at college age, everyone will need to visit a doctor for some medical concern or accident. College age students still need health care whether their insurance company has denied their coverage or their parents can afford it or not. The President's plan will promote preventive medicine to cut costs and will ensure that students cannot get denied coverage for a medical issue.

By supporting President Obama's health care plan for the country, this provides security and affordability to college students.

Hannah Kendig
freshman-liberal arts
Penn State College Democrats



Public eating up quirky musicians

By Chris Bickel

MONDAY WAS an interesting night. I left the Cell Block, drenched in sweat and covered in champagne, vodka, Corona and vomit. Best part: I didn't drink a drop of alcohol that night nor was I the one who puked.



MY OPINION

All of this was part of another experience with LMFAO, a band whose fame seems to be skyrocketing.

Monday night's show marked my second encounter with the band at Cell Block, the first being over the summer while Redfoo and Sky Blu (the two rappers in the band) made a stop off-tour.

Seeing that first show at the Cell Block definitely moved them up onto my top 10 favorite bands, but not for their "talent."

And apparently their favor is rising with other college students, too.

The summer show had a pretty decent turnout, considering the depleted source of students that would typically be in State College during the fall and spring sessions.

But Monday's show was a whole different story. People were scalping tickets for more than \$100, the line was snaked down College Avenue and the

Cell Block was literally jam-packed.

I was shocked when I entered the same venue as the summer's show. If I had to take a guess, the occupancy doubled. Only moments after finding a place to stand on the dance floor, I was squished between other attendees on all sides. I would say should-to-shoulder, but that's an understatement that I learned right away seeing that I could barely move my arms to wipe off the sweat dripping down my forehead.

But the real question I was wondering was, WHY the sudden jump to fame from a somewhat unknown status?

Let's look at LMFAO. They give off the persona of a couple of goofy guys equipped with some funny dialogue and cheesy dance moves. You can find that a lot of places this day in age. Add in the fact they are combining hip-hop with electronic music. Now stir in a bit of controversial lyrics and music videos. That brings the pot to a sizzle but not quite boiling in success. Lastly, season this concoction of fame with a stage presence to be remembered — like chugging out of a bottle of strange Gray Goose on stage, bringing a sexy girl in a polka-dot bikini to bust out some seductive moves and spraying the crowd with Corona and champagne.

After careful consideration, I've come up with this: sensory overload.

With today's music and the multitude of singers trying to

make it big, it's almost required to find a way to stand out. And for artists like LMFAO and even Lady Gaga, their sensory overload is the key factor for their success. But what makes them any different than their predecessors? After all, Madonna and David Bowie mastered this idea long before.

These new acts are just the next step. What worries me the most — what will the next step be to continue the sensory overload? Lady Gaga wears obnoxiously unique outfits and comes up with daring and innovative performances and lyrical combos. LMFAO highlights wackiness and the many wonders of booze and their lack of a gag-reflex on stage. But that's only for now, because everyone will become desensitized to them sooner or later. So what's next? What will the next performer have to do to initiate a sensory overload? Sooner or later, a line is going to be crossed to shock people, and it will be for the worse.

LMFAO is quirky and goofy — so how far will the next round of goofball performers go to top their predecessors? I can foresee being desensitized to LMFAO's eccentricity. But musical artists are just going to keep getting weirder and weirder, and we are just going to keep eating it up. I know I have.

Chris Bickel is a senior majoring in public relations and is The Daily Collegian's Friday columnist. His e-mail address is cdb5067@psu.edu.

blog lines

Footblog

Penn State is just days away from learning its postseason fate. It looks like it'll be a Penn State-or-Iowa decision regarding the BCS, so there's no surprise there.

Of course, because the Hawkeyes won the head-to-head matchup — on the road and by double digits — if the Nittany Lions are picked, it will be for business reasons ...

Read more from the Footblog and the rest of The Daily Collegian's blogs at psuocollegian.com.