

# OPINION

THE DAILY  
**Collegian**

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**Complaints:** News and editorial complaints should be presented to the editor. Business and advertising complaints should be presented to the business manager.

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## Letters

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

■ **E-mail**  
collegianletters@psu.edu

■ **Online**  
www.psu.collegian.com

■ **Postal mail/In person**  
123 S. Burrows St.  
State College, PA 16801

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.

## EDITORIAL: UPUA CONTROVERSY

# Issues jeopardize legitimacy

The University Park Undergraduate Association voted to censure President Christian Ragland Wednesday while he was away at a sexual assault conference in Seattle.

This came after Ragland appointed Dustin Dove as his chief of staff even though the UPUA's judicial branch, the Board of Arbitration, ruled against this because members said violated the organization's constitution.

The issue here is not Ragland's choice of chief

of staff, but the way the entire matter was handled and the precedent it sets for the future.

We believe Ragland should not be allowed to pick and choose the rules he wants to follow. Even if the constitution is a bit murky, the UPUA president should not be able to override the decision of the Board of Arbitration without a second thought, no matter what the issue.

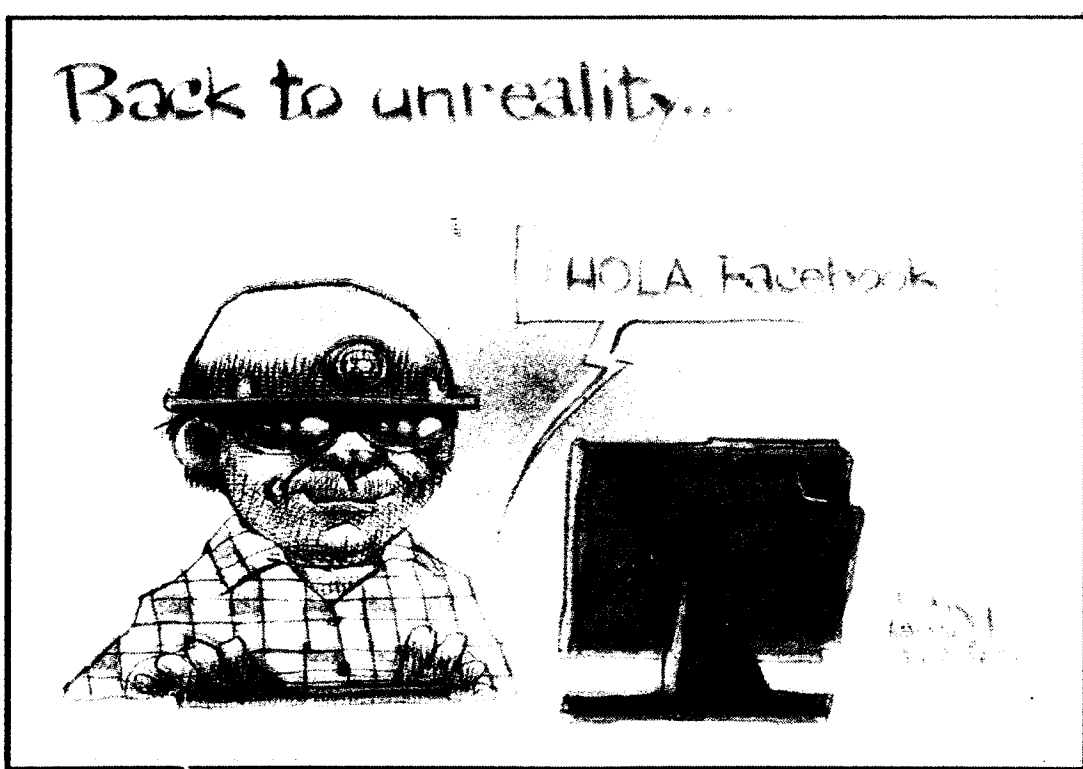
The assembly was also in the wrong for voting on the censure without Ragland present. The underhandedness of the

act merely added to the poor and public reflection on UPUA regarding this issue.

The apparent disconnect between the president and the assembly needs to be mended immediately so that the UPUA can function and represent Penn State students effectively.

Members should realize that decisions made in instances like this become precedents for a young organization like UPUA.

These recent events should not be taken lightly.



## COLUMNIST

# Time to tune out misleading media

By Kattie Sullivan

I signed up for one of my classes this semester thinking it would be a joke, an easy analysis of international communications that would score me a minor and an easy "A." Much to my surprise it has turned out to be the most meaningful, inspirational class that I've taken in my three and a half years at Penn State.

It's not a lecture most of the time, it's a discussion, with students as key participants. Our professor leads us "down the rabbit hole" to the "matrix" of complex and controversial ideas that I've never considered before.

Whenever I leave this class I feel like I've had my mind blown — shattering all of my preconceived notions of what we as a society and our government stand for and uphold, especially in the world of mass communications. I want to say "screw the man!" and work to change the world one newspaper at a time.

The professor of the international communications class brings up discussion that has some meaning to the world of mass communications. He gives us examples of international relations and media establishments that have been both detrimental and aided in global relations, especially the United States' relationship with the rest of the world.

Through discussions of policy,

tactics and regulations we learn how the media shapes our perceptions and the world we live in, and how that can be a good or bad thing depending on how the media portrays information.

Which brings me to my point — American media is essentially dumbing down our citizens with coverage of pop culture and the entertainment world. Yes, there are newspapers to give you the headlines every morning, but other media outlets seem more focused on Paris Hilton's coke habit than how many soldiers have been killed in the two wars we are fighting right now. I'm sure few fans missed last night's episode of "Madmen," but I can also guess that very few turned into the Pennsylvania governor's debate this weekend.

In a world where we need all the information can to make informed decisions about our countries future, it's upsetting to see that the amount of people who vote for our next American Idol and for our next president are comparable.

Is the media feeding us these pop culture stories and agendas, or are we as a society demanding them? The answer doesn't really matter, either way we are becoming a passive people, with less and less say in what our country does and those actions affect the world's perception of us as Americans.

From this point on I want to make a change, and I want to challenge you to do the same. Turn off the E channel, as entertaining as "Keeping up with the Kardashians" is, the show doesn't really add to your knowledge of inter-continental interactions.

Try to either read a newspaper or watch 30 minutes of news, and I'm not talking "The Today Show."

Sure, entertainment culture and pop media may be funny and ease our mind from the troubles our nation and world are facing today, especially during mid-term election time. It's probably easier to watch Heidi and Spencer go physco in "The Hills" rather than watch our leaders smear each other on negative campaign ads. But think about it, as wonderful and "Spidi" thinks their glamorous little world is, their decisions won't affect our state and country like our future elected leaders will.

So take control. Hold our media systems, your newspapers, broadcast networks and internet sources accountable. Cut back on your inhalation of entertainment news and take in a refreshing breath of international news relative to the U.S. Once you change your behaviors, the media systems will adapt, and hold our government under a microscope, and thus change how the world sees our nation.

Everything you ever thought or believed about America and how we've interacted with the world, take a class that challenges your perspective. It will open your eyes to ideas and theories you'd never dreamed of.

And isn't that what college is all about?

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## LETTERS

### Defriending solves problems

Have you ever been a victim in a relationship? Have you ever been betrayed by a good friend? If so, have these situations ever caused you great pain? Have you cried for days over an ex-boyfriend or a lost friend? If any of these situations describe you, then perhaps I can offer you some help to suppress those depressing feelings. If you're like me and find that people are selfish, heartless and just plain suck, then just simply de-friend them on Facebook. I find that de-friending is the solution to all bad relationships and friendships.

To be "defriended" on Facebook is the ultimate insult and the ultimate retaliation to someone who may have caused you great pain in your life. Defriending someone will stop that person from snooping through your personal life and leaving those sarcastic comments on your Facebook status that just end up embarrassing you. Defriending someone doesn't have to be limited to ex-boyfriends or past friendships. It's also equally insulting to defriend someone who is that crazy stalker of yours, or just to that person that always feels the need to update their life on Facebook every two seconds and litters your news feed. It is simple logic as to why this would be insulting to these people. To the people who just "suck" and feel the need to constantly make fun of you, if you defriend them, you end their ability to make your life a living hell. To the crazy stalker, defriending stops their power to constantly snoop through your profile. To the obnoxious status maker, defriending means that there will be one less person in the world that reads about their life, what could be more devastating to that person? Long gone are the years when people actually talk to one another and work out their differences. Why would anyone ever want to do that? Just defriend them.

Chris Cipro  
junior-education

### Customer should be credited

In response to Thursday's article "Alumnus thrives with T-shirt site," I was pleased to read about Kevin Stecko's success. He was a great customer of mine more than 10 years ago who bought many '80s themed T-shirts from my store. The House of Kashmir is more than 35 years old, so I was pleasantly surprised that Kevin credits part of his inspiration to my store. In this day and age, it's great to hear that State College's local businesses are still being recognized and appreciated.

Saghir Ahmad  
Owner of the House of Kashmir

### Rich are mistreated minority

In a country that prides itself on tolerance, preaching socioeconomic understanding and racial acceptance, there is a minority that has not escaped the wrath of the majority. There is a minority that is unfairly portrayed as a villain. America has a minority that, despite its relentless efforts to serve society, are demonized by the public as pompous, arrogant and greedy. Of course, the minority I am speaking of is the so called "rich."

But who are these amorphous villains? These aren't the "millionaires" and "billionaires" that politicians continuously claim do not need tax breaks and pillage our society. These are small business owners, and men and women who over time have worked their way up in the world. They are motivated mothers and fathers striving to provide for their families, send their kids to college, all while trying to make time and save money for the subtle luxuries of life. These are people who are being unfairly punished by the government and labeled as something they are not. They do not deserve to have their pursuit of the American dream hindered by the government to subsidize another's failure and to sustain inefficient and bloated government programs.

We need to support this minority and end the class warfare against them. In fact, we should look to these individuals to help solve our problems, not by pilfering their money, but by enlisting their guidance to run a more efficient government. Like each and every minority in this great nation, the majority has something to learn from them. Like each minority in our country we need to find ways to treat them better if we are ever to obtain a truly happy, free and fertile society.

Andrew Chansky  
senior-science

## blog lines

### FOOTBLOG

#### The Backers are back

Mike Mauti, Bani Gbabyu and Gerald Hodges are all back and practicing in full pads, a source said Friday.

The three linebackers all missed Saturday's loss to Illinois, and Hodges hasn't played since a knee injury on the first play the loss to Alabama...

Andrew J. Cassavell  
Football reporter

### SNAP, CRACKLE, POP

#### A day in the life

What's a typical day in your life like? What if it were a day in Cuba or Rwanda? While some of us may study abroad in Europe or visit Canada, it's unlikely that we have the opportunity to experience life in the vast majority of other countries in the world...

Julie Mastrine  
Performing arts reporter

Read more of The Daily Collegian's blogs at  
[psu.collegian.com/blogs](http://psu.collegian.com/blogs).