

OPINION

THE DAILY
Collegian

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Letters

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ENDORSEMENT: PENNSYLVANIA'S 5TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Sestak holds focus on people

Joe Sestak and Pat Toomey are polar opposites on the big ticket issues such as healthcare, the stimulus, education and the environment. These differences also very much reflect their political affiliations.

But on Election Day, we believe Penn State students should focus on the difference in background, standing on social issues and true ability to enact change in Senate. This is where we believe Sestak succeeds.

Sestak said his background as a liberal with a long military career was what helped him to learn the value of compromise in solving problems.

Toomey has shown through his jump from Wall Street to Congress, and from Congressman to lobbyist, that the line between public service and private interests

might be blurred.

Beyond standing for compromise over capital, we also believe Sestak would be more likely to consider the youth voice, which is why he deserves the youth vote. He has a firm grasp on the issues and all of the nuances.

When it comes to social problems, like minority and LGBTQ rights, which many college students fight to correct, it's Sestak who pays as much attention to these smaller issues as campaign-winning promises.

The lack of job opportunity is a huge problem facing young people today, but Sestak is also focused on making sure that people of every race, background and orientation share equal opportunities across every field.

Sestak would also like to expand educational opportunities by making it more

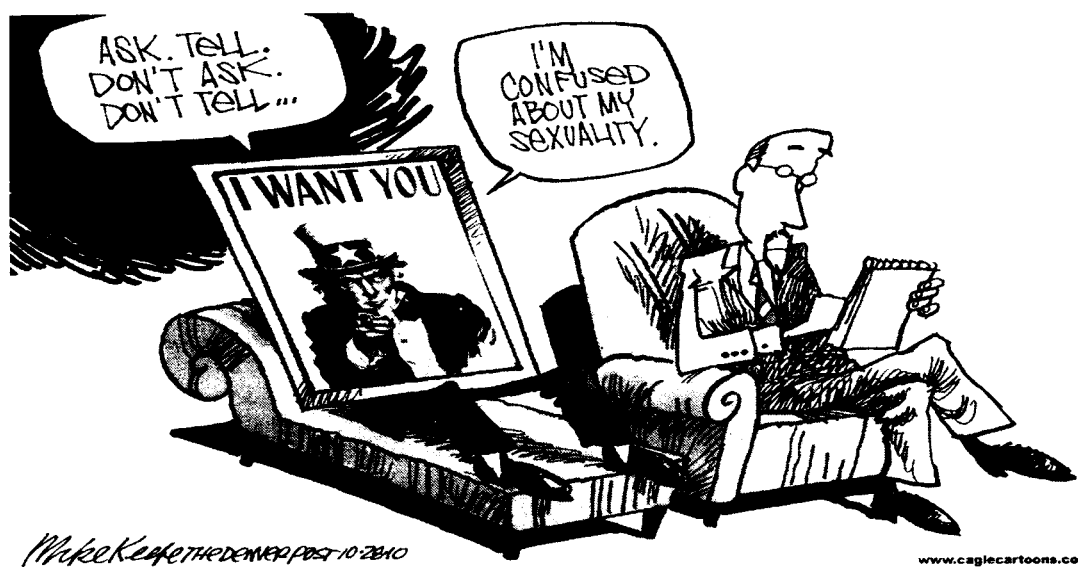
accessible and affordable. This is important because we would like to see more disadvantaged youth have the same opportunities we have here at Penn State.

Sestak also supports civil unions and equal benefits, promising that he would oppose an amendment defining marriage as between only a man and a woman.

Above all, we are most attracted to Sestak's promise to reach across the aisle, and never sacrifice the citizens' best interest for an obligation to affiliation.

Sestak has built a career on being focused on people and allowing himself to be held accountable for their success and failures.

We believe this will still hold true if he is elected to Washington, and we endorse his invitation to all succeed together.



Mike Keefe for THE DENVER POST 10/28/10

www.caglecartoons.com



Mike Keefe for THE DENVER POST 10/27/10 www.caglecartoons.com

Holiday shifted from hallowed history

By Amanda Elser

HERE goes your daily history lesson. If you've ever seen "Hocus Pocus," you should know that Halloween is derived from the Christian holiday All Hallows Eve. All Hallows (now commonly known as All Saint's Day) was created by Christians to coincide with the Celtic's pagan holiday on Nov. 1 in an attempt to overshadow their practices.

But the Celts continued with their traditions, and while All Hallows Eve was thought to be the night when all the dead come back to inhabit the earth, the spirits were considered to be evil. Believers started to set out gifts to please the wicked spirits, and from this the current practice of "Trick or Treating" evolved. All Hallows' Eve became Hallows' Evening, which manifested itself into Halloween and the holiday we know and love.

A history and tradition that has its routes in Pagan worship and Christianity is now an excuse for college girls everywhere to dress up like a dirty nurse.

Regardless of the sexy getups, Halloween still has a

magical appeal to our culture.

There is a spooky elegance that comes with this holiday — one of mystery and deception — that can be enjoyed throughout a lifetime.

Once an annual holiday to worship the dead, Halloween is now dedicated to blockbuster thrillers and fantasies.

Scary movies would probably be less of a commodity if there weren't a holiday to coincide with their release. Part of the magical appeal of Halloween is the ability to make darkness so frightening, and the monotony of daily life can suddenly be terrifying.

It's the one season where part of the tradition is to encourage you to be scared.

The Halloween of our century is interchangeable with serial killers, possessed dolls and Disney princesses — a far cry from the original pagan or Christian intentions. Though the costumes may be gorier and sleazier than back in the Celtic day, the main tradition and practice has continued on until now, making Halloween a truly remarkable holiday when you come to think about it.

Halloween has changed and evolved since its early beginnings, but each generation manages to combine the traditions of the past with the fads of the present. On Halloween this year, try counting how many Lady Gagas and Jersey Shore cast

members you see stumbling along the streets of downtown State College. Maybe they are the predictable costumes, but that doesn't lessen their appeal and the attractive concept of Halloween in general — you can be whoever you want to be.

Halloween is theatrical and an art as you dress up to emulate the people you admire. For some reason, when you're hiding behind a mask or a costume it is empowering. I am not particularly fond of skirts that are too short or shirts that are too small, but when it comes to Halloween, it is the one day of the year I don't have to be myself and I have an excuse to play dress up.

Christmas loses some of its magical appeal once you find out about Santa Claus. Same goes for the Easter Bunny. New Year's Eve is inevitably a let down holiday — never living up to its hype. Thanksgiving, while fulfilling, doesn't come without its fair share of family drama. Valentine's Day usually sucks whether you're single or not, and St. Patrick's Day isn't nearly as entertaining if you are not 21.

Halloween is honestly the only holiday I can think of that never loses its mysterious hold on our society.

Amanda Elser is a senior majoring in journalism and is The Daily Collegian's Thursday columnist. Her e-mail is ale5045@psu.edu.



MY OPINION

LETTERS

More expected in candidate

From Wednesday's endorsement, I gather that Michael Pipe is qualified to represent Pennsylvania's 5th Congressional District because he has ideas about how to fix the current job market and knows the problems facing Penn State students.

I'm sorry, but I expect a little bit more out of candidates for an elected office. What experience does he have to hang his hat on? Interning with the Obama campaign, while a great first step into politics, hardly qualifies someone to run for office one year out of college. Being an assistant manager at Five Guys is an understandable professional experience for a recent college graduate in this job market, but not an experience that qualifies someone for such a difficult job. And there are many other questions left unanswered. How does he plan to staff an office? What experience does he have reading and writing legislation? New and fresh ideas and input are all well and good. However, they have a little more weight to them when brought forward by someone with the experience to lend credibility to those ideas.

David Vissering
senior-political science

View of Tea Party is absurd

In response to Tuesday's column "Tea Party is scarier than a nightmare," I am surprised that such a twisted view of reality could be printed in the Collegian. The author must have known that there would be responses to his piece because it was so off the wall that there is no way he could of written it that way unknowingly. To assume that members of the Tea Party would hold such radical positions is ludicrous. Yes it is true that supporters of the Tea Party are for smaller government, but that is because government is a necessary evil. To even joke that a Tea Party would support a government that would close libraries and shut down police and fire services is absurd. These are services which have a place in society and are some of the legitimate reasons for having a government.

Even after reading all of these preposterous notions the one that still gets me the most is the attack on privatization. Privatization is the work of the free market. Being that we live in a country founded on capitalist principals, I cannot believe that an American would so blatantly smear privatization. Some Tea Party supporters may have some loony ideas, but overall as a whole they serve a purpose to remind us of what freedom and liberty really are.

Thomas Maksymiuk
junior-history

Main goal is to end conflict

In response to Monday's article "SPJ listed as 'anti-Israel,'" as a person of Chicano-Jewish background and member of two of the ADL's infamous "Top 10" most influential groups in America today, which actively oppose the U.S.-funded Israeli occupation of Palestine, I'd like to say that the ADL attempts to set the terms of discussion and misshape reality by misrepresenting SJP as "anti-Israel." No state is above criticism. Israel holds all the responsibilities of any other state in the international system, no more and no less. A long-standing world consensus — including all the human rights groups, Israeli, Palestinian and international — condemns the occupation and demonstrates the path to a just resolution while Israel and the U.S. alone block such efforts. This should move us as members of American civil society to continue to bring pressure upon our government to help end the conflict now.

These 10 groups in the United States and many more on the ADL's blacklists present the greatest peril to the prospect of Israel's trulent occupation of Palestinian lands continuing unimpeded. I'll proudly own up to contributing in any small way to endangering the system of occupation, rendering it more and more unsustainable. An end to this vicious military occupation — older than most of our parents' — would be a noble beginning of a possible lasting justice in the land of former Palestine.

Gabriel Matthew Schlivone
Students for Justice in Palestine, University of Arizona Chapter

Greeks forgetting THON goal

According to Monday's article "Change in THON cans upset some," greek leaders were upset that THON changed the can labels to say "THON" instead of "Interfraternity/Panhellenic Council Dance Marathon."

Apparently this was front page news because doing good things without getting credit for it is an outrage. As far as I'm concerned, the official name of the event is THON. Yes, greek communities helped to found it, but they aren't the only ones to participate. The article concludes by reminding us that THON is "for the kids." Maybe someone should remind the greeks.

Scott Wonderly
senior-civil engineering

Swift album has little to offer

Regarding, Tuesday's review of Taylor Swift's newest album "Speak Now," it seems that we get a great amount of reviewer tilt. Myself being a Reading native, Swift is a hometown girl from Wyomissing. But, I mean, what is there truly to like about her sound, yet she still keeps picking up new boyfriends; almost an apocryphal feminist icon. She cannot stand men and every abominable thing we do, but she cannot live without her fairytale-esque love. Obviously, Swift has a one track mind much like the females who are going to get this album to double-platinum by the end of the week.

Aaron Pifer-Foote
senior-English