

OPINION

THE DAILY
Collegian

Elizabeth Murphy
Editor in Chief

Kelsey Thompson
Business Manager

About the Collegian: The Daily Collegian and The Weekly Collegian are published by Collegian Inc., an independent, nonprofit corporation with a board of directors composed of students, faculty and professionals. Pennsylvania State University students write and edit both papers and solicit advertising for them. During the fall and spring semesters as well as the second six-week summer session, The Daily Collegian publishes Monday through Friday. Issues are distributed by mail to other Penn State campuses and subscribers.

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

Who we are

The Daily Collegian's editorial opinion is determined by its Board of Opinion, with the editor holding final responsibility. The letters and columns expressed on the editorial pages are not necessarily those of The Daily Collegian or Collegian Inc. Collegian Inc., publishers of The Daily Collegian and related publications, is a separate corporate institution from Penn State.

Members are: Lexi Belcolline, Caitlin Burnham, Paul Casella, Kevin Cinilli, Beth Ann Downey, Amanda Elser, Ashley Gold, Stephen Hennessey, Allison Jackovitz, Andrew Metcalf, Nate Mink, Elizabeth Murphy, Laura Nichols, Michael Oplinger, Edgar Ramirez, Heather Schmelzlen, Caitlin Sellers, Laurie Stern, Katie Sullivan, Jessica Uzar, Aubrey Whelan, Alex Weisler, Somer Wiggins, Steph Witt and Chns Zook.

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: PENN STATE'S GREEN EFFORTS

Student involvement still needed

Penn State recently received a B+ for recycling and green efforts in a poll conducted by the Sustainable Endowments Institutes.

The school scored an A in maintaining green buildings, recycling and response from administration.

With many green initiatives already implemented across campus, and an administrative plan for the future that calls for more green growth, Penn State's grade rose from a

B last year and could continue to rise. Any improvement in the green initiatives at Penn State is commendable and should be celebrated.

However, there was one aspect where the university scored low in comparison: student involvement. Even though Penn State has a number of student "eco-reps" and offers an Earth House living option, only a small percentage of students seem active in recycling and energy saving initiatives.

This is something that can change.

Students need to step up and take responsibility by practicing things like recycling in their dorms and apartments, by making an effort to turn off lights and unplug unused appliances, and by choosing public transportation rather than driving.

Though Penn State's grade went up this year, there is always room for improvement, especially in the area of student involvement.



NEWS ITEM: MICHELLE RUNS OUT OF CASH WHILE SHOPPING



Political opposition needs compromise

By Michael Oplinger

As my friend's party ended Saturday night, I found myself in a political conversation with a guy who I had met only a few minutes before.

Other partygoers finished their drinks and stumbled out the door as we somehow engaged in a serious discussion.



MY OPINION

We quickly discovered that we differed ideologically, but we talked about issues like fiscal policy and the Federal Reserve in a friendly rational manner.

Neither of us probably changed the other's opinion, but we left with a better understanding of an alternative viewpoint.

What stood out about this conversation to me is that neither of us reverted to traditional party "talking points" or used any of the buzz words so often spoken in the political realm today.

It was just simple, rational political discourse — just two guys chatting about the world.

We weren't going to solve any problems there in that apartment, but maybe we demonstrated that the country and its political conversations don't need to be so divided.

Through talking with him, I realized our views weren't very far apart.

Each side's views aren't as radical as it seems sometimes. There certainly is room for compromise — compromise that probably wouldn't be so challenging if both sides actually listened to each other.

The problem seems to be our inability to truly hold a conversation with a free exchange of ideas.

The perceived extreme partisan divide of Washington seems

to have spread to the general public.

We all obviously enter discussions with established beliefs, but that doesn't mean the conversation should be ended right away.

As Kanye West wrote in his song "Power," "They say I was the abomination of Obama's nation. Well, that's a pretty bad way to start the conversation."

As many musicians intend to do with their lyrics, West sends an important political and social statement.

Useful conversations can't start with over-the-top statements like that.

Nor can they start with saying that President Obama's a socialist or Muslim or Kenyan or Hitler.

Nor can they start with saying that Democrats want to move the country to be a complete welfare state.

Nor can they start with saying that Republicans only care about the interests of Wall Street.

Nor can they start with saying that the Tea Party is just a bunch of racists.

To foster productive political discussions, we must improve at using conversation starters instead of conversation enders.

Comparisons to Hitler for a political purpose should be permanently banned.

Terms based on rumors instead of facts, like "death panels," must be abandoned.

The system is complex enough without adding lies to the mix.

To truly make any progress with any agenda, an informed political discourse must take place.

Discussion based on facts will allow opposing sides to see their differences, but more importantly, their similarities.

On the broad political spectrum, Republicans and Dem-

ocrats tend to remain close to the center.

Arguments can't be won by declaring the other person to be a radical or socialist or fascist. To make such accusations, which are usually false, disparages the other person's argument.

As we enter a time of at least two years of divided government and as the sides appear to be moving further apart, having informed conversations seems increasingly important.

But free debate still seems to be hindered by the fear of being labeled a radical.

In theory, modern technology should ease the process. The Internet allows for the free flow of ideas.

But the Internet seems to have been used to further separate the two sides.

Intelligent discourse is found only in a few places.

Comment sections on websites should allow us to instantaneously participate in debates. People can also share links to further information.

But look at the comments on any news article or Youtube video. The conversation consists of insults and extreme statements.

Instead of presenting logical counterpoints, the comments usually jump to personal attacks and wild assertions.

Maybe the anonymity of the Internet allows people to shirk responsibility and feel more comfortable insulting others.

But the Internet still remains a valuable tool in facilitating open conversation, which could extend to all aspects of our lives.

Talk and actually listen to each other. Maybe politicians will follow our lead.

Michael Oplinger is a senior majoring in journalism and political science and is The Daily Collegian's Tuesday columnist. His e-mail is mjo5071@psu.edu

LETTERS

PSU fans can learn from rival

A brief history: In 2005, the Ohio State marching band visited PSU for the Ohio State vs. Penn State game, a matchup PSU would go on to win and thus upset OSU. Many current students may not be aware but the OSU band was treated extremely poorly during their trip. Bags of urine were dumped on band members as they walked by the student section after their halftime performance. Some PSU fans attempted to punch OSU band members as they marched to the stadium. The show of disrespect by our fans was so egregious that OSU's band director (who was a graduate student at Penn State many years ago) has vowed never to bring the band back to PSU.

Fast-forwarding five years to this past weekend, I had the opportunity to travel to Ohio State with the Blue Band. There was much apprehension within the band last week, not knowing what retaliation we might face in response to the 2005 fiasco. There were the usual snide remarks, as expected, but no physical attacks. Did the student section cheer us? Of course not but they did not disrespect us as members of Penn State's student section did in 2007 when they turned their backs to Notre Dame's band and gave them the finger. As we marched out of the stadium after a tough loss, many OSU fans gave us high-fives and thanked us for coming, telling us how much they enjoyed our presence at the game.

Penn State students should take a lesson from a university we claim to hate. They were respectful of the Blue Band, as our students should be to all visiting bands at Beaver Stadium. For a student section ranked No. 1 in the country, we sure do not hold ourselves to high standards when it comes to respect and maturity.

Dan DePodwin
senior-meteorology

blog lines

SMALL WORLD

Roman holiday

In two months, I will be boarding a plane to Rome, leaving my friends and family behind for three months and stepping foot on to European soil for the first time in my life. I don't know any Italian and I've never been on an airplane alone before. I've never been farther from home than Canada.

I can't wait. This study abroad thing that has caused my so much stress for the past months and continues to give me anxiety attacks is rapidly approaching, and, while I'm very nervous, I'm more excited about this than I've ever been about anything before.

Forget about the stress of finding a subletter, finding the funds, booking the flight, registering the trip, requesting housing but not knowing until two weeks before I leave and scheduling courses that I may or may not get. I am going to be in ROME, The Eternal City.

Why Rome? I get that a lot. After taking French for five years, maybe France would have made more sense.

Not to me. Maybe it's my romanticized version of Rome from "Roman Holiday" and "The Lizzie McGuire Movie," but I can't think of a better European city to spend months in.

I can't wait to visit the Colosseum, the Trevi Fountain, eat tons of spaghetti, pizza and gelato, have my own Roman Holiday-esque romance and trapeze all over Europe...

Somer Wiggins
Venues chief

SNAP, CRACKLE, POP

Second 'Blue' season

With "Blue Mountain State" premiering Oct. 20, Darin Brooks, who plays second-string quarterback Alex Moran, talked to me about the premiere, the second season and his own college experience.

Q: How do you think the premiere went?

A: I think it went really well. We were advertising it on Spike and I think now we are going to pump up the publicity. We saw the premiere on Saturday; we won out our demographic of 18-30 year old guys.

Q: What can we look forward to in the second season?

A: Oct. 20's episodes were "Controversy" and "The Fingering." The "Controversy" introduces two new main characters, a new quarterback and a new girl. Denise Richards will premiere in the second week, I think. She has a five episode run with us on season two. It's going to be a good season. There are going to be a lot of cool cameos.

Q: What has your experience been like on the show? How was it moving from a soap opera to a comedy?

A: A very raunchy comedy. Soaps are a great training ground for anyone. On Days of Our Lives, we shot 80-100 pages a day and completed six episodes in five days. I think soaps are the best training ground for anybody who wants to be an actor. On BMS, now I get to let loose. It's a lot of fun for me, not that Days wasn't fun. But I like being able to let loose and try different things...

Karsten
TV reporter

Read more of The Daily Collegian's blogs at psu.collegian.com/blogs.