

OPINION

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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EDITORIAL: DRY ON CAMPUS DORM POLICY

No alcohol in dorms a good step

The university has decided to prohibit all alcohol in residence halls starting in the 2011-2012 academic year, even for those who are 21.

Prohibiting alcohol on campus residence halls is a great step forward taken by the university to combat the problems of underage and excessive drinking.

Minimizing the interaction in the dorms between those of age who have access to alcohol and those who are underage and do not will help limit

access to alcohol.

Also, attempting to curtail the excessive binge drinking that can happen in dorms will cut down on the amount of drinks any underage student could start his or her night with.

The university has presented a noble goal that should be pursued vigorously. They should present real consequences that will make underage students think twice about drinking heavily in the dorms.

Giving an exception to White Course apartments

is understandable, because there are rarely underage students housed there, whereas in the residence halls there are mostly underage students.

It won't stop excessive drinking in its tracks, but it is a step in the right direction.

And for a university facing a consistent drinking problem, taking a stance against alcohol as a whole is a wise move.

We believe they are being put in place for the greater good of the student population.

LETTERS

Alcohol will remain in dorms

No matter what the administration does, there will always be alcohol in the dorms. Students will always find some way to get it, and the university can do barely anything about it. I understand that they are trying to stray away from the idea of a "party school," but simply banning alcohol in residence areas will not solve the problem. They banned alcohol previously for students under the age of 21, and yet there have still been incidents reported in the residence halls. This policy will be difficult to enforce, and won't totally solve the problem at all.

Sean Flynn
junior-health policy and administration

Disparity inherent in genders

As I mentioned in my previous letter, the article "PSU addresses disparities" made several good points including the different percentages (as opposed to number) of men and women receiving tenures. I agree, that should be addressed. In fact, I at no point discounted a single point made in the initial article, I simply wrote about a different point within the topic of equality.

That being said I at no point, as Liz Campo accused in the letter "Disparity not mothers' fault," supposed any specific reason for the tenure disparity. I was trying to make the point that the numbers themselves don't always tell the whole story.

I assume you're not suggesting that 100 job openings should be filled with 50 women and 50 men regardless of if there is 4:1 or 1:4 ratio of men's to women's applications. Still, the cause of the application difference, as "PSU addresses disparities" suggests (and I never refuted), should be resolved at the source, not faked at the hiring table.

Ideally, applications would contain only initials or ID numbers: no names or genders, which will eliminate that factor entirely. Why is it that there are significantly more women than men who go into college interested in elementary education?

I can't prove that it is due to interest differences, but it would make sense. In almost every other species on the planet, it is a mother's instinct to take care of her young. Is it so unfathomable that women may be more programmed toward child care than men? And I never suggested that a man would miss his child's birth due to work, but somehow I don't see myself taking turns to stay home and breastfeed my children.

Mike Kaiserian
senior-mechanical-engineering



Holiday cheer is good for everyone

By Amanda Elser

There are very few things that I love more than the holidays. My favorite

movie is "Babes in Toyland" (the Drew Barrymore version), my favorite drink is hot apple cider with cinnamon, my favorite Pandora station is White Christmas and if Bing Crosby was my grandfather I wouldn't be that strongly opposed.

Point is, everything about the Christmas season is shinier, brighter and happier, but even I have to admit the excess of good tidings.

It started when the day after Thanksgiving I was in the grocery store with my mom and I heard a customer say "Merry Christmas" to the deli lady. I actually did a double take. Though everyone gets into the holiday spirit come November, the actual big day was about a month away.

As much as I hate to admit it, we are a product of commercialism and big businesses making a profit over exploiting a holiday, turning a grouping of holidays into a two-month long shopping season.

So for my last column of the

semester I am going to remind all of you of the true spirit of Christmas (don't worry, I am not going to get all Catholic school girl on you).

The Christmas season isn't about gifts, as a childhood spent watching "The Grinch that Stole Christmas" taught me. It's not about the decorations or 24 hour Christmas radio stations (though they do add a festive flare). It's about spreading cheer and love.

There is a reason why movies set during the holidays are usually so successful — everyone is a tidbit more vulnerable come December. It is suddenly socially acceptable to believe in hope and wishes (I never said I wasn't going to get corny).

And though it may be a Hallmark enhanced holiday, so what? If you spend a little money to bring joy to someone else — let the businesses make money. I quite frankly enjoy the YouTube videos of kids freaking out over a video game or a doll. Those five minutes of opening the gift you have wanted all year is pure bliss and I wish I could have bottled it up and saved it for a rainy day.

I know people say that excessive gifts are sending the wrong message about Christmas, but even the simplest thing can mean the world of difference.

My mother grew up in Italy and she will tell me every year

until I die about the time she only got a pincushion for Christmas. Yes, a red pincushion, for sewing. That was her one gift from "Babbo Natale."

She tells me this story so that I am grateful for everything I get on Christmas Day (including the clementine at the bottom of my stocking).

The funny thing is, I cannot even tell you how many plastic toys have gotten thrown away, but her pincushion has been used for every rip and tear in a favorite dress or hem on a brand new pair of pants.

That is the personification of the Christmas spirit. It is tradition and gratitude mixed with family and friends.

So don't be a grump this season. If you're one of those people that can't stand Christmas music until December 25 then don't feel the need to pass on your hatred.

Smile at someone passing you on the street. Hold the door open for someone a few steps behind. Drop in some of your spare change to those lovely bell ringers on the corner of College Avenue and Allen Street.

And if you don't want to do it for your Christmas, try doing it for someone else's.

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blog lines

CAN YOU DIG IT?

Rose reflects on success

With the Big Ten having the most NCAA Tournament success of any conference through the first two rounds, we asked Penn State coach Russ Rose on Tuesday afternoon his thoughts on how the conference has fared.

"I think the fact that there is six teams remaining is a reflection of the quality of teams and players and coaches that exist in the conference," Rose said.

"There's also four left from the Big 12 and there's also four left from the Pac 10. Some people want to point out that it's teams from the BCS conferences. And I think you can make an argument for that but I don't think that's what it's all about because Hawaii has won national championships and Long Beach State has won national titles and there was a time that Utah State was one of the great teams in college volleyball..."

Jake Kaplan
Women's volleyball reporter

Band keeps tune for team

Penn State coach Russ Rose usually points out the flaws of his team after each match, win or lose.

But no matter what happens during home matches, there's usually one group Rose is always happy with: the band.

Gregory Drane, assistant director of athletic bands, is responsible for building up the Pride of the Lions volleyball pep band to what it is today. I sat down with Drane a few weeks ago to talk about his job at Penn State. Here's what he had to say:

Q: How do you determine what to play and when to play it?

Drane: "Quite frankly, our main job is supporting our team, so I try to choose songs that may help to get the crowd behind the team at different times. At different times, we're just being the entertainment for the crowds."

"A lot of the times that is dependent upon what is going on at that event. We're pretty flexible as far as that is concerned. There are particular things that are traditional. For instance, being at a football game, after the third quarter everybody is waiting to hear 'Hey Baby'."

"And quite frankly, at a volleyball match after the intermission, when the volleyball team comes back out to warm up, they also expect to hear 'Hey Baby' as well. So, there are certain things that are tradition, that we've plugged into certain spots where there's an expectation for the crowd to hear particular songs at particular times..."

Ryan Loy
Women's volleyball reporter

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