

Editorials

Locker room: Athletes only

Ever since *Boston Herald* reporter Lisa Olson had a problem with some of the New England Patriots in their locker room, the question of whether female reporters should be allowed in men's locker rooms has been debated back and forth.

The answer is simple. No.

No female reporters in male locker rooms. No male reporters in female locker rooms. No reporter of any kind in locker rooms; that goes for locker rooms of both genders.

Create a press room where both male and female reporters can conduct interviews with the players. All reporters have an equal chance to get the stories and the players have more privacy.

The media is always striving for better access to stories, but in this case it is just not worth it. Equal access to the players, outside the locker room, is the only answer.

Improve poor voting record

As election day draws near, students will hear the usual spiel about how they should vote. And rightly so.

Not only is voting a sign of good citizenship, but the officials we elect change our lives in many ways. State legislators, for instance, decide on appropriations for the University, so student input is important.

Though each vote carries far reaching consequences, apathy pervades our society. Among the world's 23 democratic nations, the United States is 22nd in the proportion of registered voters who actually cast their ballots.

And all students are a large part of this problem. Recent statistics indicate that voter turnout among young voters has been low.

According to the Vote America Foundation, only 36.2 percent of 18-to-24-year-olds voted in the 1988 presidential election.

Students must exercise their rights.

Although the words sound hollow, your vote can make a difference.

The preceding is an excerpt taken from the Oct. 2 editorial by The Daily Collegian, University Park.

The Collegian

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Opinion / Editorial



Letters to the Editor

Article fair

I thought that Sue Cepicka's article was fair. I didn't, however, think that the two Letters to the Editor that followed were. I think that since Behrend is starting to cast a county-wide shadow that students attending classes at that school downtown (Gannon University) are growing more sensitive about their school's flaws.

If those two editors spent more time improving their own paper (*The Gannon Knight*) and less time making personal attacks on your editors (*The Collegian*), they might develop a paper that could compete with Behrend's.

Jeremy Sutch
3rd semester
Mathematics

Thinking alike

I was one of the members of the English Department who signed the letter to the editor about Professor Eva Tucker's stance on "Huckleberry Finn". I had read the coverage of this matter in the "Times-News", and Eva's approach, at least as it was reported in the paper, was too close to censorship for me.

Those of us who drafted and signed the letter were acting in good faith, and taking legitimate public issue with our colleague on a matter that's important to all of us.

What we didn't know at the time we sent the letter that Eva Tucker had modified his stance; our letter came out in *The Collegian* after Mr. Tucker's partial retraction and clarification of what he means.

And I agree with everything Eva says in *The Collegian's* recent article. He doesn't want to

take "Huck Finn" off the supplemental reading list for high school students in Erie. He wants, instead, to add minority authors, which is something that I've been arguing for years, sometimes right here in these pages. He rightly points out that curriculum committees have been engaged in their own form of censorship by underrepresenting minority writers.

Regarding Mr. Tucker's point that "Huck Finn" should be taught in its full historical context, his suggestion would, I hope, address some of Monica Irwin's concerns expressed in a letter upbraiding her colleagues in the English Department for our letter. (Woof! When Monica Irwin has something to say, by God, she says it. And yes, Monica, some of your good friends were among the signers.)

Although I can speak only for myself in a formal sense, I think I'm safe in saying that all the people who signed the letter are happy to know that our stance and Eva Tucker's are now much closer together, and that we're all working toward the same thing.

Dr. Diana Hume George
Professor of English

Yet another one

Can you stand yet another comment about "Huckleberry Finn"? I was not one of the nine English faculty who signed the letter Monica Irwin attacks in the last issue, so I haven't really said my piece.

First, I find it interesting that in both the *Erie Times-News* and elsewhere the primary defense for teaching Twain's novel is sociological and historical: that is, it will help up understand racial brutality.

But this is not why

"Huckleberry Finn" is a great novel. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is far more important historically and sociologically, but is a greatly inferior work of art. "Huckleberry Finn" must be taught if one is to have a full understanding of American literature.

It was Hemingway who said that all modern novels derive from "Huckleberry Finn" and he was far from the only novelist who learned the modern voice from it. If it were a racist book, as "Birth of a Nation" is a repugnantly racist fantasy, it would still be necessary to study "Birth of a Nation" and the pro-Nazi "Triumph of the Will" to understand the development of the film.

It is not racist, however. What makes "Huckleberry Finn" so important, so modern, is Twain's use of irony, the major weapon of modern literature from James and Faulkner to Eudora Welty and Ralph Ellison. In that way, "Finn" occupies roughly the same niche that Flaubert's "Madame Bovary" occupies in French literature.

In the novel, Huck is constantly struggling with what he is told is right and what he feels is right. Gradually you come to recognize how his feelings are so much more "right" than the values of a "civilized" society that supports slavery and the degradation of a man as good as Jim.

The book constantly batters that society from beginning to end. That is why Huck lights out for the West at the end. We are meant to be embarrassed by Tom Sawyer's elaborate plan for Jim's escape, because Sawyer is depersonalizing Jim for the sake of his fantasies. Huck doesn't understand this, but like many things he doesn't understand, he goes along because that's what he's supposed to do.

When he heads West--after Jim receives his freedom--he rejects all of that. It is utterly

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