

Letters to the Editor

(continued)

...RIGHT

(continued from page 4)

reach, and it is not always my fault.

It is not up to me to decide whether Mr. Prindle's point of view is right or wrong. Our priorities are different and the world is large enough for both of us. Though, I would like to suggest Mr. Prindle to stop stroking his literary libido, turn on the light in "the dimly lit rooms," and lighten up.

Dr. Antonella Cupillari
Assistant Professor of
Mathematics

Answering NSBE

I read with interest the Letter to the Editor from Christopher Lewis, Vice President of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE). I would like to provide a few clarifications about the issues Mr. Lewis raised in his letter.

Three years ago, Brett Banker (who was then Coordinator of Intramurals) and I reviewed every intramural sport and activity offered to students.

One of the intramural events reviewed, and subsequently eliminated was "dodgeball." Our decision was reinforced at a meeting of Penn State Student Activities staff from all campus early that fall, when we were instructed to discontinue "flagrantly violent sports that are not governed by established rules of play...such as dodgeball."

I was approached by the president of NSBE late on a Friday afternoon with a request to conduct a "Balloon Bust" as a fund-raiser that coming Sunday. Individuals would pay a dollar to break as many balloons as possible in a given amount of time. Some of the balloons

would have prizes in them such as candy or money. It was my feeling that this event might be a violation of University policy regarding "games of chance."

To check my interpretation of this policy I immediately called my counterpart at University Park. I was not successful in confirming my interpretation of the "games of chance" policy, and that the NSBE should delay the Balloon Bust.

I subsequently learned that fund raisers are a violation of University policy when there is a consideration given (money) to participate in the event, a prize is awarded, and winning the event is based on *chance only* - not a skill. NSBE's event as planned would have been a violation of University policy. The events sponsored at the Health Carnival were not in violation of University policy since winning these events required only an act of skill.

With regard to Mr. Lewis' concern that home video cassettes cannot be used for public performance, these pre-recorded video cassettes and video discs available in stores throughout the United States are for home use *only*. Even "performances" in semi-public places such as clubs and schools are considered public performances, and are in violation of Federal law.

There was never a question that the dance NSBE scheduled for September 15 could take place; in fact Student Activities has encouraged weekend events. The only remaining issue we were dealing with was the question of Police and Safety coverage.

Since the dance was advertised at other area colleges and there was the potential for a large crowd, I suggested that two student auxiliary officers be hired for the dance. When I made the request to Police and Safety I was informed that only one student auxiliary would be at the dance,

however there would be one full-time officer assigned to patrol the Reed Union and its external areas.

I informed the president of NSBE of the change in security coverage, and said I had asked that NSBE not be charged for the full-time officer. Subsequently, NSBE was charged only for the student auxiliary at a cost of \$24.00.

I share Mr. Lewis' frustration with the student organization budgeting process. NSBE and several other student organization became recognized after the Student Government budget allocation process for 1990-91 had concluded. SGA has always been encouraged to keep some monies in reserve to allocate to new organizations formed or reactivated after the budget allocation process.

In spite of our advice, SGA decided this past year not to maintain a reserve account. Thus, organizations like NSBE, and organizations forming this semester will have to rely primarily on fund-raising to support their programs. I encourage NSBE and other student organizations to bring their funding concerns to SGA. It is only through dialogue and debate that the budgeting process can be changed.

I met recently with the president of NSBE to discuss many of the issues raised in this letter. At that meeting we discussed how Student Activities can better serve NSBE. I will meet with all club members at NSBE's next meeting to specifically develop a plan of action.

I would like to conclude by thanking Mr. Lewis for encouraging Student Activities to take a critical look at the programs and services we provide. While I feel good about the programs we are developing and those we have in place, I am ever mindful of our need to do what we do better.

David P. Shields, Jr.
Assistant Dean of Student
Services

The last straw

In last week's edition of *The Collegian*, Professor Wolford accused me of a cynical form of doublespeak on the Huck Finn issue, an obvious straw man argument that's just about the last straw here.

He'd have readers believe--and he knows they include students who will take him quite seriously--that I prefer my white males dead (that way they wriggle less when I chew them up in my ravaging feminist craw, yum yum), my literature only politically correct (written by women, minorities, paraplegics, or in braille), my censorship sugar-coated, my orthodoxy rigidly saluted by the classroom victims of my misandry, who probably cannot tell what I'm doing, poor dears, but whom Professor Wolford will undertake to tutor so that they'll know feminist fascism when they see it.

It's almost Halloween, so I'm reminded that last March in these pages, Professor Wolford responded to my hope that the college curriculum would include more works by women and minorities by saying that I offered readers "a candy bar laced with arsenic and presented smilingly to a toddler on Halloween." He also compared to a lawyer who cynically gets her guilty client off--and, significantly, masterfully, the client he imagines I represent is a rapist.

Claiming to speak for the underdogs and victims, he calls mine the "establishment" view, the orthodoxy, the hard fist of power coming down on the brow of the little guy. And I mean guy here, because, like another colleague, Professor Wolford thinks I'd like to put the white male on the endangered species list, and then contribute to his extinction. (Right. That's why at least three quarters of the literature I have taught in the past ten years is written by white

males--dead, but very much alive in my classrooms.)

Understand that all of this isn't about me at all--nor, really, about Professor Wolford. This is a symbolic dialogue between the conservative male and the liberal feminist. If I'd hired Professor Wolford to write these things, I couldn't have asked for a more classic textbook example of what insecure (Omigod, she called him insecure! Quick, everyone, cross your legs!) men say when they feel threatened by a small contingent of people asking for equal opportunity.

Chet represents here the white male academics who, in actual positions of comfort and privilege, cry wolf (and witch) when women and minorities rattle their chains. This is the same voice that says affirmative action has gone too far, that the world order will be overturned by radicals, that all this fuss below deck is really a thunderbolt from the sky.

Nonsense--and Professor Wolford knows it's nonsense. When he calls mine the establishment view, he is the one doing doublespeak, and deliberately. An examination of his own rhetoric would reveal the consummate use of every cynical strategy of which he accuses me. In a country where women and minorities are underrepresented in legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government and of society, white males are hardly in danger of being taken over by us.

And many of them see things quite differently from Professor Wolford. If you want a perspective on these matters that makes my own look pale and perhaps even conservative, take a look at John Coleman's letter to the Times-News last week. Male, white, alive.

Come on over on Halloween, Chet. I've got something for you.

Diana Hume George
Professor of English and
Women's Studies

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