

opinions

The Daily Collegian
Tuesday, April 14, 1987

editorial opinion

100 years young

Eighteen hundred and eighty seven: a year of celebration and of firsts. The medical field experienced a breakthrough as another analgesic was discovered; Queen Victoria celebrated her Golden Jubilee; and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle tantalized the world with his first Sherlock Holmes masterpiece, *A Study in Scarlet*.

And in April of that year, the *Free Lance* — Penn State's first news magazine — graced the presence of the College community.

One hundred years, tens of thousands of students (and hundreds of failed exams) later, *The Daily Collegian* celebrates 100 years of service, dedication and commitment to both the fields of business and journalism.

The University has long endured wars, the Great Depression, student sit-ins, riots and demonstrations. It has celebrated two national football championships, academic excellence, a man on the moon, desegregation of schools with the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education*, and the world's first test-tube baby.

Through space shuttle tragedies and the loss of great leaders like the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and John F. Kennedy, it has cried.

And through it all, *The Daily Collegian* has reported with candor.

In the past 10 decades, every Penn State president from George Atherton to Bryce Jordan and many others have at one time or another had a gripe with the *Collegian's* reporting or editorials.

As students, we have learned, we have grown, and yes, we've even made mistakes. Undeniably, we are not faultless.

For example, the paper suffered the consequences of inadvertently running racist felt wanted advertisements in January 1979. "The *Collegian* Incident" brought forth many internal changes at the paper, but ink from the advertisements continued to blot race relations between the black and white communities for quite some time. Clearly, we were wrong and we were justly chastised.

We've made other mistakes since then as well — and we've displeased many readers by publishing stories that some people thought should never have seen print.

When students who opposed University investments in South African-related companies built a shantytown in front of Willard Building last spring, critics objected to the constant play the protesters received on Page 1.

This year, articles and editorials that take a hard line against the role secret honor societies play in campus life, or criticize ineffective student government, or cite the University administration for its latest insensitive blunder, have brought complaints that state the *Collegian* is being ignorant, insensitive or biased.

Quite often our critics are right. Many times our articles omit facts or lack perspective or rely too much on one side of an issue. And, there are

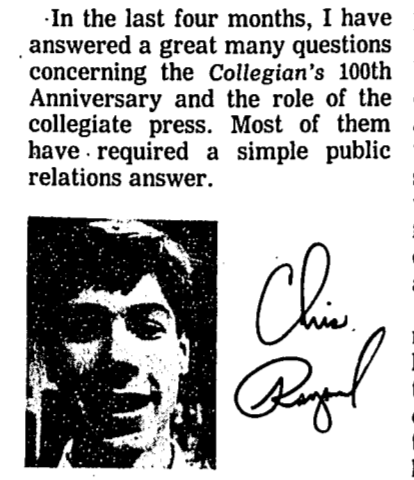
times when our columns and editorials avoid taking any sort of firm stand. But if we had allowed the fear of making mistakes deter us from putting out our newspaper, the first issue of the *Free Lance* never would have made it off the printing press 100 years ago. And today Penn State would not have its financially independent student-run newspaper — a truly rare phenomenon in college journalism — which, despite its flaws, has won myriad national honors and serves as an important check on the power of administrators and student leaders.

We cannot promise to be perfect; we never have. What we can do is promise to do what we have done — to work as hard as we can and subject our work to constant scrutiny in the light of the journalistic principles we strive to uphold.

To the alumni and current staff members who worked so hard to bring the *Collegian* to its centennial, happy birthday. This is your day. And to the Penn State community we have served for the last hundred years: thank you for reading faithfully.

As we have realized, journalism is not a profession, it is a calling. And, because of the love and dedication that countless staff members have had for the *Collegian* we have reached the hundredth year plateau. While we are proud to recall our past success, we will continue to reach for the millennium.

The tales of hockey players and politicians



In the last four months, I have answered a great many questions concerning the *Collegian's* 100th Anniversary and the role of the collegiate press. Most of them have required a simple public relations answer.

Those who have asked me these questions have been surprised to learn that I am not a hockey player or a politician. In fact, I am a journalist.

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In order to judge the *Collegian* by other college papers, therefore, one must recognize that it averages 24 broadcast pages a day; that students make nearly all decisions concerning news content; that it is financially independent from the University; and that its equipment and facilities are fairly advanced.

These distinctions alone separate the *Collegian* from all but a handful of college newspapers nationwide. It also provides its editors with a lot more options than most college journalists have.

College editors can afford to extend their coverage into state and national issues. They can afford to pay a continuous flow of wire service reports from around the world. And most importantly, they can afford to make decisions concerning news content without the fear of disciplinary action from the University and other officials or a cut in financial aid.

That final distinction is what very often determines a reader's opinion on our political stance. If we touch a nerve with our coverage, we are liberals. If we don't, we are conservatives.

The prevailing atmosphere on campus can also play a role as Ivan Holmes pointed out in a recent study of college newspapers: "Today the important thing on campus is to make the university look good," he wrote in the *Columbia Journalism Review*. "So a university newspaper that tries to publish honest hard news is cut off on every front. It doesn't even go down one way to release the exact figures; if a student is arrested no one wants to release the facts; if a coach is caught cheating, or a professor is found to be incompetent, the newspaper is at fault for bringing the news to the attention of the public."

Thus, no matter how hard college reporters work, they will all be beset with cries of foul play from both sides — the liberal and the conservative.

The *Daily Collegian* is not immune to the pressures applied to all newspapers. Our reporters can be refused entrance into press conferences. They can be bullied and badgered by outside sources. And our editors can be threatened in any number of ways.

The key to our success, however, is that we can afford to make decisions contrary to those threats and still survive as an organization. We can afford to exercise the same news judgment as professional newspapers though we may be criticized for being radicals or lapdogs.

I don't mean to imply that we are above reproach. In fact, we welcome criticism. But in this the 100th year of publication, we are an institution of liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans, hawks and doves.

We are an institution devoted to uncovering the issues on this campus whether they concern administration, the student body, or simply the student population.

And that, my friends, is the strongest stance we take.

Chris Raymond is a senior majoring in Journalism and the editor of *The Daily Collegian*.

Some other Top Tens

You won't see them on Letterman, but they'll do for Penn Staters

Speaking of macaroni and cheese flavored lollipops, did you know that David Letterman's 40th birthday was last Sunday? Since Congress is still up in the air about whether they should declare his birthday a national holiday or not, I will dedicate my column to this great man by listing a number of *Top Ten* lists that deal with Penn State. However, as we all know, Penn State is cutting back on everything, so none of the following lists actually have 10 items.



So, direct from the home office in Scottsdale, Arizona, here are today's *Top Ten* lists. The top seven most popular works read by Penn State students:

- 1) *Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx
- 2) *Cojo* by Stephen King
- 3) *Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien
- 4) *Life of the Herp Seal* by National Geographic
- 5) *Spiderman meets Godzilla's nephew* by Marvel Comics
- 6) *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss
- 7) *Here I sit broken hearted and other assorted bathroom wall poetry.*

The top six most common things lost at a fraternity party:

- 1) Scarf
- 2) Coat
- 3) Umbrella
- 4) Date

The top six duties of any USG president and vice-president:

- 1) Attend all University demonstrations and sell popcorn
- 2) Tell Bryce how "becoming" he is
- 3) Pick out clothes for Joepa to wear for next day
- 4) Sing "Old Man River" at Fiji Island
- 5) Clean up marshmallows in freshman section after Penn State-Pitt game
- 6) Throw out the first drunk at the annual faculty-alumni baseball game

The top eight things read in the *Collegian* by students:

- 1) Police Log
- 2) Personals
- 3) *Peanuts*
- 4) *Doonesbury*
- 5) *Bloom County*
- 6) *Far Side*
- 7) Any column next to a picture of a really geeky looking guy
- 8) Any article with the words "sexual dysfunction" in the title
- 9) The top seven things least heard at a Penn State Board of Trustees meeting:
- 1) "Just who do we think we are?"
- 2) "Let's try to recruit more minorities to Penn State."
- 3) "Let's build a free parking lot on campus for students instead of faculty."
- 4) "Let's stop treating the students like babies and start treating them like adults."
- 5) "Why don't we lower tuition this year?"
- 6) "So it's unanimous. We'll divest everything from South Africa, tomorrow."
- 7) "Where do you live up here?"
- 8) "Where do you live up here?"
- 9) "I love frat parties. Do you love frat parties?"
- 10) "Let's change the Lion Ambassador's uniform to leather." and "Luke, I am your father, you can't resist the Dark Side."

The top four April Fools Day jokes:

- 1) "Johnny, guess what? The rabbit died."
- 2) "You folks called, they'll be here in five minutes."
- 3) "Don't study now, the Physics test isn't until next week."
- 4) "It's not raining today."
- 5) "Hey chickee, chickee, chickee."
- 6) "We're off to see the Wizard."
- 7) "You have the right to remain silent."
- 8) "I don't feel very well."
- 9) "I feel like I've been hit by a train."
- 10) "I'm on the football team."

The top six things heard on College Avenue at two on a Saturday morning:

- 1) "I fall down and go 'boom!'"
- 2) "Close your eyes and touch your nose with your index fingers."
- 3) "I don't feel very well."
- 4) "Hey chickee, chickee, chickee."
- 5) "We're off to see the Wizard."
- 6) "You have the right to remain silent."

The top five Penn Staters and their famous relatives:

- 1) Milton Eisenhower and his brother Dwight D. Eisenhower, former President of the United States
- 2) Fred Lewis Pattee and his granddaughter Peppermint Patty, close friend of Charlie Brown
- 3) St. Joe Paterno and his uncle, *The Big Guy* of heaven
- 4) University president Bryce Jordan and his favorite son, Michael Jordan, pro basketball player
- 5) The top nine things said by a freshman at a fraternity party:
- 1) "What's your name?"
- 2) "What's your major?"
- 3) "Where do you come from?"
- 4) "Where do you live up here?"
- 5) "I love frat parties. Do you love frat parties?"
- 6) "My name's Felix, I'm pre-med."
- 7) "I'm a junior."

The top four lines used to pick up girls:

- 1) "Wanna be married for a night?"
- 2) "Hi, I'm on the football team."
- 3) "I'm majoring in marine biology, do you want to go upstairs and see my mussels and cockles?"
- 4) "Would you like to help me with my Health Ed 46 homework?"
- 5) "It's interesting."
- 6) "It's different."
- 7) "It's unique."
- 8) "Wow man, did you know you have gray hair?"

The top five techniques taught in subliminal advertising:

- 1) "It's interesting."
- 2) "It's different."
- 3) "It's unique."
- 4) "Wow man, did you know you have gray hair?"
- 5) "I love frat parties. Do you love frat parties?"

The top five things that the University hasn't restricted in the last 10 years. (See top five list above).

The top five comments on my columns:

- 1) "It's interesting."
- 2) "It's different."
- 3) "It's unique."
- 4) "Wow man, did you know you have gray hair?"
- 5) "I love frat parties. Do you love frat parties?"

Matt Gross is a junior majoring in English and psychology and a columnist for *The Daily Collegian*. His column appears every other Tuesday.

Please Write

Are you angry at a recent editorial, article or column printed in *The Daily Collegian* and are your friends are thoroughly bored with the fact that you've reread it at dinner for the last three nights in a row?

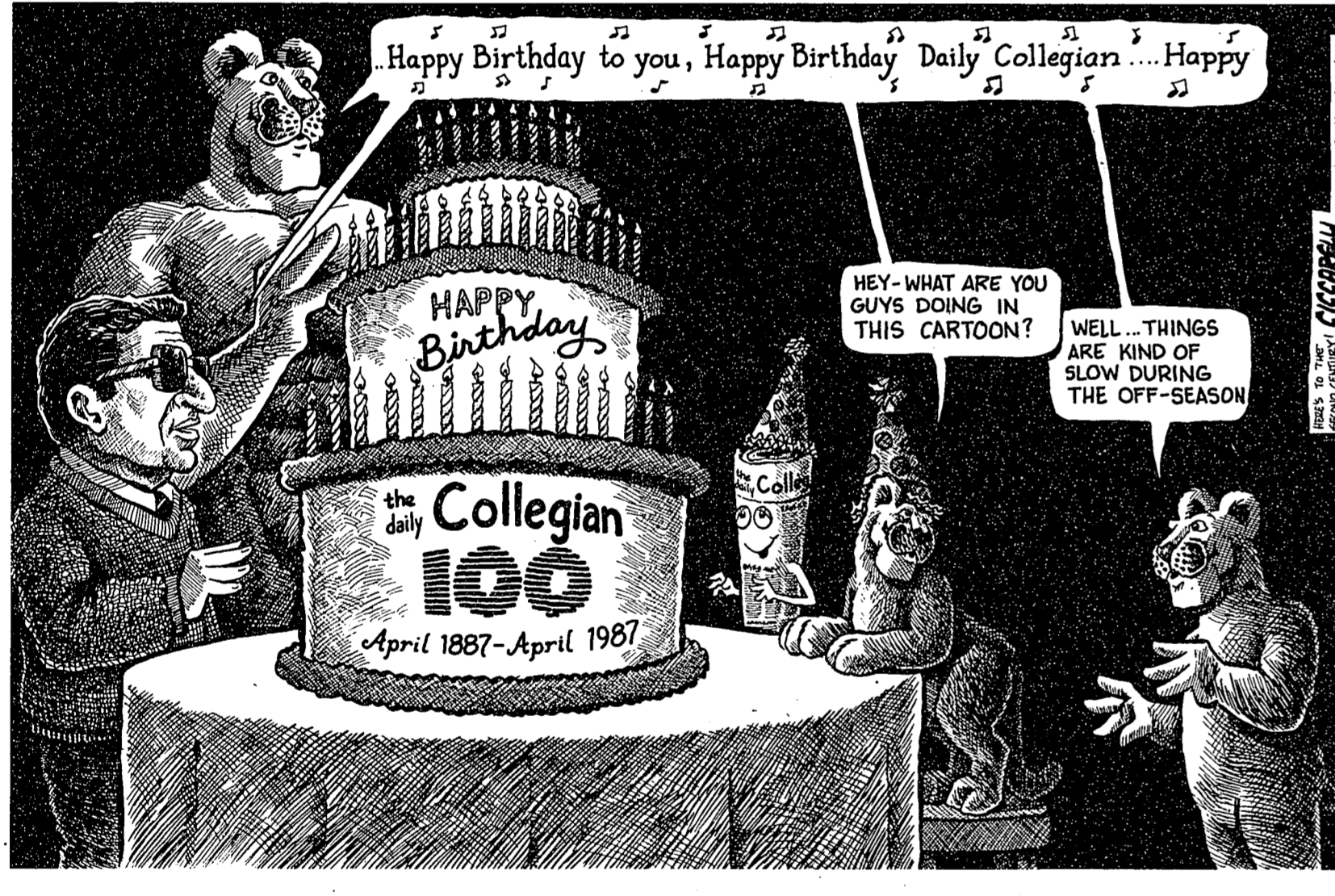
Don't bore your friends or ruin a good dinner, write a letter-to-the-editor and let others in Happy Valley know what's on your mind.

The Daily Collegian welcomes letters from students, faculty, staff, alumni, and area residents concerning current issues and ideas locally, nationally or internationally.

All letters should be typed, double-spaced, and no longer than two pages. If you believe a topic merits more of an in-depth statement then you may submit a forum. Forums also should be typed, double-spaced, but may be up to three pages long.

Author or authors should include name, ID number, local address and telephone number on each letter. Writers should submit their letters in person to the *Collegian* office in 126 Carnegie during business hours, 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Due to a large volume of letters, we cannot guarantee that all will be printed. Opinion Editors Terry Mutchler and Jim Higgins reserve the right to edit letters for length and also hold letters that are judged libelous or in poor taste.



the daily Collegian
Tuesday April 14, 1987
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Letters Policy: The *Daily Collegian* encourages comments on news coverage, editorial policy, and University affairs. Letters must be typewritten, double-spaced and no longer than one and one-half pages. Forums must also be typewritten, double-spaced and no longer than three pages. Students' letters should include semester standing, major and campus of the writer. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification of the letter.

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Worthy Words
"Aim for professional excellence — but never at the sacrifice of human pride."
— Paula Froke, former editor of *The Daily Collegian*, 1981-82

reader opinion
Congrats
Congratulations upon the 100th anniversary of one of the best college papers in America, *The Daily Collegian*.

The Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi has honored *The Daily Collegian* as "best" in recent years, so my compliment is well-founded.

The crucible of a college newspaper where students are primarily responsible for the quality of the publication is among the best ways to learn about the joys and pressures of real journalism. As a one-time student newspaper editor, I can appreciate what a wonderful opportunity it offers for testing the realities of enterprise, talent and judgment.

Just think of how many journalists worked in 100 years of publication, who went on to serve the public!

No way! He's as smart as anyone else in his major. It's the education system.

Ever since the school system became an agent by which we assimilate all people into our society to be "Good Americans," it hasn't been the same. It seems to be more important to educate our children to live in society than to teach them skills. Why then, must you ask why high school classes are so hard? It is easy. Many teachers simply can't teach. That is certainly apparent on campus as well as in high school. One can go to class, copy, take notes, and read the text book and not have learned a thing. Then, students are expected to take a test on what the course had covered. A test, according to Webster, is defined as a series of questions or problems designed to determine knowledge or intelligence. A test according to many teachers seems to be either how much one knows of material not covered in that class (like Math 140 of which a knowledge of some Math 141 concepts are certainly helpful), how well one can guess, or how well one can guess what will and will not appear on the exam. Oh yes, and how well one cheats, which still occurs in college much like it does in high school. Do these tests really reflect what materials one does know. Some do and some don't. It is however the ones that don't that

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