Admin. Position on Student Art

Of current interest among students and faculty of CSCSB is the controversy over the policy of displaying student art in public areas of our campus. Since many views and interpretations have arisen, and since communication of information on this issue has been somewhat lacking, the Pawprint is attempting to clarify and focus on the points involved. Tuesday, the Pawprint interviewed Dr. Gerald Scherba, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, to learn the details on the Administration's position.

During the discussion, Dr. Scherba confirmed that there is at present no formal college policy regarding the display of student art in public areas on campus. The main reason for the lack of formal policy is that the Art major is new, and student artists are only now beginning to want to see their work displayed. This academic year has seen the first formal request for such a display.

Dr. Scherba cited two basic freedoms involved in the determination of this policy: the freedom of the student to publicly display his work, and the freedom of the viewer to choose not to see art works. The importance of adopting an official policy is that it must protect both freedoms concerned.

Last year, the college provided the Art Department with BS 101 as a "gallery" for student art. This year, it is planned that PS 13 will be the gallery when construction is completed by March 1, 1969. It is important to make clear the distinction between a gallery and public display. A gallery is a separate environment whereby the artists have freedom in the selection of art for display, but such activity in the area of public access requires a policy which recognizes the freedoms of both the artist and the viewer.

As of last week, Dr. Scherba revealed, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate has sent a proposal by Dr. Jesse Hinoika to the Federation of California Teachers Association. Although there is no formal policy, it is "current practice" to sanction display only in a gallery structure, and not in areas of public domain. An example which Dr. Scherba constructed to illustrate how the freedoms of a minority might infringe upon the rights of a majority involved the idea of a "captive audience." The cafeteria is designated as a place in which students and faculty may enjoy their meals. If, for example, the art theme on display were concerned with the horrors of war, depicting starving Biafran children, torn bodies, etc., then this could be deemed an infringement to be confronted with adverse concepts when considered from the context of eating, although the nature of the artistic material is valid in its own right.

Dr. Scherba's personal reaction to this issue stressed the value of utilizing the appropriate, established channels available in the campus structure for the solution of problems. CSCSB is made up of the regular Regents' meeting, the proper committee, receiving recommendations from those committees, and finally adopting the best solution as policy. He further said that in the future, a formal policy protects any minority party from foisting their own bag upon the general (Continued on page 4).
The Administration's position on the issue of student art displayed in the Cafeteria Building is rational and logical; it is prudent, sensible and reasonable. Yet, it is being challenged. Is it justly so challenged?

Dr. Sherba's statements, representing the Administration's views, involve valid concerns for the freedoms of minority and majority rights. It is obviously a desirable approach to design a campus policy concerning the selection of student art work to be displayed in public areas which will both protect the viewer from confrontation with objectionable material and provide the artist with a public media of display. However, the assumption that official policy need be adopted before student art can be displayed is imposing a negative value judgement and underestimating the quality of taste of those who would supervise the displays.

Simply because there is no formal established policy in existence constitutes little or no justification for the suppression of student art during its presentation. Dr. Sherba is being biased. Immature in the administration's present "current practice" of prohibiting the display of art in public areas is the assumption that whatever art would be displayed would offend the general taste and attitudes of students. Isn't this prejudging the perceptiveness of our Art Department? Does it take any gigantic stretch of our imaginations to give Dr. Harrison and Bill Haney the basic credit for possessing minimal intelligence in the selection of the art to be displayed?

The total implications and corollaries of this issue are ticklish and complex. There are very basic, rational, undeniable freedoms involved on both sides of the controversy: freedom of the artist, freedom of the viewer not to be thrown into a "captive audience" situation, academic freedom, minority and majority rights. The pro/con discussions leave many a student with emotionally charged bags of criticism, believing this issue to represent a supreme example of adherence to minority rights. Properly. But with a maximum quantity of information at his disposal, the student cannot escape a moral state of frustration and emotional concern.

What the Administration has not concerned itself with IS the validity of this emotional reaction on behalf of the student body. Given the above, we frequently assume — that they are irrational, illogical, narrow, irresponsible and hasty — they still remain as real, here-and-now symptoms of a student viewpoint. And it is unjust to ignore a response simply because you don't consider it to fit into the sphere of cold rationality. What is the actual danger of displaying student art now, while the Hirokazu Hiroaka proposal is still in the bureaucratic machine? Wouldn't the students, by-and-large, let the Art Department know if they were offended or disappointed with the display? And given the possibility that there is no immediate reaction, wouldn't this in fact aid the college in determining the criteria for selection of appropriate art subject matters?

Art is life, and student art is part of our life on this campus. Although there are such practical problems as funding, master plans, available space, construction plans which contribute to the origins of this issue, the immediate facts are that the Art studio is underground in the basement of BS, and there will not be a gallery until March 1. Admittedly, these factors do not warrant the ugly cry of suppression. But, the prohibition of AT LEAST a temporary display in the Cafeteria Building of student art is a position which tends on the thin ice of that cry.

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Objection

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Letters

I would like to object to the policies of the school paper which all students are forced to support monetarily. Apparently, the administration believes in freedom of the press, Mark Trenam and Dr. Van Marter approved the article by Don Lannon on feminine deodorant problems. I do not deny Mr. Lannon's right to write such an atrociously out of taste article, but I do object to this garbage being published in a paper supposedly short on space (or talent). I also object to my authoritarian right Mark reserves to edit all material submitted to the paper-over or under. This new low in campus journalism contributes to the feeling of student APATHY, as students no longer waste their time reading the substance of articles but only the yellow journalistic tendencies.

Tom Hayes

Dear Chris and Tom:

I fully agree that the subject matter portrayed in Don Lannon's article of last week involved that twilight zone of subjective taste. Yet, I also felt Don had done an excellent job of satirizing the absurd, repulsive extremes of the Madison Avenue advertising game. The material was lifted from a popular, nation-wide magazine.

F. C. R Prince

Elsen on Picasso

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Dr. Alvin H. Young, a professor of Art History at Stanford University, will lecture on "Picasso as a Sculptor." The presentation, open to the public without charge, will feature photographs of the Physical Sciences Building. In his field, late 19th and early 20th century art will speak at California State College, San Bernardino at 2:30 p.m., Wednesday, February 26. Dr. Albert Eisen, a professor of Art History at Stanford University, will lecture on "Picasso as a Sculptor." The presentation, open to the public without charge, will feature photographs of the Physical Sciences Building.

Dr. Eisen is a director of the College Art Assn. of America, and a co-founder of the Committee for the Development of Art in Negro Colleges. He has served as a consultant to the U. S. Office of Education and as a member of the Advisory Board of the Kinsey Institute for Sex Research.

Dr. Elsen's lecture will be a presentation of the Lectures and Public Affairs' committee.

Robert T. Goss and Judge J. Steve Williams, will be moderated by Professor Leslie Van Marter. Admission is free and audience participation is urged.

J. Steve Williams, a former San Bernardino County and Chairman of the State Social Welfare Board, was recently appointed as a Special Assistant to Governor Reagan. A native of Idaho, Williams grew up in the Los Angeles area. He graduated from Loyola University and moved to San Bernardino in 1950. Besides practicing law for more than six years, he has served as chief deputy in the District Attorney's Office and the Superior Court Commissioner with the United States Department of Justice since 1957. Dr. Robert T. Goss, born in North Little Rock, Arkansas, moved to L.A. at the age of five. He enrolled in the U.S. Army and learned from a co-founder of the Committee for the Development of art in Negro Colleges. He has served as a consultant to the U.S. Office of Education and as a member of the Advisory Board of the Kinsey Institute for Sex Research.

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Newman Presents Draft Panel

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Interviews By Harvey Friedman

LARRY WHITE
Junior, Psychology: "I think it would be a good opportunity to get outside of your normal environment and to get to know people who have interests or experiences that may be different from your own." 

KAREN NIELSEN
Junior, Mathematics: "I don't see any reason why student art shouldn't be displayed on this campus. There should be a policy designating where on campus it is to be displayed. I'd hate to crawl through abstract metal sculpture to get to a class!"

LINDA PIEPER
Graduate Student, Education: "I agree with displaying student art publicly. It would bring the art department into the forefront of the college community. Perhaps a committee (composed of students, faculty, and administration) could be formed to review and establish guidelines for student art exhibits on the campus. By placing student art in public places on the campus, dedicated to the destruction of American-ism..." 

HERB ADAMS
Senior, Music: "I don't think that students should be able to exhibit their art in some other place than the basement of the Tim Building. The censorship of the display of student art is another example of the closed and small-mindedness of the school administration. Prints and old masterpieces were allowed to be publicly displayed in the cafes, but student art works that are representative of this college community were not allowed to be exhibited. This can only manifest further student unrest and stagnation of the educational process.

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