

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE ABOVE CARTOON HAS BEEN CENSORED FOR YOUR MORAL PROTECTION.

Home: A nice place to visit, but ...

Students find refuge from reality under parents' roof

Leaving home for college is a frightful and bold adventure. But, as my friends tell it, it's nowhere near as unnerving as returning home.



ROBERT VASQUEZ
Columnist

One of my roommates put it this way, "Home is a nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there." So often, I've heard the stories of kids going back home, only to find that it wasn't the same place they left. Some kids say that their parents are too prohibitive and watch them too closely. It seems that once the kids have tasted freedom, they find the shackles at home just a little too tight; the leash a little too short.

Others say that their parents drive them crazy with too much attention. The kids aren't used to having their parents around and they seem to trip over each other. Either way, the parents can't seem to win.

The problem is a common one. I've been told, "No matter how long your gone, no matter how far you go, once you leave the nest, you can never really go back home. I wasn't sure what it meant, but it sounded profound. So I said, "Thanks, Mom. I appreciate the advice."

She smiled and said, "No, son, that wasn't advice. That was a fact. You can't come back. Your father and I have sold your bed and are renting out your room for scientific studies. They're conducting experiments on the fungus and mildew you left there."

Actually, it wasn't my mother who filled me in on this little fact of life. It was friends from college and high school who spoke with the weathered voice of experience. They had learned the hard way. They had taken the big step and moved into places of their own. Struggling with rent and towering piles of bills, my friends seemed content to tough it out alone.

They partied till the wee hours of morning, no curfew hovering above their spinning heads. They skipped breakfast when they felt like it and drank beer late in the afternoon when they rose to greet the new day.

And when the kegs had run dry, when the parties were over, and the bills had finally caught up, the prodigals would return home where their masochistic parents waited patiently, ever happy to lend a helping, albeit firm, hand.

I've never understood the problem with kids returning home. The thing that perplexes me is that parents allow

children to return at all. So many kids talk as if their parents were lucky to have them back. Some, maybe most, parents feel that way. But other parents are only too happy to nudge their chicks out of the nest. One lady's advice to me was, "Don't ever have children. They cost a fortune. And they never leave."

I was only visiting when I went home this weekend. It had been months since I last made the pilgrimage and I was looking forward to the visit. I wondered when I would finally suffer the same problems my friends had mentioned.

I would be careful, I determined, not to confront my parents with the problem, should one arise. I would silently endure their good intentions and escape at the end of the weekend, both parties unscathed, and return only for Christmas and Thanksgiving, at which time they traditionally stuff large birds and roast them.

But no problem arose. Actually it was kind of nice to visit home again. My parents have always been accommodating. And my trips home always prove a great escape from the brutal reality I have found in college.

From the moment I arrive until the moment I leave, my parents' every move is geared toward making my stay as comfortable and pleasant as possible. The places we eat are always my decision. My father's favorite chair is always offered to me. My mother looks for a good movie or event that I might enjoy. If I go out, there is no mention of a curfew. And in the morning, I'm allowed to sleep as late as I wish, until I wake up to the sound of hushed voices, my parents whispering so as not to wake me.

As I sit at the table, eating a breakfast that has been prepared and served to my specifications, I can't help but wonder if these people are aware that I'm content to eat a can of cold ravioli when I'm away at college. I wonder if they're aware that I rush from work to school only to rush back to work again. I guess they are. Maybe they feel sorry for me.

It's kind of strange to be treated so well, but I'm not complaining. When I'm at home, I'm treated like a visiting dignitary and given my diplomatic immunity, I can do no wrong.

So many kids complain about their parents when they go home. I'm just glad they're still there. I still don't know why they treat me so well when I return, though. Maybe they're just trying to show how grateful they are that I left home.

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Society views marriage as religious privilege, not right

I read Matt Dickerson's column on marriage recently, and noticed a disturbing aspect of marriage was missing.

The missing aspect involved the fundamental definition of marriage. Dickerson describes marriage as a legal, economic union between two humans. I definitely differ with that view.

Marriage is a religious commitment in which a man and a woman proclaim to the community (local and world-wide) that they intend to be together and grow toward God (I am being purposely nonspecific about which religion). Couples invite everyone they vaguely know to proclaim this fact, and regrettably to obtain gifts a symptom of this legal/economic attitude. What Dickerson describes is how society reacts to marriages, not the essence of marriage.

Marriage has religious bases deep in the cultures of nearly all people around the world. Whether Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Islamic, etc.; marriage is definitely a religious thing. Elaborate ceremonies are held in religious settings, often a church. Many Hindus spend four days getting married, and the whole village (2,000+) is invited! Here in the West, we have it easy.

Society has chosen to accord special recognition to marriage because it realizes the importance of such a profound act. It is our own democratic society (Texas) which has chosen to legally recognize marriage between a man and a woman, and not legally recognize the marriages of homosexuals. This is true democracy, open democracy, where the majority rules.

Marriage and adoption are related issues. Why should a judge assign a child to a homosexual couple when little is known about homosexual parenting ability (as Dickerson states)? Why take the chance? Partners in homosexual unions who are mismatched should remember that many heterosexual couples are also mismatched due to concealment. For instance, one or both sets of parents may object to the couple. Quite common in heterosexual relationships. Liberalizing the definition of marriage and the legal requirements could

be dangerous. Why can I not marry two or more people (polygamy)? Could this be a "basic human right?" I hope not; think of the problems.

Past societies and cultures have experimented with these ideas and discovered they do not work or produce successful marriages. Why can't I marry a primate? Sounds ludicrous, but Dickerson states that homosexuals should be able to marry the mate of their choice.

Society already places many bounds on the legal recognition of marriage such as age, consanguinity, who may perform the ceremony, mental capacity of either partner, etc. Very few people appear to contest these restrictions even though some people's "rights" are limited. Some people in Arkansas do manage to marry off their 14-year-old daughters, but that is for another column.

There are also complicated procedures and nerve racking times one must go through to end a marriage. Divorce is indeed an ugly occurrence in the U.S. or anywhere. Seldom is it justified. Other cultures have high societal pressure against divorce so that couples are nearly forced to resolve their problems instead of evading them.

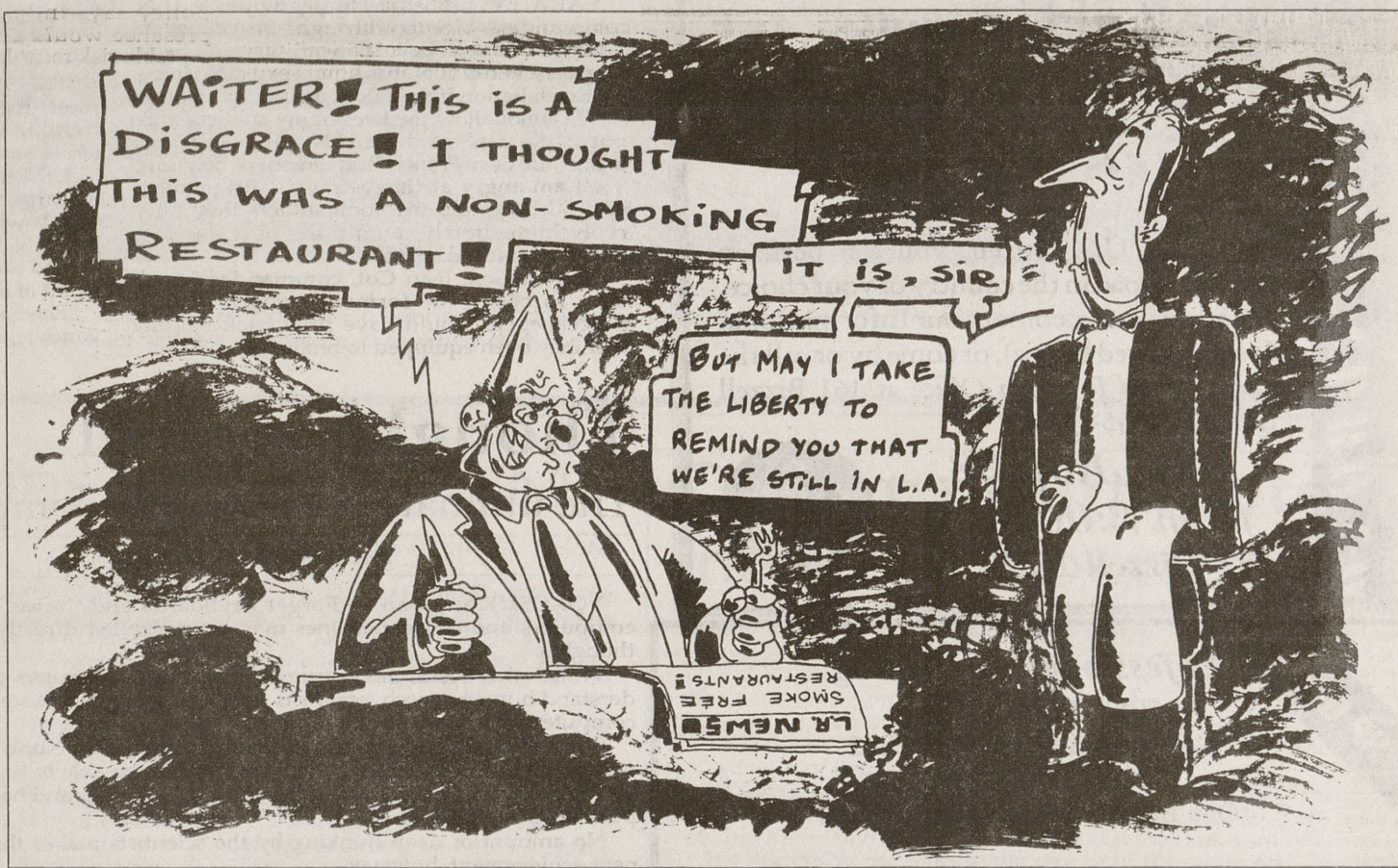
Most religious people would say the key to a successful marriage involves developing three foundations to their relationship- a spiritual, emotional, and physical (in this order). I doubt many people would list legal or economic foundations for having a successful marriage. These are simply side-issues of marriage which usually become important during times of trouble or divorce (i.e. times when the three foundations are weak).

Homosexual marriages which are unstable or experiencing promiscuity (as Dickerson discusses) lack these three foundations. Society's legal non-recognition is not the cause.

I personally do not recognize homosexual marriages since I subscribe to a definition of marriage apparently far different from Dickerson's. Legal recognition of marriage does not stabilize marriages as Dickerson suggests; the three foundations do stabilize.

Marriage is not a right which protects couples and their children; it is a confirmation of the couples' desire to grow toward God. Marriage is not a basic human right, it is religious privilege which the state and society have chosen to recognize.

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MAIL CALL

A&I alumni should know when to quit

What a shame that Dick Watson Texas A&I class of '61, is wasting so much effort on such a worthless fight. Certainly any Aggie would also fight a change in the name of this great University, but there comes a time when you just have to suck it up and take it. That time has passed, Mr. Watson. Also, the article in Monday's Battalion left me with the impression that Mr. Watson and his colleagues are somewhat confused. First of all Mr. Watson, you are not being forced to become an Aggie. If you think you are an Aggie, it's in your own mind. No student of A&I, nor former student, will ever consider you an Aggie. You may think of 'Aggie' as a label placed on students of a university with

the letters 'A' and 'M' in its name, but being an Aggie is something you could never understand. Not only will you not be labeled an Aggie, you will never be an Aggie.

Secondly, Carl Douglas has vowed to throw away his A&I ring and diploma if the name is changed. The logic behind throwing away the symbols of the memories and accomplishments from the place you supposedly love so dearly eludes me. My Aggie Senior Ring means a lot more to me than just a name, and it will take something as drastic as losing all ten fingers to keep me from wearing it.

I want to leave you with a little saying I have on my wall:

Lord, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,

The courage to change the things I can,

And the wisdom to know the difference.

Maybe I'm wrong and you can change things, Mr. Watson, but it seems to me that your wisdom has failed you.

Jesse Lynch
Class of '93

No proof oppression reason for depression

A senior psychology major (Tracey Jones, June 28) highlighted the importance of depression in women, which is a major public service.

I have a different point of view, however, on the potential causes of depression in women. The argument posed was that women are at a greater risk than men for depression because women are more oppressed or more repressed than men.

Correlation is not causation. To illustrate: In the United States, more blacks than whites are at or below the poverty level. More blacks than whites also suffer sickle cell disease. Therefore, the analogous argument would be that poverty causes sickle cell disease.

Not true. Sickle cell disease is caused by a genetic defect in the structure of hemoglobin. The disease itself may bankrupt a family thereby causing

poverty, but there is no evidence that poverty causes the disease.

As for oppression, repression, and depression: What are the facts?

- Some forms of depression affect men and women equally; others do not.
- More severe forms of major depression affect men and women equally, while less severe forms are more likely in women than men.
- Prior to puberty, boys and girls are at equal risk for all forms of clinical depression. After puberty, women's risk rises to two to three times that of men's.
- Debate (theories, not facts) surrounds the possible protective roles of testosterone, estrogen or progesterone.
- The degree of status attainable or actually obtained by women has not yet been found to relate to the risk for clinical depression.
- Self-anger as a cause of depression has not been supported; in fact, much research indicates it is incorrect.
- Some research suggests that women are, in fact, in better touch with their feelings than men or more sensitive to others' feelings and emotional expressions. No research to my knowledge has suggested a contrary view.

My response does not dispute the need for equality between the sexes. This is not only fair, but long overdue. Whether it will cure or prevent clinical depression in women has not been di-

rectly studied.

To date, the facts do not fit the theory that oppressing women caused depressed women, that women are more repressed than men or that anger turned on the self causes depression.

Political agendas have begun to selectively call on science or scientific "facts" for support. Women deserve to be equally treated. You bet. Science needs to be objectively regarded, fairly cited and protected from political agendas, even if the agenda has merit.

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