



## Declaration of Independence needs more consideration

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer,

while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

The Declaration establishes that humans have rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, among others.

Inherent in every right is a corresponding responsibility. Rights tend to disintegrate if they are not exercised or protected.

If a majority of Americans as individuals will not accept the responsibilities attendant to those rights, those responsibilities will be exercised by a minority.

The political disillusionment of many young people today leads one to believe that there may be a crisis involving fundamental human rights in the United States in the near future.

Individuals must continue to participate in the democratic process or else be willing to submit themselves to the laws of a governing elite.

Eventually, when the rights established at the founding are forgotten, and the people feel they are not being represented, the only way open to the people is the exercise of the last right clearly established in the Declaration — the right to revolt.

Every American at this time in our history should ask himself if he has fulfilled his responsibilities and truly deserves the rights granted him.

— Jerry Needham

## Editorial PE grading unfair

Texas A&M's present system of averaging required Physical Education grades into a student's GPR is extremely unfair since it results in discrimination against non-athletes.

Academically capable students, while they should remain physically fit, should not be penalized for a lack of physical prowess. The present PE grading system does just that — it punishes the student who is not athletically inclined; it lowers his GPR, thereby influencing his chances for admittance into professional or graduate school or his chances for employment.

Required physical education certainly has an admirable purpose. Students should maintain physical as well as mental health; the two are virtually inseparable. But should a student be graded on the level of proficiency he achieves in a sport? Should he be graded not on the progress he makes in a sport as an individual, but as compared to the rest of his class, a class which might contain former professional athletes or Olympic hopefuls?

Although many PE instructors are generous with their grade points and attempt to grade students on their progressive mastery of a sport, a great many of them grade on a fixed scale of achievement: you must run so fast for an A, so fast for a B, etc. Never mind that you have just been released from the hospital and are recovering from an advanced case of hepatitis. Still other instructors are more equitable in their grading, grading students on a comparative basis and giving a certain percentage of A's and B's. Never mind that half the swimming team is in your Beginning Swimming class, or the high

school state 4-A champ is in your tennis class.

Granted, other courses on campus are graded on a competitive basis rather than upon individual achievement, but one of the most important functions of a university is to educate a student: to expand and challenge his mental powers, to advance his mind. Required PE courses, while they serve an important purpose, require little in the way of thinking; they merely require physical ability. A reasonably alert horse could earn the highest grade in an aerobics class, while a muscular Labrador Retriever could outlast half the students in a conditioning swimming course.

Why then, since physical education courses bear so little relation to the mind, should grades in these courses be entered into a student's academic GPR?

Certainly it is dangerous for a student to become so absorbed in obtaining high grades that he agonizes over a C or a D on his transcript. No student should value grades so much that a low grade in a one hour course could disturb him. After all, we are constantly reminded that the inflated importance of grades is one of the major faults of modern education.

Perhaps increased emphasis upon grades as indicators of student worth encouraged the establishment of the present system of PE grading, or perhaps it arose as an attempt by Texas A&M to more closely align its grading system with those of other Southwest Conference schools. Whatever its cause for existence, the system is unfair to a great many students and merits more thoughtful consideration.

— Lisa Junod

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