

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION • TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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ACTION REACTION

Summer fun cut short

Traditions are hard to buck at A&M, but the senior final exemption policy should be reviewed and revised.

Seniors graduating during the regular school year traditionally do not have to take any finals their last semester. Those graduating in August are also exempt from only one semester: if he fulfills his requirements the first session, he doesn't take those finals; if he has to attend both sessions, he is exempt only from the second session finals.

Professors hasten to remind the seniors that they are graduating in August, not July, and that the exemption applies only in the semester in which you graduate.

However, the exemption policy should take into account that summer students who attend both sessions are cramming 10-12 hours — almost a semester's work — into three months. Most seniors feel that if they put in their four years and accumulate 130 hours of classwork, they should have the privilege of being exempt from more than two finals.

Summer graduation is not a choice for some seniors. For some it was a result of changing majors or transferring to A&M from another school. Many of them probably have lost more than a few precious hours. Should they also be penalized by the final exemption policy?

—KAREN ROGERS

Fewer finals no help

Yes, Karen, traditions are hard to buck at A&M, but senior exemptions are not a tradition, they are a privilege.

Now you want to abuse that privilege by letting only the summer session seniors be exempt from tests during both sessions. This is not fair to any of the students at A&M, particularly the seniors graduating during the regular semesters. Why should they not be exempt from tests during the fall and spring semesters if the summer session seniors are exempt from both sessions? It would only be fair.

Seniors have earned and deserve exemptions from tests during one semester, but exemptions from both is taking things a bit far.

More exemptions would cost the university money through absences. They would also cheat themselves of part of their education if they were allowed exemptions during both semesters. Seniors have a tendency not to show up after the last required test, so they would be missing education in two semesters instead of one.

Another thing, Karen, you should consider yourself lucky to be going to a university that has senior exemptions at all.

Many universities are cutting this privilege out completely, and if students here start griping for more exemptions, the administration may feel moved to cut them out completely.

—KEITH TAYLOR

Congressional double standard questioned

By CHERYL ARVIDSON
United Press International

WASHINGTON — A woman is fired by her boss. He states in writing that the only reason for the dismissal is that a man would be able to do her job better.

This on the face appears to be out-and-out sex discrimination, entitling the woman to an immediate recourse under provisions in the Civil Rights Act that prohibit discrimination in employment. She could seek to get her job back, secure back pay and perhaps even win damages.

Just such a case occurred in Congress, but Shirley Davis, the woman who was fired by former Rep. Otto Passman, D-La., has spent years in the courts trying to get her employment discrimination case settled.

The reason she's had to go through all this is that Congress exempts itself from the Civil Rights Act, as it does from other federal laws that set standards on civil and human rights issues.

Davis is another a victim of a system that works hardships on people with some of the most pivotal jobs on Capitol Hill but the least amount of power — congressional staff members.

After her firing, Davis sued Passman in the federal courts in Louisiana, charging sex discrimination, but her case was thrown out. Then came a string of appeals.

In early June, the Supreme Court overturned the Louisiana decision, saying congressional employees do have a right to sue if they are victims of discrimination. The Supreme Court said the courts are the proper place to bring a complaint since congressional employees have no other recourse.

Now, the Davis case goes back to Louisiana courts, and she will try again to get the same sex-discrimination protection that is afforded to private-sector employees.

About the time of the Supreme Court ruling, the Senate quietly passed an amendment that calls on the Civil Rights Commission to study any legal questions involved in eliminating the congressional exemption to civil rights statutes.

Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., who sponsored the amendment, said the Davis case points out the "double standard" of subjecting congressional employees to the "hiring and firing whims of congressmen while the rest of the country must abide by Civil Rights laws."

"This is the first step in what will be a major reform of Congress' relationship to more than 6,000 employees who remain unprotected from discrimination by the Civil Rights Act of 1964," said Leahy.

But others are not so optimistic. Congress has a long history of isolating itself from the laws in place for others, and there are no guarantees that procedure is likely to be changed without a bitter battle.

Among the other major exemptions Congress has chosen to bestow on itself are freedom from the Equal Pay Act that requires women to receive the same wages as men for comparable work and the Fair Labor Standards Act that provides for a minimum wage, overtime and child labor protection.

Congress is not covered by the National Labor Relations Act that requires employees to recognize and bargain collectively with unions that have won the right to represent employees or the Occupational Safety and Health Act that requires employers to meet safety and health standards in their workplaces.

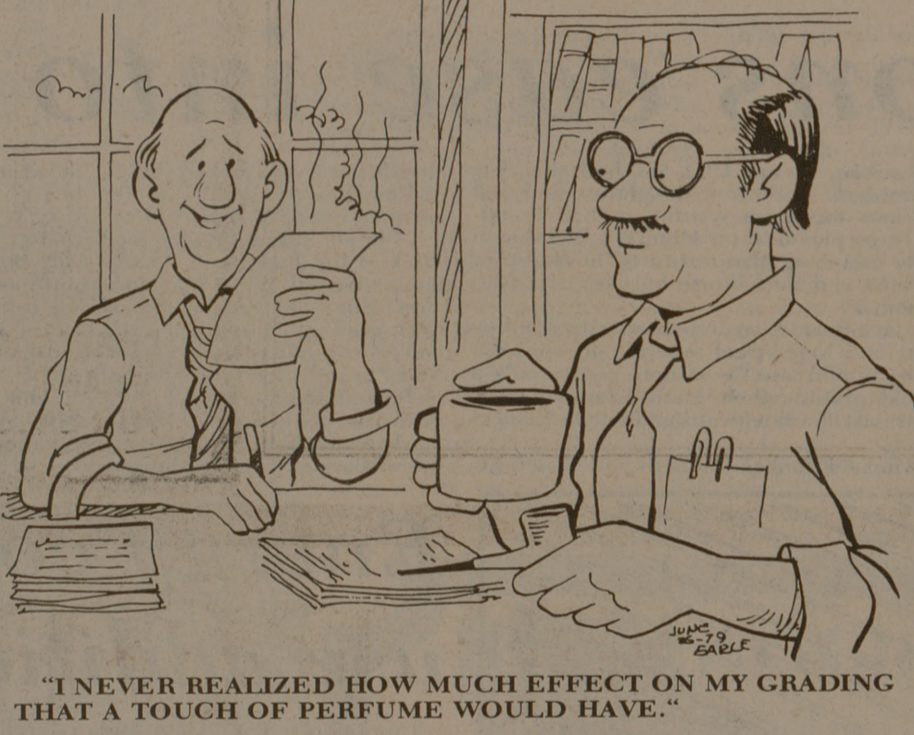
There is a congressional exemption in place for the Freedom of Information Act that gives members of the public the right to examine most records of federal agencies and the Privacy Act that requires government agencies to assure the confidentiality of files they maintain on individuals.

You will hear a lot from lawmakers about how sacred they hold the public trust of their constituents. Yet they will routinely exempt themselves from living under the laws they make for everyone else, as if they deserved a special status.

But surely if its good enough for us, it must be good enough for them.

Slouch

by Jim Earle



Letters to the Editor

2 independence days OK

Editor: Two very diverse views of where blacks stand on the issue of the celebration of the 19th of June have been given to the public over the past week. I feel that the public has been exposed to two extremes: one very passive and one very activist.

When such extremes are portrayed, often people wonder if every one fits those two specific categories. The answer is no. There are those of us out in the boonies who believe in celebrating both the 19th of June and the 4th of July.

First, I am a black, but second, I am an American, and I am extremely proud to be both. So nothing in my particular heritage prohibits me from observing both holidays. In my youth, my parents and grandparents celebrated the 19th of June with lots of festivities, which made the day become very meaningful to me.

I do feel that when a celebration is scheduled it should be a celebration. As one poet said it so well, there is a time and a season for everything.

I feel that another point should be

made. The city of Bryan is not killing our children. Let anyone show me statistics that the city of Bryan has killed someone and I will be in the forefront, exhausting all remedies that the System allows for.

Neither am I a prostitute to the officials of the city, county, state or nation. That is the reason I exercise my right to vote. The System allows for ways for us to replace those who do not give anyone equal justice and I have always exercised this prerogative. Just because I vote, in every election, I have the right to be heard when something happens with which I am in disagreement. My vote for any one person does not sanction any adverse statements can do just as much harm as no statement at all.

Lastly, my being both black and an American gives me the best of both worlds. I am not satisfied with lots of things that occur, but I also realize that at least I am guaranteed the right to protest here in America which is one thing that I could not do in any other country.

—Erma Faye Jefferson

'Duke,' Ags friends

Editor: With the passing of John Wayne, I would like to share a perhaps unknown point of interest with my fellow Aggies. While he didn't touch this campus physically, he probably came closer to it than others imagine.

In 1962, my brother, Rick Graham, class of '63, went to see the movie "The Alamo." He was extremely interested in the painting of the mission, over which the titles were run. Sending a registered letter to John Wayne, he inquired of the possible sale of the painting to his squadron, for the University. The reply came from the Duke himself, stating that while the painting was not for sale, it was a part of his private collection, and he would be honored to dedicate it to A&M.

After much correspondence, John Wayne was presented with an inscribed saber and the University was presented with the original Russell Roberts painting of the Alamo from John Wayne.

This painting hangs in the special collections room of the library, for those who are interested. It truly is our own personal touch with, and remembrance of, John Wayne.

—Penny Graham, '79

TOP OF THE NEWS

STATE

Jachimczyk testifies in Henley trial

Houston chief medical examiner Joseph Jachimczyk was expected Monday to explain the process he used to identify the sixth youth Elmer Wayne Henley is accused of killing in his trial in Corpus Christi. Before the trial recessed for the weekend Friday, the medical examiner testified the victims were sexually abused before they died painful strangulation deaths. After the youths were killed, Jachimczyk said, their nude bodies were wrapped in plastic bags containing lye to aid decomposition and dumped in shallow mass graves. Henley, 23, is being retried on charges he killed six of the 27 teen-agers who died prior to the 1973 death of Dean Corll, 33. Henley was originally convicted in 1974, but the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals ruled the original trial judge had erred in not allowing a change of venue hearing.

Two bodies found in collapsed rig

Two more bodies were found in a collapsed offshore oil drilling platform during preparations last weekend to refloat the structure, a Coast Guard spokesman said Monday. The discoveries brought to five the number of bodies recovered since the May 10 collapse of Ranger I in the Gulf of Mexico 12 miles south of Galveston. Three other persons remained missing, 26 escaped injury.

Man stabbed to death at concert

An 18-year-old New York man died of stab wounds suffered at a rock music concert during the weekend, police said Monday. Michael Kawalek, a machinist who planned to return to his home in Buffalo, N.Y., this week, died in the audience at Sam Houston Coliseum Saturday. A friend told police Kawalek made several trips to a restroom where drugs were being sold and finally returned, moaned and slumped in his chair. The friend said he thought Kawalek was high on drugs until the end of the concert when he discovered blood on the front of Kawalek's shirt, police said.

NATION

Court reverses conviction

The Supreme Court unanimously ruled Monday people cannot be subjected to criminal punishment for refusing to identify themselves to police unless there is "reasonable suspicion" of wrongdoing. The Court reversed the conviction of Zackery C. Brown, a young black man arrested in 1977 under a Texas statute that makes it unlawful for an individual to refuse to disclose "his name and residence address to a peace officer who has lawfully stopped him and requested the information."

Coalition asks that sale be blocked

Consumer groups Monday asked a federal judge in Washington to block the government sale Friday of some 170 offshore oil and gas leases, arguing that natural resources are virtually being given to major oil companies.

The coalition says that in the past four years alone, the United States has let \$4 billion slip away because of the low royalties. He said the California sale itself could represent a loss of \$300 million to \$400 million.

First Lady recovers from virus

First lady Rosalynn Carter recovered from an intestinal virus in time to attend a state dinner given by Emperor Hirohito Monday after having missed some of the excitement of her husband's first full day in Japan. Eleven-year-old Amy came down with the "tummy bug" during the 15-hour flight from Washington, but Mrs. Carter was not stricken until she stood in a reception line before a luncheon given by Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira. She looked faint as she turned to Mrs. Ohira for assistance and was whisked through a back door to the residence of U.S. Ambassador Mike Mansfield, where she rested in bed.

WORLD

Mexicans arrest 100 smugglers

Mexican federal agents and army troops during the weekend arrested more than 100 people in Tijuana, Mexico suspected of smuggling illegal aliens into the United States. The action followed strong criticism by Roberto de la Madrid, governor of Northern Baja California, of Mexico's failure to control the illegal flow of its own citizens across the border, blaming it for friction with the United States.

THE BATTALION

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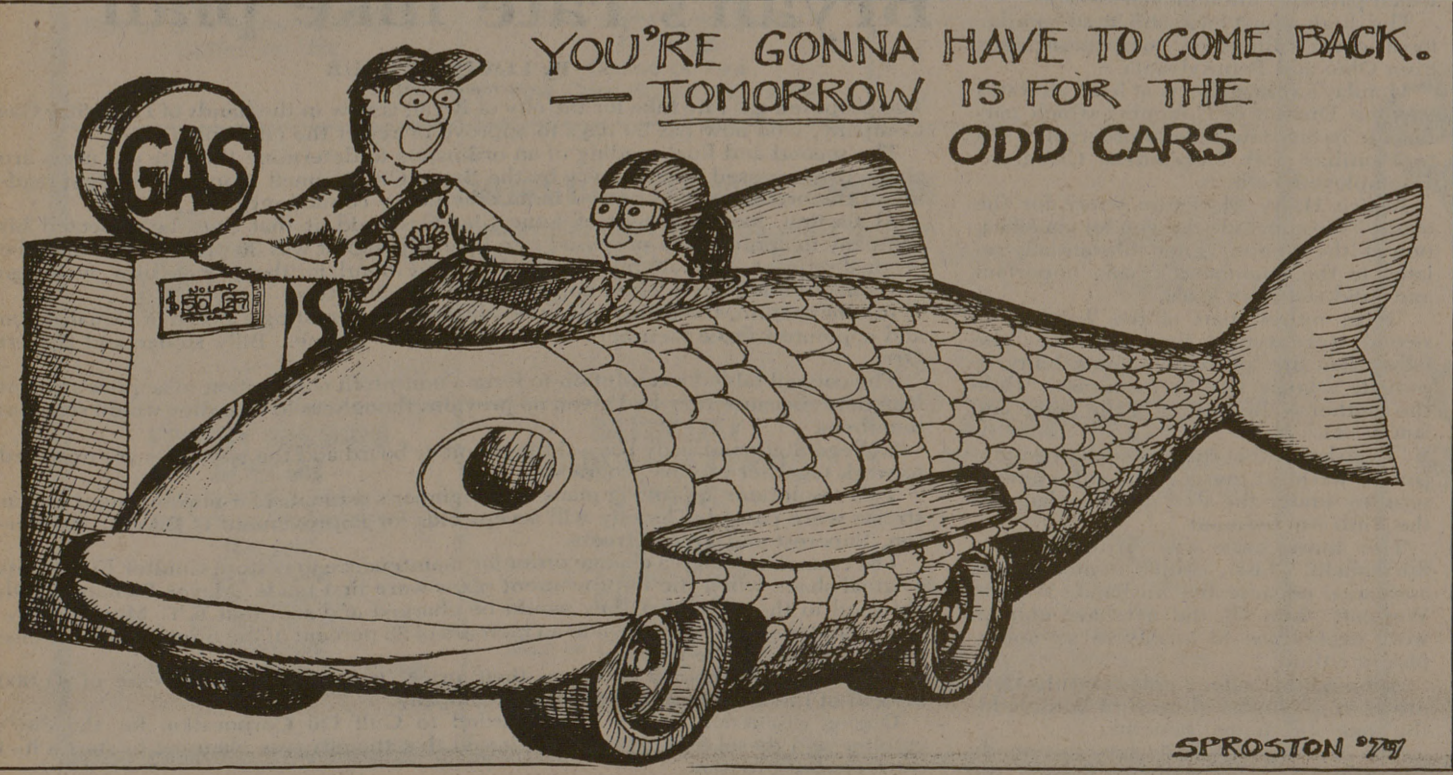
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