

# VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

TUESDAY  
MARCH 10, 1981

## Slouch By Jim Earle



"Your idea of giving an exam on Friday before recess is a good one, but I should warn you that student hostility may manifest itself in the form of a pie in the face, a cow in the office or the air out of your tires."

## Affirmative action produces 'rage'

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON — For weeks now, I have been carrying around a clipping from the Boston Globe about Patrick Ewing, a Cambridge high school senior who was admitted to Georgetown University in Washington for next fall, despite an acknowledged "reading deficiency" and "slowness in writing."

An official of his high school wrote the colleges he was considering a letter outlining Patrick's special requirements. Among them were "daily tutoring ... (which) must include covering material with Patrick, some level of explanation of new material, proofreading of papers and help with construction of papers." The letter also specified that he must have "untimed testing," because "Pat's slowness in writing does not give him ample opportunity to express himself."

If these stipulations seem remarkable, let me add that the letter was written by the high school basketball coach and that Patrick Ewing is a 7-foot center described by the Globe as "one of the most coveted players in the country."

I kept looking at this story and thinking that something was sure to be said about its implications. We all remember the furor over the Bakke case, and the wave of indignation over the fact that Allan Bakke, a white applicant to a California medical school, had lost his place because, it was alleged, an affirmative-action program gave preference to a black applicant with a lower entrance score. That one was so important it wound up in the Supreme Court.

Well, here was young Patrick, whose college admission score was "relatively low" according to his coach, taking someone's slot at the highly selective Georgetown University. Where was the protest? Strangely enough, none appeared.

And then last Wednesday in the Washington Post, Patrick's fellow-townsmen, Harvard political science professor James Q. Wilson, weighed in with a powerful essay attacking affirmative action programs. He expressed the "rage" he said most people feel at policies that aim not at "equality of opportunity" but at "an increase in the number of blacks, Hispanics, women and minorities" in a school or office or plant.

Reading along, I felt sure that my friend Professor Wilson was going to cite the Ewing case as an example of the invidious reverse discrimination implicit in such programs. I could not have been more wrong. "A college," he declared — perhaps with the Ewing case in mind — "may decide that its purpose is not simply to find the bright-

est students and make them still brighter but also to have a competitive athletic program, retain the support of generous alumni and offer to students an opportunity to mingle among young persons of different backgrounds, talents and interests" — presumably including individuals of exceptional height, coordination and agility.

But, he said, that principle does not apply to institutions where access "is judged solely, or principally, by the merit of its members and the excellence of its practices." Specifically, it does not, according to Professor Wilson, apply to the faculty of arts and sciences at his own Harvard University, whose dabbling with affirmative action hiring apparently had triggered his denunciation.

When I read that, I knew what I wanted to say about the Patrick Ewing story. First, I am glad he is getting a chance at a Georgetown education and I hope he makes it. One of the many virtues of that great university is that it has recognized its special obligation to the city in which it is located by running an effective program to identify promising minority students and giving them the financial and academic help they need to reach their potential. Few of them, incidentally, are 7-foot centers.

But I felt a lot less comfortable about what the Ewing case said about the value-system that most of us whites, Harvard professors or not, accept. Most of us were never outraged about busing, so long as black kids were being bused past white schools to their own segregated classrooms. It was only when white kids were put on buses to go to previously black schools that the practice became controversial.

Just so with affirmative action. There will be no squawks from Professor Wilson or anyone else so long as affirmative action is confined to 7-foot centers who want only an undergraduate education and are no threat for a faculty job or any other position a better-educated white might want.

After all, "a competitive athletic program" does "retain the support of generous alumni," to say nothing of adding to the enjoyment of the millions of us who have been watching the tournament games on TV this week.

But don't mess around with the Harvard faculty in order to bring in more minorities or women. And don't give a black kid of average height a medical school slot that "belongs" to a white, just because the black kid might open an office in the ghetto, instead of the suburbs.

That, to quote Professor Wilson, is guaranteed to produce "rage."

## Taxpayers cheat and clamor

April 15 is still weeks away, I know. But the horrors of filing the annual certificate of debt arrive before the last day. I reserve the first weekend following Valentine's Day to do my taxes, better to claim more business deductions, my dear. I once thought that filling out the 1040 would be a simple matter, and for many years it was. I watched as dad did the referencing across tables, looking for dependents and write-offs.

But right-off, when I looked at my first tax form, the Grim Revenuer looked amusedly on.

I couldn't file the short form, that time preserver of the non-self employed. I had my own business, and the records were just incomplete enough that H&R couldn't help. I learned that I was not a chip off the old block.

I had my long 1040 and various other attachments necessary for completing it, most notably the "C" schedule, a form for declaring specific profits and losses in a business.

I had to compute a self employment tax, then add all my phone bills, entertainment, car costs and a variety of other deductions to arrive at my profit for the year, which then went on the 1040 form.

Total time? Eight hours.

The work didn't bother me too much. I knew that by simply declaring income without the work, I would lose a substantial chunk of money, having only myself as a dependent and not being over 65 or blind. So on that count I had no gripes.

But I was bothered by who paid the most

### Leftovers

By Todd Woodard

tax. Supposedly, the graduated income tax, which Americans could not stomach in permanent form for more than 100 years, drained people according to their ability to pay. I determined that to be a lie.

There are, overgeneralizing here, four groups of taxpayers: the poor, the middle class, the rich and the illegals.

While the poor have many problems, taxation is not one of them. Incomes at low levels, if you'll look at your tax tables, don't carry high percentage brackets.

The rich, who are supposedly taxed at fantastic percentages, 70 percent for incomes of \$200,000 or more, often pay conquerable percentages to the poor, because of loopholes their influence has won for them.

They'll be damned if they let fewer loopholes cut into their yachting money.

The illegals, like prostitutes, can never file a return and be relatively safe, considering the 70,000-person Internal Revenue Service doesn't have a statistical chance to catch illegals. So, if the rich control taxes by weight of money, and the illegals are inconspicuous, and the poor don't pay many taxes

anyway, guess who's left. The middle class. The system has the single income maker by the ball point pen. He can't do much, because the W-2 says in black and white just exactly what money went to the pike. He can't afford to invest money in shelters because the pressures of inflation eat his buying power from beneath him. He can't tie up money for six to 12 months to declare capital gains. He can't hide money because he doesn't have it, and if he has it, it wouldn't be worth hiding. A possible audit.

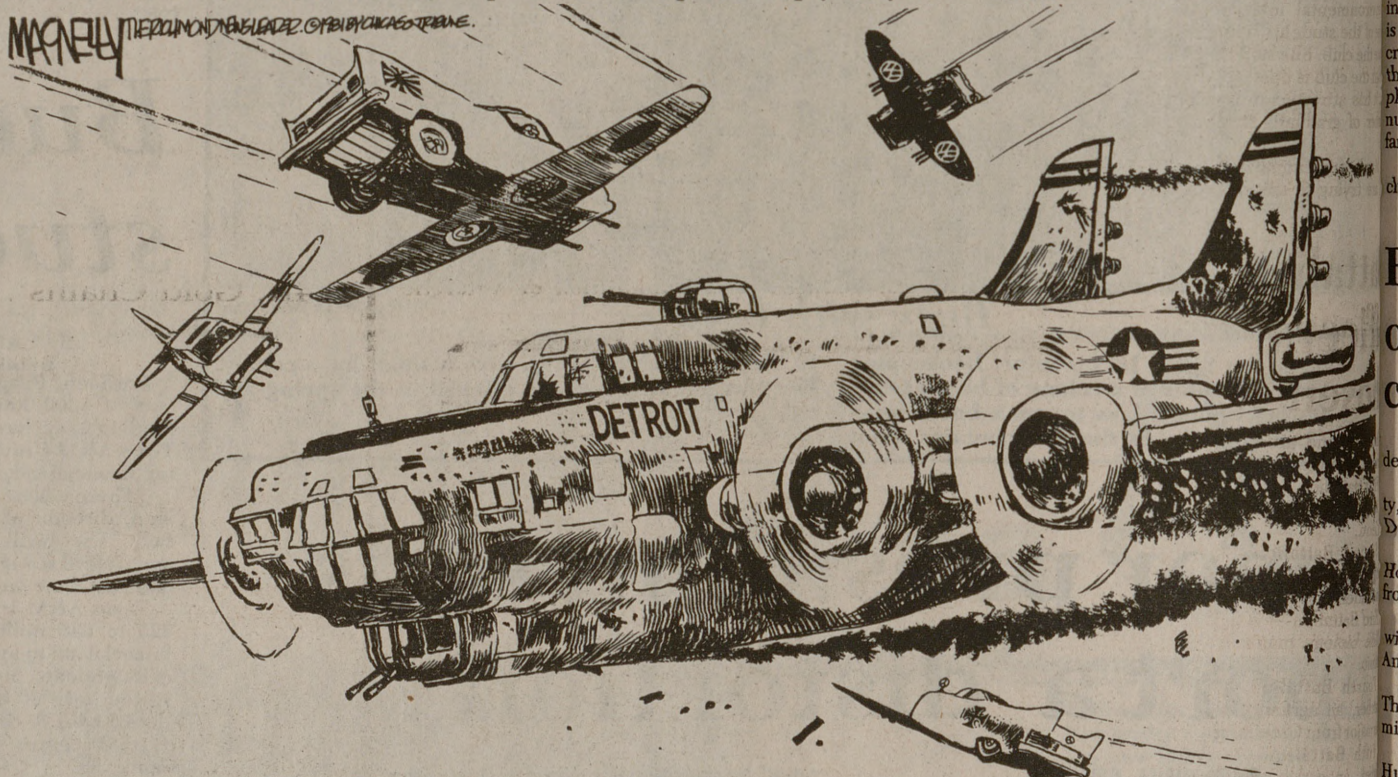
About the only choices Mr. Middle class has is to moonlight or cheat. If he moonlights, or his spouse or children work on a cash basis, they can bypass paying taxes on small sums. Or he can cheat.

But with the spectre of audits looming, informers being paid a 10 percent fee for information, computers looking over various filings for oddities, cheating is no good.

So how do taxes and school and state relate? Someday, you may be faced with a cheating dilemma. I have. I didn't like the possible effects of getting caught, I stayed honest.

Most college grads do make higher salaries than non-college workers. We're in the higher brackets, just high enough to pay big percentages, but without the clout to protect our interests.

So you have a clear choice. Classroom reduced rates and equitable distribution of taxation, or wonder whether the Grim Revenuer will visit you tomorrow. Or later.



It's your turn

## Assistantships are opportunities

Editor:

An open letter to teaching assistants at the University of Houston who are calling in "sick" in a dispute for more pay:

My colleagues and I will be the first to admit that graduate assistants are not paid well. However, assistantships to graduate students should be viewed as an "opportunity" rather than an "occupation". The assistantship offers the convenience of working at a place on campus and an environment which will provide experience for the future. For these reasons, there is usually a much larger number of students wanting assistantships than positions available.

It amazes me that you feel calling in sick is the only way you can get the attention of the administration at the University of Houston. Students in your classes and research projects in which you are involved should not have to suffer because of your perceived inequities. May I suggest you take a higher paying job off campus and let those more concerned with academics and less with economies take your place.

W.R. Pasewark

### Thieves aren't Aggies

Editor:

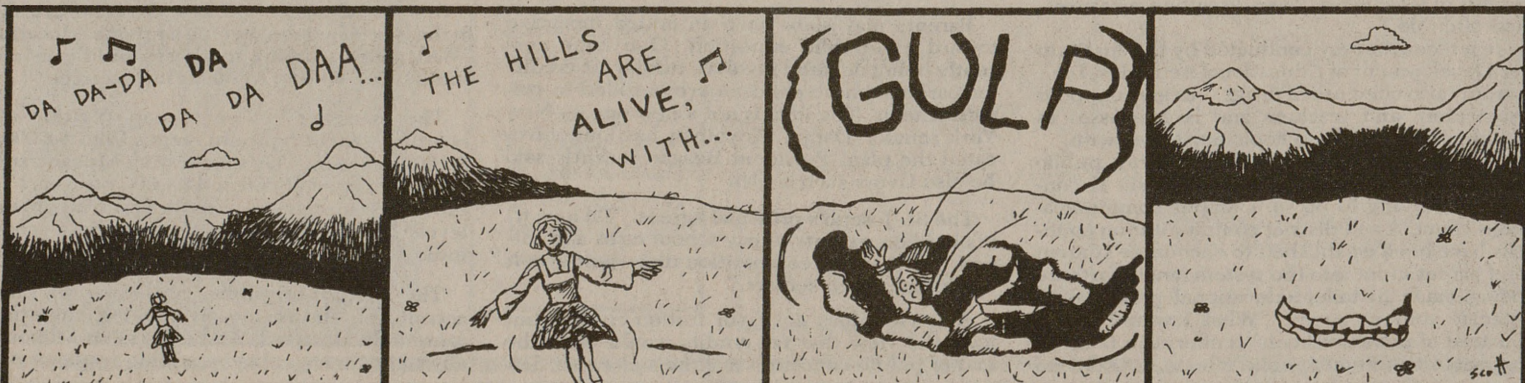
The Aggie Code of Honor states: "Aggies do not lie, cheat, or steal nor do they tolerate those who do." The recent rash of burglaries exemplifies that some students on this campus no longer live by this code and in our opinion do not deserve to be called Aggies. It seems sad that at a University which prides itself on honesty we must live in fear of having our valuables stolen from our own rooms. Furthermore, the lack of effective support and sincere concern on the part of the campus police illustrates the

fact that they too have become willing to tolerate the behavior of those who infringe upon the rights of fellow students. If campus police fail to even make an appearance at the scene of a burglary totaling more than \$300, it is difficult to believe that an adequate attempt to solve the crime is being made.

The theft of personal property is a loss in itself, but must Aggies also tolerate having their whole lifestyles altered by the long-standing integrity of Aggie jeopardized by the actions of a few, and inaction of others?

Eileen Corrigan  
Cindy Page

## Warped



## By Scott McCullar

## THE BATTALION

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The Battalion is published daily during Texas A&M's fall and spring semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

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