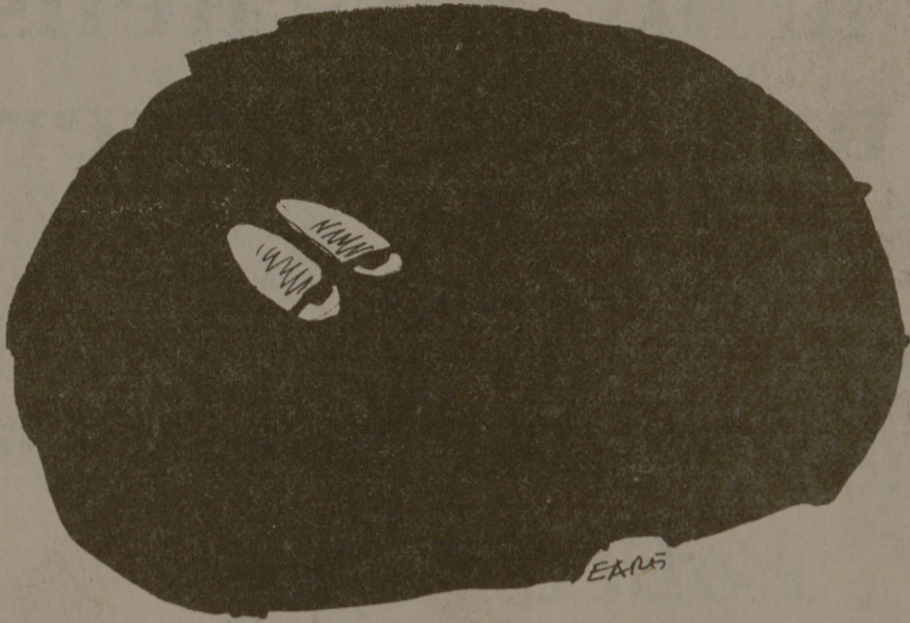


Slouch By Jim Earle



"This is the week I've been holding back for. I'm gonna pop out of bed and study, and work, and prepare and review and ... ZZZZZ ... ZZZZZ ..."

Saga of biochemistry student breakdown

Editor: I have just been witness to an absolute tragedy. One of those events that sears its horror and sorrow into the memory and yet is one of those "common" occurrences, one that no one would give a second glance to if they perhaps read the wire service story over their morning coffee, in their morning paper. I'm speaking, of course, about another student lost to Biochemistry.

He was a quiet man, and therein lies the tragedy. Just one of the faceless hordes of students, quietly sitting at a desk, quietly taking notes, and quietly going nuts. They read all the references, they work the study problems, they go to help sessions when they don't even need help. And then, one day, some poorly understood mechanism in the brain gets fed up, and when they try to cram one too many reaction mechanisms in, it's over. Billions of neurons literally fall over each other, as they fight and claw their way toward the "exit" signs glowing red by each ear. It's not a pretty sight.

This poor guy never even knew it was coming. He sat across from me at a table in the library, his beady little turtle eyes glued to his book (which, by the way, made it impossible for him to blink), and suddenly, it was as though something had snapped. He looked up, one broken suspender lying dead on the table, and started to twitch. Furiously he grabbed the student next to him, and hurriedly wrote a few words on his back. And then it was too late (we were studying at 1:30 a.m., and that's *too late*). He ran wildly, implying a scream, into the dark recesses of the stacks. Being a quiet man, he would never actually scream in a library, but you could tell he was thinking about screaming. Where he is today no one knows — he may have been miraculously cured in the damp mustiness (or is it the must dampiness?) of the old library, he may be lurking there still, waiting for the copying machine that never comes, or he may be filed under 459.6 L4.5 1960 "Looney Students and Other Hazards of Big Time Education." No one knows.

But what he left behind was both a warning, and a warning. For on the back of the poor stranger he had grabbed, he wrote the only thing his tortured soul could express — bad poetry. But I think it has a message for everyone within the sound of this newspaper.

I have a tale to tell you
And it may save your life.
So once you've heard me tell it
Go run and tell your wife.
Go tell your aunts and cousins,
Your cat, your dog, your tree.
If they're not versed, they might be cursed
With Biochemistry!

Oh, some men climb up mountains,
Some men sailed the sea,

Some are making fortunes,
I know it isn't me.
I'd love to be an author,
But it's not to be,
Because, you'll find, I've lost my mind
To Biochemistry!

There was time so long ago
When I was just a lad,
I asked the sage advisor
About the courses that he had.
His eyes began to twinkle,
His voice was rich with glee.
"We've all agreed that you need
Some Biochemistry."

Into that dreary class I went
With others by my side.
And just in case 'twas needed,
I sought a place to hide.
Then in strode the professor
Who smiled deceptively,
"Well gosh, by gum, I'm glad you've come
To Biochemistry."

Then before another eye blinked
He launched into his speech,
And for the next full hour
It seemed that he would teach
The whole of science to us
As only he could see.
He never broke, but always spoke
Of Biochemistry.

And so went my semester
As the days went rushing by.
I grew more dazed and helpless
As my brain began to fry
With thought of carbohydrates,
Enzymes, delta-G.
So count the cost, or you'll be lost
To Biochemistry.

I think I've made my point. Can we let these atrocities continue? Can we sit daily by while our comrades in arms are assailed by this insidious attack to the very core of their being? I say, yes. I mean, what the heck, I've got finals too. Oh sure it would be nice if people weren't flipping out at odd hours of the night, but we must consider what's really important — helping another human being with words of compassion and understanding, or trying to squeeze out those extra points by cramming all night and giving the heave-ho to those pathetic wrecks that come poking around looking for sympathy. You've gotta have priorities.

Remember this story. Remember all those poor, quiet, overworked students, and show them you know what it's like. Bring them a Hershey bar, or just sneak up behind them and say "We all admire your hopeless struggle for a meaningless grade." Chances are they'll smile and faint dead away. But they'll be better people for it.

Philip Mitchell
Graduate Student

the small society by Brickman

HOO-BOY! THE
FOUR-YEAR
EDUCATIONAL
POLICY WE
TOOK OUT WHEN
OUR SON WAS
BORN...

TOOK CARE OF HIS PLANE
FARE TO COLLEGE -



Media 'hazes' Sen. Harrison

By ED ROGERS
United Press International

WASHINGTON — While waiting for his postponed Senate expulsion trial on Abscam charges next January, Sen. Harrison A. Williams, D-N.J., has already undergone a "trial" of another sort. It might be called "media hazing."

In a press conference he called last Tuesday right after the Senate leadership made the postponement announcement on the eve of his scheduled Senate ordeal, Williams found himself besieged by questions that were meant to harass.

Getting a news figure off balance and out of humor is one way of provoking an ill-advised response that can make ruinous headlines and sneering broadcasts. It's journalistic hardball.

The game was to see if Williams could keep his cool before 12 television cameras, 23 microphones and a hearing room full of "journalist-pitchers" hoping to strike him out.

The opening pitch was a question that could have news value only if the senator fumbled. He was asked about the chance that former President Richard Nixon might return to the Senate. Williams, wise after 22 years of Senate experience, replied

solemnly that he did not foresee a Nixon return.

What if prospects are clearly unfavorable as debating time nears on a resolution that says Williams "be, and hereby is, expelled" for his Abscam involvement that brought "dishonor and disrepute" on the Senate? Would he then stop fighting and resign?

Williams, who claims his criminal conviction resulted from "manufactured evidence" in secretly videotaped dealings with FBI undercover agents, gave this reply:

"My intent is to see that my society is not used in this way — fear of always being wired and trapped into doing something wrong," Williams said.

Apparently presuming Williams was then, at least, in "disgrace," a reporter asked if under the circumstances he intends to seek re-election.

"I haven't thought about running, or not running," Williams said.

Under what hypothetical situation, then, would he resign rather than fight? The answer: Williams has thought of nothing but fighting.

Williams was still cool. But there must be some way to embarrass this "news target" — to get him flustered so he would say something "newsily" regrettable.

So came a trump question. It was pegged

on the fact that Williams, while his resignation case is pending, continues to speak on the Senate floor although he has been convicted on Abscam bribery and conspiracy charges.

How would Williams feel about other "convicted felon" voting and speaking on the Senate floor? the question was to know.

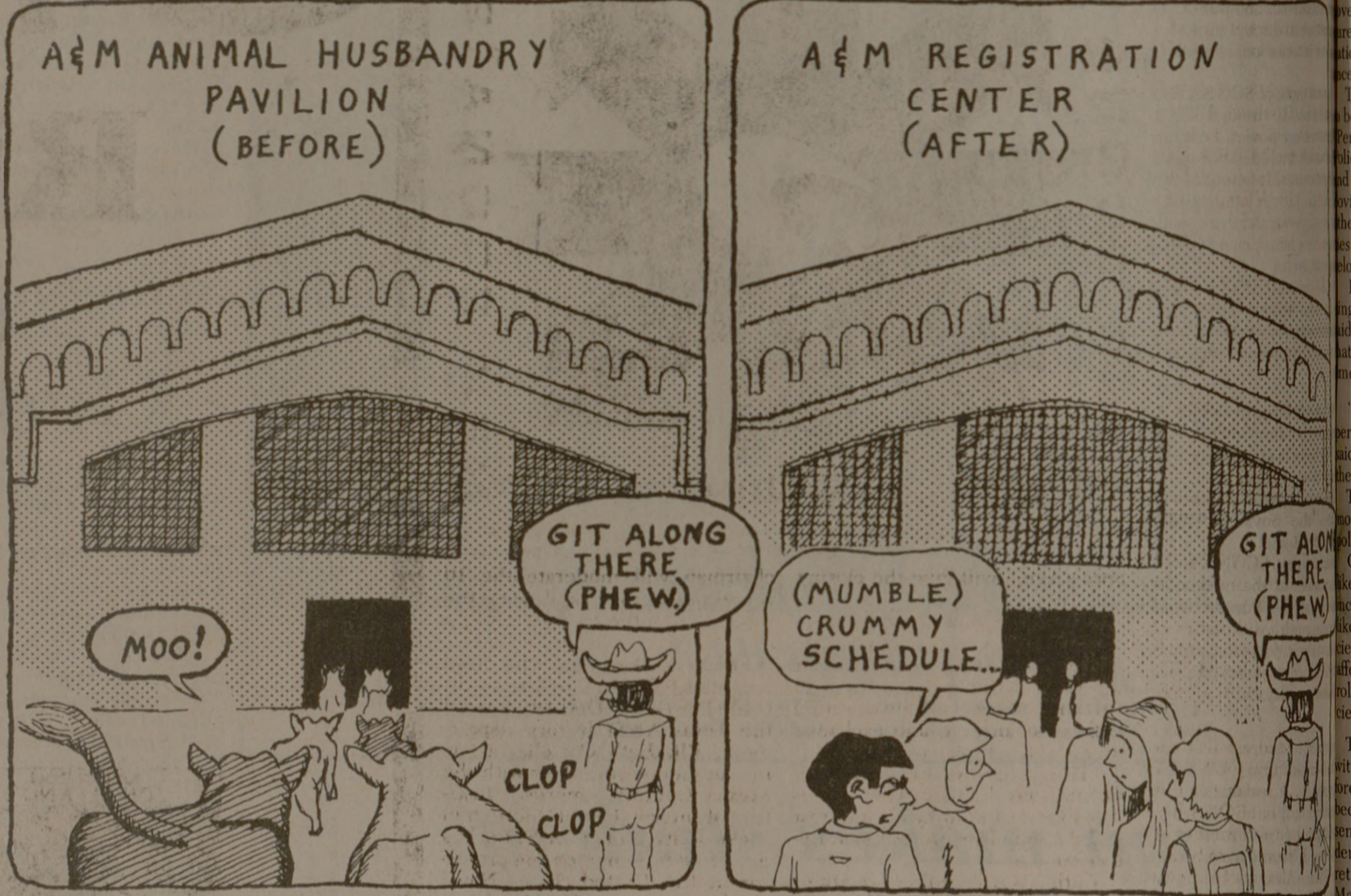
"If he was set up, framed, abused by government, I'd say let him vote, let him talk," Williams said.

The question had "news value" — It gave Williams a chance to make a point wanted to make — to claim that by setting him up with rigged evidence, the pretense committed misconduct that is a threat to all senators.

"It's a doubtful opportunity for the kind of intimidating threat, fear," Williams said of the FBI's publicized Abscam investigation, that resulted in convictions of House members and other politicians, as well as Williams.

"I think the Senate has been victimized," Williams said.

After the journalistic skeetshooting been under way for a half hour, called time. After more "last questions" the reporters left and wrote about Williams' claims of government wrongdoing.



It's your turn

Please don't walk on any grass

Editor: It irritates me to no end to see so many people take short cuts through the grass. There are some places on campus where people have walked so often, there is a dirt path worn through the grass. I'm talking about in front of the Chemistry Building, the side of Zachry facing Bizzel street, and the numerous places where two percenters can't take that extra step before rounding a corner to another sidewalk. That's right, ya'll make up that measly two percent that just don't care. The people responsible for making Texas A&M the beautiful campus it is, are fighting a losing battle to keep it that way. What do we have to do to keep ya'll off the grass, put up signs everywhere that say, "please stay off the grass." Get real. Or better yet, let's just put creek gravel down everywhere so we can enjoy the pretty rocks and not have to worry about ya'll getting grass stains or dirt on your shoes. Listen up 2 percenters, STAY OFF THE GRASS.

Shawn Wasilewsky '85

MX silos

Editor: Lately President Reagan has been facing some issues concerning the MX missile silos. The recommendations sent forth to Reagan have pointed out that the present silos are not hard enough. Reagan's idea is to simply strengthen these silos. However, the Senate has recommended that completely new silos be built. While this construction would be in progress, there would be a three year period in which the Russians would have a definite advantage over us. Reports such as this one and others like it have begun to give me a very dim view of our society. The national attitude is so childish. "If you don't get your silos built, we're going to blow you up." It's like two little kids having a fight. I don't see anyway to alter our position right now, but maybe someday the nations will grow up and work as friends rather than foes.

Ted Trimble '85

Singing study break

Editor: We, the residents of Neeley Hall, would like to thank the members of Fanatic Fifteen for their truly enjoyable versions of the Christmas carols. We would especially like to thank the fish for their amusing enactment of "The Twelve Days of Christmas." We also extend our thanks and appreciation to K-2 for their adorable reindeer, elves, and Santa Claus; and the select members of The Fightin' Texas Aggie Band for their Christmas serenade. What a terrific study break! Merry Christmas Aggies!

Shelly Greenberg '84

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by 40 other signatures.

Quiet hours

Editor: Beginning last Sunday night at 10 our dorm began enforcing 24-hour quiet hours. Most of the girls congregated in the hall for group study and moral support. These "quiet hours" have interfered with group study. The girls could study in their rooms, but find it too confining, and why they study in the hall. But, the dead week if they speak too loud or even rowdy for a second it is an automatic Board. If the girls want a quiet place to study, they could either close their doors or retreat to the study carrels at the end of the halls.

Holly McFadden

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography courses within the Department of Communications.

Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. Editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, show the author's name and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome and not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

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