

# opinion

## Slouch

By Jim Earle



"Do you realize what an uproar it would have caused just a few years ago if an Aggie kissed another Aggie?"

## Acid rain movie gets rating of triple-X

by Art Buchwald

We had just finished dinner when Winslow said: "I have a surprise for everyone. Come in the living room while I lock the doors and pull down the window shades."

We went in the living room. Winslow had set up a 16mm projector and a movie screen.

"What are you going to show us, Winslow?" Someone asked. "Deep Throat" or "Debbie Does Dallas"?

"Something much worse. I managed to get an illegal print of a Canadian documentary on acid rain."

A murmur ran through the crowd. "Couldn't we get in trouble watching a dirty film from Canada?"

Winslow smiled. "You're damn right you could. The Justice Department has declared all Canadian films on acid rain pure propaganda, and they have to be clearly marked as such. They also told the Canadian Film Board it has to turn over to Justice the names of those who asked to see the films."

Martha Harrington said: "I've never seen a documentary on acid rain. This is going to be exciting."

"How in the devil did you get the film?" I asked Winslow.

"I smuggled it in from Toronto," he replied.

"You really took a chance. What if you had gotten caught?"

"I would have been fined and sent to jail. U.S. Customs has strict orders to look for Canadian Film Board movie prints. They're even training dogs now to sniff for them. The Attorney General has given it top priority."

"Why are they uptight about films on acid rain?"

Winslow said: "They're afraid if Americans see them, without them being clearly marked as propaganda, we would believe that acid rain is an environmental problem."

"You would think the Justice Depart-

ment would have more to do then worry about Canadian documentaries," Ed Harrington said.

"You don't know much about the Justice Department. They finally found a legal issue they understand. They've been so confused about civil rights, EPA and antitrust cases, that they jumped at the chance to sock it to Canada. The Canadians are going to think twice the next time they finance a film about pollution," Winslow told us.

"How long is it?" someone asked.

"It only runs 30 minutes. But it will blow your mind."

Bella Murphy said, "Suppose the FBI breaks in while we're watching it?"

"Don't worry about it, Bella," Winslow said. "My kids are outside on the lookout. If they ring the doorbell three times, I'll dump the print and substitute 'The Devil in Miss Jones.' They can't touch us for watching a porno movie in our own home."

"Well, show it fast," Bella said. "I'm very nervous."

"Okay lights out. Here we go."

We all sat in rapt attention as we watched fish and wildlife dying in the Canadian north. A few people got sick and had to go to the bathroom. At the end of the picture, Martha Harrington said, "What kind of degenerate mind could make a picture like that?"

"That's what the Justice Department would like to know. If this film is shown throughout the United States it could destroy the American way of life as we know it."

"How could Canada do it?"

"There are a lot of dangerous people in the environmental movement up there, and they have control of the film industry. If you think that one was bad wait until you see the other one I smuggled in. It's about the horror of nuclear war."

"You can't show a Canadian picture against nuclear war in the United States," Bella screamed. "It's illegal."

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# Rebirth of public interest

by Maxwell Glen and Cody Shearer

Public-interest law is dead in America: right or wrong?

At first glance, a eulogy might seem in order. Ronald Reagan has led a fiscal and regulatory attack against those groups that fight for the poor and powerless. Meanwhile, ocean-size salaries seem to have drowned or diluted compassionate tendencies among thousands of American law school graduates.

But, when several local universities staged a "fair" for careers in public-interest law last week, they offered a chance to determine whether things really are rotten. After a visit and a subsequent survey of the public-interest community, the answer is no. If anything, public-interest advocacy has survived the worst and will probably be better off as a result.

Georgetown, George Washington and Catholic Universities, among others, had invited several dozen "public interest" offices and organizations to make a pitch. A surprisingly large contingent from Reagan's non-activist Justice Department and a slew of agents from environmental and civil rights groups had crowded on a rainy day into a downtown student union hall. It was a regular jobs baazar for the publicly-minded.

To the program had also come more than a hundred undergraduates, law students and unemployed lawyers. Many of

the curious went away disappointed. While jobs were available, most were for second- or third-year law students: Non-profit groups offered little or nothing in the way of competitive salaries; law graduates interested in permanent positions seemed out of luck entirely.

Of course, Reagan-led cutbacks in two key areas, government jobs and federal grants to public-advocacy organizations, have reduced opportunities for high-minded lawyers and law students. Emasculation of the Legal Services Corp. is symbolic of retrenchment at Justice, the Federal Trade Commission and federal agency civil rights offices. With public funds uncertain, most private groups have been trying to hold on with static numbers of employees.

If the turnout on both sides of the display tables at last week's fair provided ample reason for optimism, students, for example, have not entirely given up on public-interest work. At a recent visit by the director of the Massachusetts Public Interest Group attracted a surprising 85 students at the University of North Carolina law school. The lawyer glut has forced many to expand their career alternatives (across the board, in fact, public-interest groups reported a deluge of resumes from highly-qualified applicants).

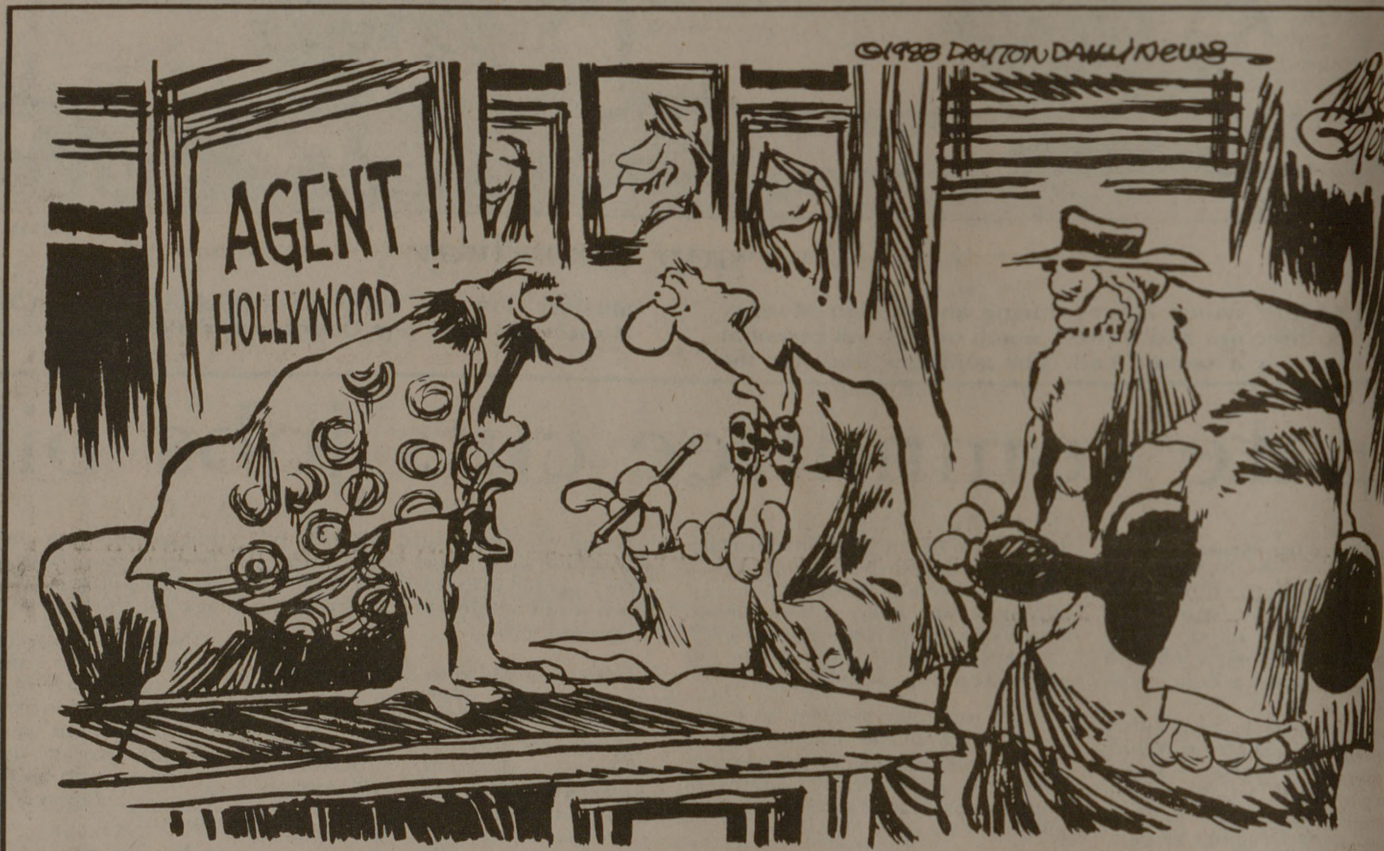
Clinical law courses are thriving, too, points out former representative Robert Drinan, now a law professor at Georgetown University. "There aren't many bleeding hearts in my classes ... but the

interest is no less intense than it was," he said.

Meanwhile, public-interest is longer a field for the starry-eyed and inexperienced. If staffs seem to be more sophisticated, it's because, before, a helpful development of increasingly complicated natural resource issues. "At least in the environmental area, public-interest lawyers are powerful and better skilled than the said Jonathan Lasch, leading with the Natural Resources Council.

Increased technical sophistication, moreover, has spawned a community of independent specialists. Firms have sprung up simply to litigate cases about nuclear power plant siting or worker compensation issues. No one is likely to encourage such legal activity across the U.S.

This isn't to suggest that public-interest law is imminent. It's hesitant to press its advantage. The Office of Management and Budget is preparing to reintroduce legislation that would limit awards for attorneys' fees brought against federal and local governments, discouraging firms from taking on such cases. At the same time, the jury is still out on whether bar associations will meet well-publicized commitments to increase their work.



FELDMAN, WHEN I SAID TO TAKE OUT A CONTRACT ON THE ROLLING STONES... I MEANT FOR A CONCERT

## Letters: Hit-and-run witness wanted

Editor:

Hey Aggies, I need your help. Someone played bumper cars with my brown '76 Cutlass last Saturday night and declined to let me know about it before they left.

My car was parked in front of Q-hut A while I was attending an APO party in Q-hut B. Between the hours of 12 a.m. and 2 a.m. on March 6, someone converted the front end of my car into a mod-art form. If anybody, anywhere saw what happened, or knows something about it, please give me a call and let me in on it.

One note to the person(s) who did it: You know you made a big mistake, but why make a bigger one by not owning up to the error in your ways?

Phil Carter  
260-5778

### Big Event tradition

Editor:

The students of Texas A&M deserve a vote of thanks for the wonderful job they did in putting together and successfully pulling off the tremendous undertaking known as the Big Event. My husband and I were down at the Brazos Animal Shelter, wanting to get a look at the large animal holding pen that the students with the Big Event had built on the land behind the shelter. We were expecting something half-finished and not very big, so it was quite a shock to come upon the masterpiece that was located there.

The large sturdy structure — consisting of two spacious buildings to provide shelter for the animals with a generous, well-constructed corral and chute — looked like a building contracting firm

had spent days constructing it instead of being built by a group of students in one afternoon. It already is holding its first tenant — a stray Shetland Pony found wandering loose with no apparent home. He seemed to be enjoying having the big place all to himself.

It's amazing what you can do when you have a large group of people working towards the same goal. In one afternoon, rain notwithstanding, this solid structure was erected by the students with the Agricultural Engineering Society. All over the county, other students were working on equally fulfilling projects, helping those

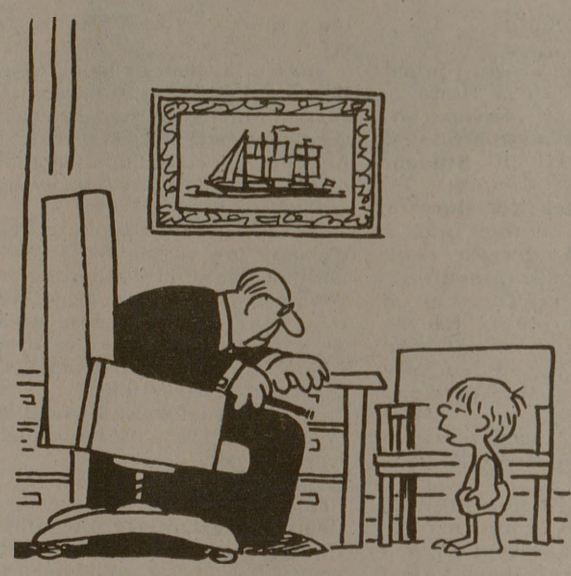
who needed their help.

Joe Nussbaum, Mike Wolff, Glimp and the others responsible for creating the Big Event, as well as thousands of students who gave their time to help others deserve our thanks.

I believe Texas A&M's Big Event is destined to become as worthwhile a tradition as Silver Jubilee, one that truly has the right to be called "tradition."

Chris P.

## Berry's World



"I've set up a new high-tech company and I'm looking for venture capital."

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