

# opinion

## The fate of modern man

This is the final part of a two-part Reader's Forum.

Humanistic reasoning concludes that all of the universe is contained in a gigantic cosmic machine. Man is a part of the machine but God is not. God is dead. Only matter exists. Thus every event which occurs in the universe is a part of a cause and effect relationship. Schaeffer says: "The terms determinism or behaviorism indicate that everything people think or do is determined in a machine-like way and that any sense of freedom or choice is an illusion." Humanistic reasoning has affirmed that man is not great, but simply a random collection of molecules ... nothing more. There is no freedom, there is no hope, there is no meaning. Man is dead.

However, man cannot bear the thought that he is a meaningless collection of particles, so now he is hoping to find meaning. This yearning for meaning in the face of hopelessness is called existentialism. The French existentialist, Jean-Paul Sartre, says we can give ourselves meaning through action. The direction of the action is unimportant, only the action is. There is no difference between helping an old woman across the street or running her down in your car; both actions give an individual meaning. Philosophers are attempting to find meaning though they all admit that it is not reasonable to believe that meaning exists.

Over the last 100 years, humanism has slowly invaded theology to produce a watered down Christianity. The Bible is no longer a book about personal God who gives us absolutes which give our lives meaning, but has become the basis for what Schaeffer calls, "a contentless reli-

gious experience within which reason has no place." The Reformation provided a Christian base which, although far from perfect, became the foundation for Western nations including the United States. Our society unfortunately has slowly shifted off of this Christian base over the last 100 years. We once would look to the Bible to decide what is right or wrong. As

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we have shifted away from Christianity, the shift away from a "Christian-dominated consensus" created a void which Schaeffer says has been filled with "two impoverished values: personal peace and affluence."

But the youth of the 1960s wanted more meaning to their lives than was provided by their parents' values of personal peace and affluence. The youths correctly concluded that their parents' aspirations were not enough to give life meaning but unfortunately turned to alternatives which were just as meaningless. Over the last 15 years young people have gradually given up their struggle for meaning and significance and have returned to their previous values of personal peace and affluence.

So where does all of this leave us today in 1983?

Society is basically divided into two categories: the "minority," "Christians who either have a real basis for values or

those who at least have a memory of the days when values were real ... (and the) ... majority ... with only their two poor values of personal peace and affluence." (Schaeffer). As the minority grows smaller and the majority larger, our society will rely on our courts to set arbitrary absolutes provided that the new absolutes do not conflict with the majority's values of personal peace and affluence. What will happen to society when economic, political, and racial pressures mount to an intolerable level? Francis Schaeffer predicts that when the pressures and problems of the world become choking and intolerable, we will have to choose between two alternatives: 1) an imposed order by a totalitarian elite or, 2) "once again affirming that base which gave freedom without chaos in the first place — God's revelation in the Bible and his revelation through Christ."

\*\*\*\*\* Whither Do We Go?

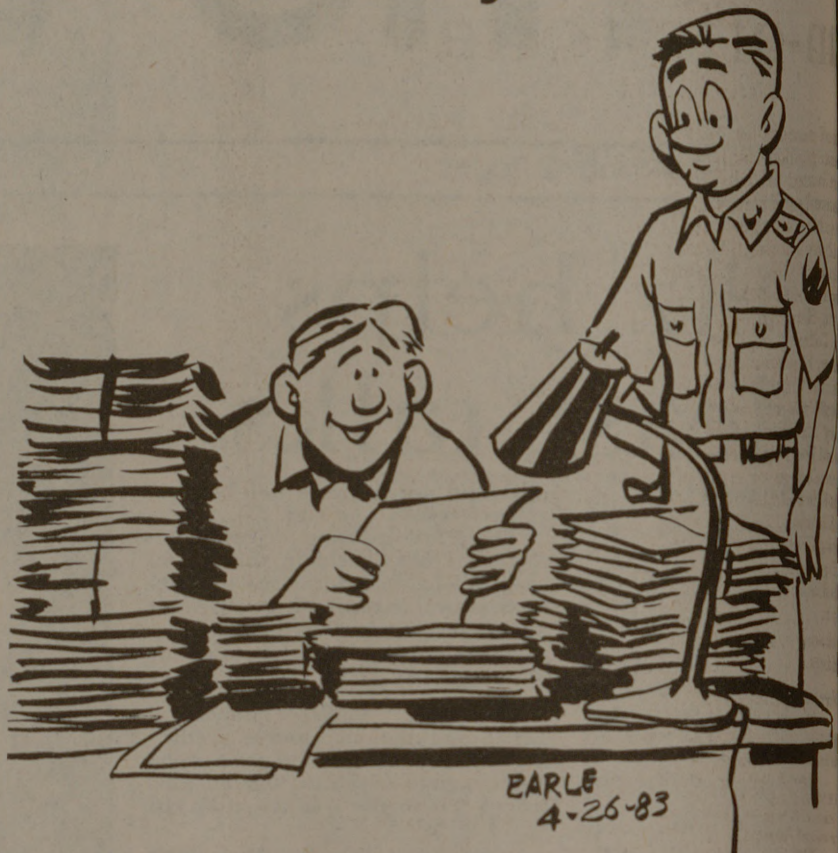
\*\*\*\*\* I have chosen God's way.

By accepting Jesus Christ as my personal savior and therefore becoming a Christian, I discovered personal meaning and significance. Through the Bible, God has explained to me the universe and my role in it. The Bible gives me a flawless set of values and absolutes which help me make sound moral decisions.

Most of this article is simply an outline of Francis A. Schaeffer's book, "How Should we Then Live?", so you can refer to it if you would like documentation. In closing, I would like to leave you with one suggestion. Consider the sign that I read while driving through Bryan that said, "The Holy Bible, the hero dies but that's not the end of the story."

Wes Volberding is a senior accounting major from Houston.

## Slouch By Jim Earle



"Finals are gonna be a push-over. All I got to do is memorize these cheat notes, old exams and notes taken by my roommate. This sure beats studying!"

## Corporate institutes — old college try

by Maxwell Glen and Cody Shearer

Most any American born after 1945 probably knows that television irreparably damaged the movie-house business. Once Americans began to watch movies and other entertainment in the comfort of their living rooms, fewer bothered with the cost and inconvenience of theaters.

A similar movement toward direct service now haunts, of all industries, higher education. Rather than enter a traditional four-year college or a graduate school, a growing number of students each year are choosing a school owned and financed by an American corporation. Some might call it a short-cut to job security.

Of course, ever since General Motors established its "institute" in Flint, Mich., 64 years ago to produce auto engineers at assembly line speed, American businessmen have often donned the robes and mortar boards of university deans. But the declining competence of college graduates and rising cost of retraining them have led many more companies to establish their own degree programs. The working assumption is that the corporate college can better train potential employees than traditional academic institutions.

According to the American Council on Education, 140 U.S. companies — from American Telephone and Telegraph to Mr. Steak, Inc. — now offer academic credit for an aggregate of 2,250 courses. Before the decade is out, employers could be perusing resumes that boast a "Bachelor of Science, Security Pacific Bank, 1989."

As yet, the Ivory Tower's new rival poses no mortal threat to its long-standing ascendancy. Most corporate colleges still cannot award degrees (in most cases an insufficient array of course offerings and library volumes hinders accreditation). In fact some, like (McDonald's) Hamburger University, now seeking accreditation, encourage their charges to enroll in humanities courses at

local community colleges.

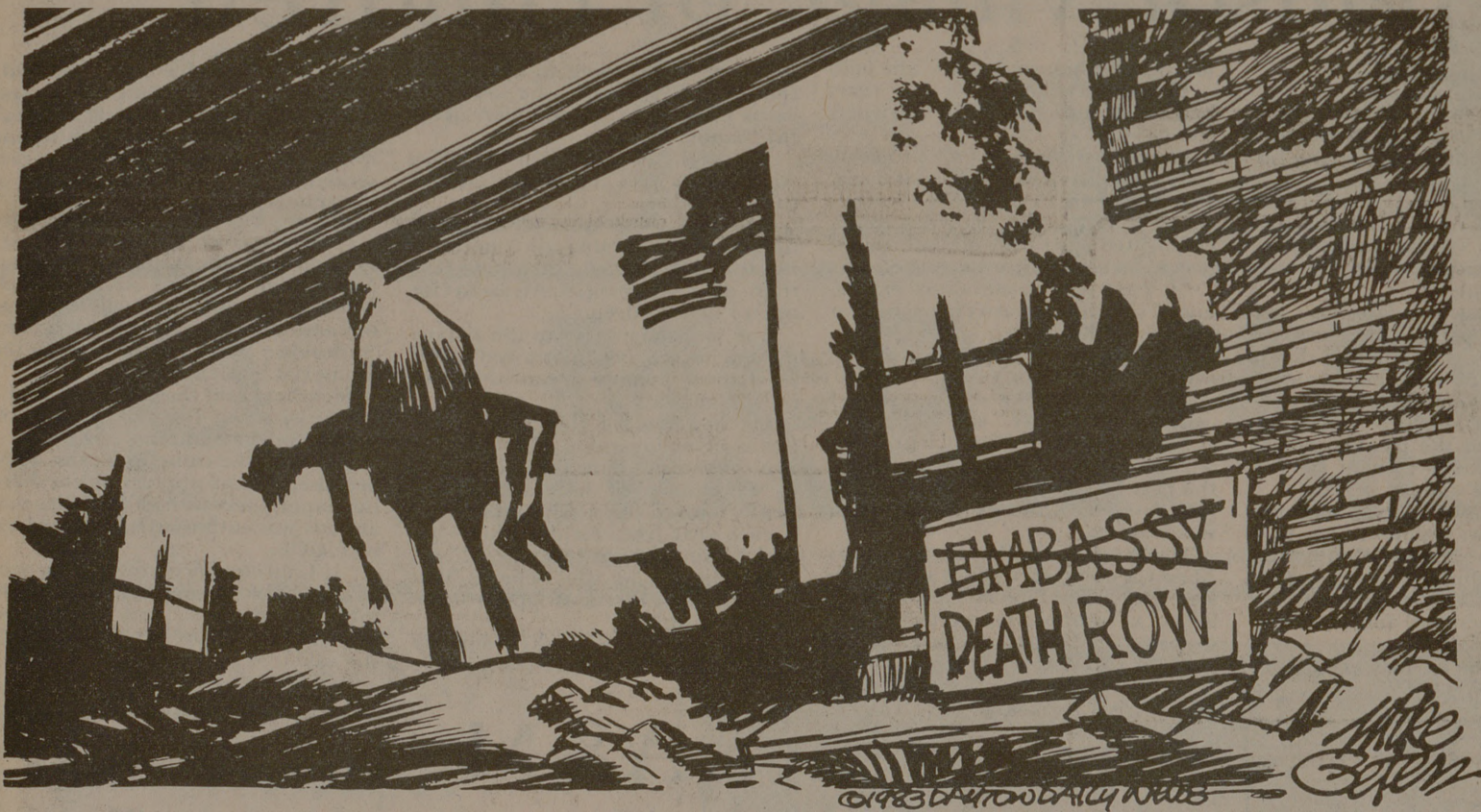
Meanwhile, the typical course offering — "Better Business Managers," "Advanced Business Equipment" and "Food and Beverage Cost Services" — wouldn't throw a scare at Yale's Bartlett Giamatti or Notre Dame's Theodore Hesburgh. On the whole, traditional colleges remain much more deadly earnest.

Yet the corporate dons are deadly serious about filling a gap, not only their employees but for anyone else. college-level training. At the graduate level, moreover, they see an opportunity to meet company needs. instance, Wang Computer's three-year old Institute of Graduate Studies awarded its first five masters degrees in ware engineering" last spring. Wang institute's enrollment is still only 100, but faculty and students know that the highly-specialized Wang degree is more than the paper on which printed.

Academia's response to the corporate college try has been understandable. While many institutions, particularly large research universities, have recently boosted efforts to arrange agreements with corporations for both students and contracts, they've otherwise the potential of corporate college inaction mirrors academia's scholastic approach to its task: anxious to prepare students for gainful work while purveying more timelessly beyond profit and loss.

Yet it would be unwise to underestimate the drawbacks of a corporate educated work force. Corporate sponsored schools will likely train highly-specialized technicians trained to do the company's bidding and to pay, but unable to see — much less — beyond a narrow expertise. They will not be Mr. Chips to worry about the impact of assembly-line minds on individual creativity and national productivity.

Whether America's college graduates see it that way, however, is another matter.



## Letters: Olympic silver collection

**Editor:**  
On Thursday, Texas A&M University will become the site of an unprecedented event, "SILVER DAY" — a day in which the entire campus can show their support for the U.S. Olympic team. Phi Kappa Epsilon, and honor/service fraternity, representing the health and physical education department, is asking that all students, faculty, staff and employees of Texas A&M give a nickel, dime or quarter for this cause.

As you know, the Olympics is one of the few events that tie and bring together the nations of the world. In an indirect way, we at Texas A&M can help promote international cooperation by help send-

ing our U.S. team to this global event.

As we contribute let us remember what the tradeoffs are: 1) all funds will help to support the 1984 U.S. Olympic team (several athletes on campus are Olympic hopefuls); 2) as a campus we can project an image of international ambassadors; 3) Texas A&M can become one of the first universities to advance, promote and financially support the amateur athlete (big business and industry are usually the leading donors for the Olympic team); 4) and again promote the tradition that esprit de corps still exists and exemplified in this united effort.

I feel confident that everyone on campus will respond and contribute for this Olympic cause.

Ron Rainwater  
PEK President

## Reagan and El Salvador

**Editor:**  
President Reagan has been debating with Congress over increasing the military aid to El Salvador for that country's war with the Soviet-supported, communist guerrillas.

Many members of Congress have likened El Salvador to another Vietnam. This could not be further from the truth. We are not talking about a country which is half-way around the world, we are talking about a country within two days driving distance from the U.S.

If we let El Salvador fall to the communists, as Jimmy Carter let Nicaragua fall, Honduras, Guatemala and Costa Rica may soon follow. Then Mexico, with its economic crisis, would be extremely vulnerable to a communist revolution which could easily spill over into Texas,

New Mexico, Arizona and California.

El Salvador is the place to reverse the spread of communism.

We urge everyone to write the Texan Senators, asking for their support of President Reagan.

R. J. Balhorn '82  
Aldo C. Lopez '86

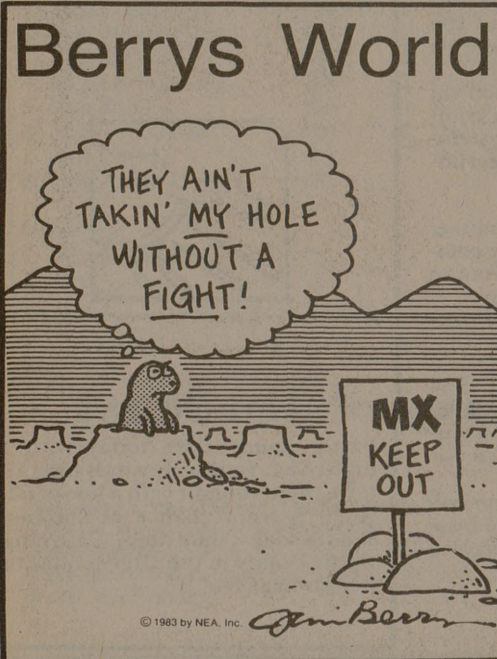
## Bicycle safety

**Editor:**  
Well, it happened again. As I was driving to work down East Main Drive I nearly hit a parked car as one of those fine outstanding Ags rode their bicycle right out in front of my car. He then also failed to stop at the stop sign and was nearly hit by someone who was obeying the law and had stopped and was simply taking their turn.

Despite the fact that some people think that cars shouldn't be allowed to park on campus, or drive on campus for that matter, there are those of us who have to and will continue to do so.

If you bicyclists would quit hogging the road, stop at stop signs, stop at crosswalks and obey all the other traffic laws that we automobile drivers must do, then it seems to me there would be a less than average chance that they would be hit, or that they would hit someone walking. And as long as the bicyclists on this campus continue to disrespect the traffic laws that exist, there will be a higher than average chance that another name will be added to the flag pole for Silver Taps or to the roll call at Aggie Muster.

J. K. Playter  
Bryan



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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory for students in reporting, editing and publishing practices within the Department of Communication.

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

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