

Pragmatism ruined chance to learn

Pragmatism is OK. Ben Franklin was a Pragmatist. Teddy Roosevelt was pragmatic. What does pragmatic mean? Webster's defines pragmatic as practical.

The annual Student Conference on National Affairs is supposed to be a forum for open debate, but the discussion at the reception given for Arthur Miller, a communications law expert from Harvard, was alarmingly pragmatic rather than ideological.

What type of questions on communications law did the anxious students of the media have for Miller?

Did they ask about libel or the conflict between First Amendment freedoms and the rights of individual privacy? No.

Instead the students huddled around the Harvard lawyer like disciples of a guru and asked his grand advice.

"How many people apply for Harvard Law School?"

The grand master of the Law replied calmly, "9000."

"And how many get accepted? And what type of undergraduate degree should we get? And what are the good law schools and what are the bad?" the chorus chimed.

Miller answered each question gracefully, and each student went away happy. But how much did each one of them miss?

What could they have gained by talking to the man in his field of expertise?

Nothing but a little bit of knowledge.

After the reception for Miller, heated ideological debates did follow in the round table discussions, where delegates are divided into small groups. But it's still disheartening to think some people are so career-oriented that a few extra minutes with Miller became a question-and-answer session on law school rather than on his field of expertise.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Lab fee proposal needs reworking

The Student Government finance committee's recommendation of a \$1 fee for lab tests done at the A.P. Beutel Health Center is a step in the right direction, but a giant leap is what is really needed.

University officials say \$1 per test isn't enough to cover the costs of processing the paperwork involved in keeping track of a lab fee. And the health center, beset by rising costs and low student fees, is in need of funds.

The Battalion Editorial Board believes students not only should pay for their lab fees, but should pay enough to cover the administrative costs as well. A higher fee would not only discourage unnecessary tests but would also help ease the center's financial burden.

Raise the lab fee, and let those who use the service pay for it.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Products with EDB should be banned

A recent report from the Consumer Affairs office of the U.S. Attorney General warns shoppers against buying products containing EDB at slashed prices. The bargain, the report warns, isn't worth the risk.

A check of several local grocery stores produced none of the products, but elsewhere grocers haven't pulled all suspected products off the shelf.

Even more importantly, the federal government hasn't acted to ban their sale.

In a case such as this, the health of

the American consumer should be the only concern. If EDB — which has been found in dangerous levels in consumer products — is a cancer-causing agent, then the government should have only one thing in mind: the safety of the consumer.

As the list of cancer-causing chemicals grows, the American public finds itself at the mercy of industries that fail to adequately test products and chemicals and a government that is slow to act in the consumer's interest.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Mergers have sexy language

By Art Buchwald

Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

Every day you read more stories about takeover battles and mergers. It's hard for people to understand what is going on.

The takeover battle of corporations such as Warner Communications and Texaco-Pennzoil are just the tip of the iceberg.

Takeovers have now become the corporate equivalent of war.

The people involved even have their own sexy language.

An investment banker explained to me how the system works.

"The Bicarb Steel Company is selling at a very low price because it isn't making any steel. Sodium Oil decides to become an unwelcome suitor and tender an offer to acquire her stock. Sodium is known as the 'Raider,' and Bicarb the 'Target.'

"Bicarb doesn't want to marry Sodium, so she seeks out a 'White Knight' to save her. A White Knight is a company that Bicarb could go to bed with, without feeling she had been raped."

"How does Bicarb find a White Knight?"

"Hopefully through an investment banker or a hired gun. You see, the Raider plots his strategy for taking Bicarb by force with his hired gun, and then we're hired to defend the Target's virtue. Both sides have unlimited numbers of lawyers."

"It sounds expensive."

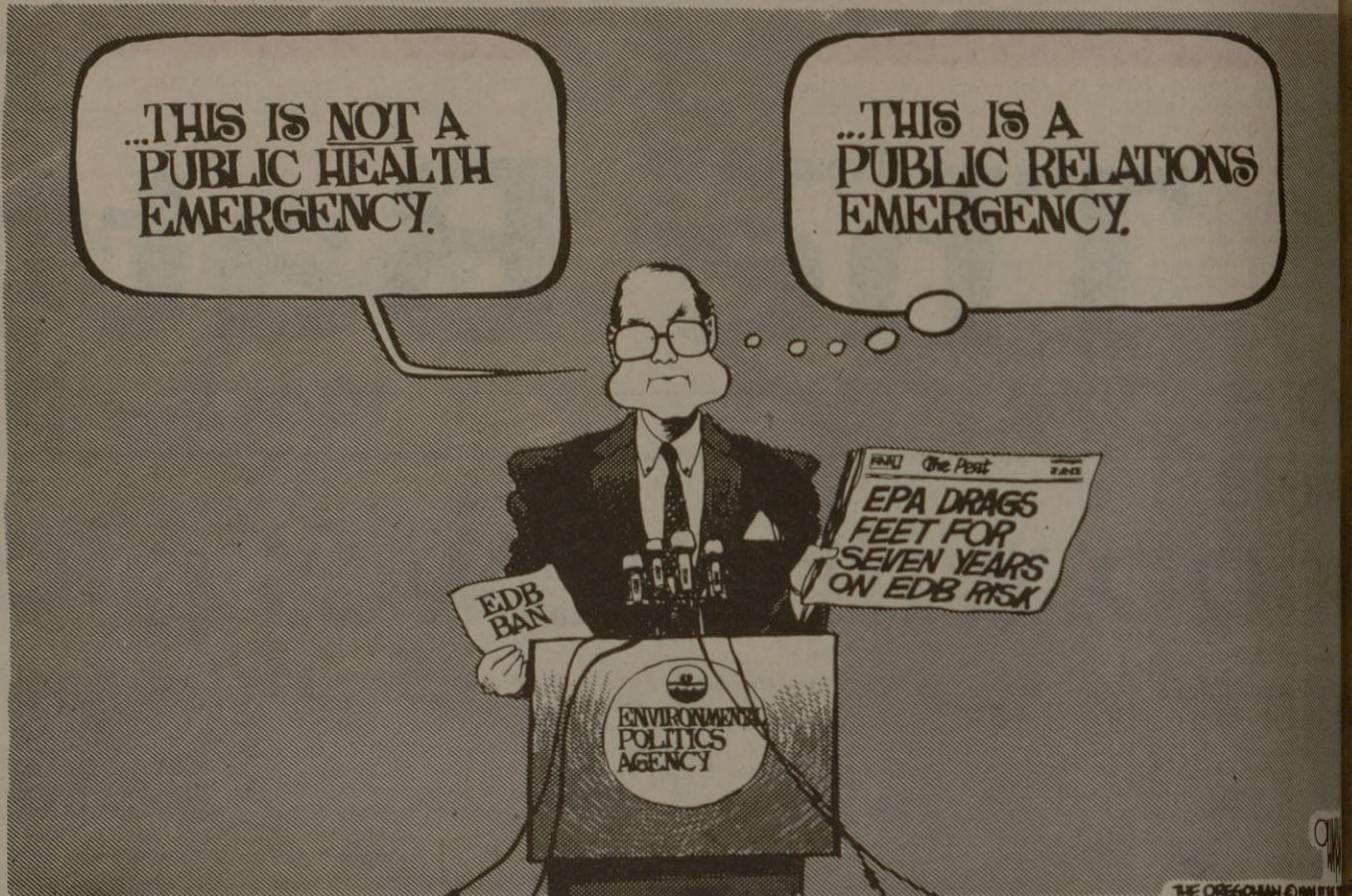
"You better believe it. Now if you can't find a White Knight, you look for a 'Gray Knight.' A Gray Knight is someone the Target isn't in love with, but could sleep with if she had no other choice."

"What about the 'Black Knight'?"

"The Black Knight is a third party that comes into the bedroom uninvited at the last moment to spoil the wedding night by tendering a higher offer."

"And those are the major players in the takeover war?"

"Not necessarily. There is the 'Godfather.' The Godfather is a friend of the Target, and he might acquire just enough stock to scare off the Raider, not because he loves the victim, but because he stands to make a sizable profit on his stock which the Raider has driven up in the takeover bid. Suppose Bicarb is selling for \$7 a share; Sodium has bid \$10 for her body. The fact Sodium has made the offer drives the stock up \$4 a share, because the market is betting the takeover battle will be bitter and Sodium will have to come in with a higher price. Besides the Godfather there is also the 'Grizzly.' He buys up just enough Bicarb stock, say 15 or 20 percent, so he can go to the Target and say 'Be nice to me baby, and I won't hurt you.' That's known in the Business as a 'Bear Hug.' The guy who gives the Bear Hug may do it either to make a lot of money, or he may secretly want the Target for himself."



Letters

Limits of evolution

Editor:

I would like to comment on the recent dialogue in The Battalion on the creation/evolution controversy. As a Christian theist, I believe that God not only created but also sustains the physical world. The so-called "laws of nature" describe His customary care for His creatures whereas miracles describe His care in some extraordinary way.

For me, the question is not whether but how. Did God create via process exclusively, via miracle, or using some combination of the two? Put another way, can we give a reasonable naturalistic explanation for the origin and progression of life to its present state?

I have recently with two friends completed a book entitled "The Mystery of Life's Origin: Reassessing Current Theories" in which we concluded that scientists today have no idea of how life originated.

I attended an International Gordon Research Conference on the Origin of Life which was attended by most active researchers in this area. The closing speaker at the conference noted that current scenario of the origin of life is about as likely as a tornado passing through a junk yard creating a 747 airplane.

In an origin of life presentation I made at the University of Pennsylvania this past fall, several non-Christian professors of molecular biology agreed with my assessment of the current state of affairs, but were more optimistic than I about what would be found in the future. Claims that we can give a naturalistic explanation to the origin of life at present are either uninformed or dishonest.

Why can't we honestly present what can be explained by evolutionary theory, clearly noting the limitations in these explanations at present, and then acknowledge what remains to be explained may or may not be found to have a naturalistic explanation?

Clarence Darrow, the ACLU lawyer in the famous Scopes trial, said it well: "It is bigotry for public schools to teach only one theory of origins."

As Dr. Norman Geisler has said, "If it was bigotry in 1925, then it is still bigotry in 1984. Bigotry has not changed in the past half century; only the bigots have."

Walter L. Bradley, Ph. D.
Professor of Mechanical Engineering

Shocking incident

Editor:

This letter is directed to the College Station Police Department and to all College Station residents.

On Feb. 12 the second Eagle Straight Shot 10K race was held. Unaware of the race and plans to block off Texas Avenue, I decided to do my laundry and grocery shopping. I had to put my clothes in the washing machine at a laundromat across Texas Avenue before it was blocked off. When I returned to put my clothes into the dryer, I found that a barricade had been set up preventing access to the laundromat. I pulled up and asked an officer if I could park my car next to the barricade or somewhere close by so I could walk

across the street to finish my laundry. The officer very threateningly replied, "I don't want to hear your mouth! Turn your car around and get out of here!" I was shocked at the officer's quick temper when I was only asking for his help. I then turned my car around and found my own parking place, then finished my laundry.

This incident has also changed my view on the road blockades set up from time to time on FM 2818. At this blockade officers check your driver's license, safety sticker and license expiration date. This now appears to me as a checkpoint one would experience while driving in Russia, not as something set up to help the residents of College Station.

I had previously heard that the College Station Police Department was discourteous and short on patience, but in the past two-and-a-half years that I have lived here, I have never had any problems until now. I only hope that the residents of College Station take a closer look at the police officers who are paid to protect us. Otherwise we may need another police department — to protect us from our present one.

Harry Callicotte

God punishes gays

Editor:

Come on A. M. Hudson!

I don't think the person sitting next to you on the intra-campus was really serious when he said, "All the gays in the dance room should have the doors locked and then be gassed to death."

It seems to me that you approve of the gays. And as far as your last four words of your letter goes, ("live and let live") I will let them live but I pray for those who are gay and that they will change their ways. For I believe that gassing is by far from a bad punishment as what God will and has already done to some (AIDS).

I don't believe the punishment is up for us to take. God will punish those who misuse what he has given us in his own way if they don't change their ways and ask for forgiveness.

It looks to me like your attitude is the "back-of-the-barn", my friend. I would like to say this last thing with forgetting

about proper English. "All you guys there, if you don't change and ask for forgiveness then stay away from me my friends. My friends and I are normal, and we would rather pair up with ones which are of the opposite sex. God wanted us guys to do in the place."

Did God make Eve for Adam Adam for Eve?

Speaking up

Editor:

Every now and again one must speak to keep one's self-respect. I wish comment on the letter of Walton, Hicks Bates.

I first note that heterosexual refers to a sexual preference for persons of opposite sex, whereas homosexual refers to a preference for persons of same sex as one's self. That's all. It regards whether or not the latter is "normal," an orientation shared by a comparatively estimated 10 percent of American people certainly seems a typical biological occurrence.

The notion that homosexuality is a deviation in the ongoing changes in values is neither new nor correct. DePalma can speak to the degree "choice" he had in the matter of his sexual preference. Taking his preference to be typical, I would expect more exercise of conscious choice went to form the preferences of Walton, Hicks, Bates or myself.

The notion, too, that an unpopular lifestyle (more so if voluntarily adopted?) is a fit object of "black" son, mental and physical harassment and societal persecution by the Straight-Majority, is such an old one that ought all recognize it. When we do should purge ourselves of it.

"Live and let live." Pete, Robert, Kenneth, I say to you that tolerance is not a concession to those for whom we have no concern: it is an enlightened recognition and acceptance of the rights of those with whom you disagree. It is your fellow human beings.

The Battalion

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