

Warped

by Scott McCullar



Juarez mayor now to run for governor of Chihuahua

Associated Press

JUAREZ, Mexico — Mayor Francisco Barrio Terrazas, reversing an earlier decision, said Thursday he will enter the race for his party's nomination for the governorship of Chihuahua.

Barrio said the public outcry over his decision not to seek the National Action Party's nomination had been greater than expected, forcing him to backtrack on his announcement of Jan. 16.

Barrio, 35, said "I started receiving visits and calls from people from all the major municipalities in the state, putting pressure on me."

"The common denominator of their pleas that I reconsider was a perception that this electoral process was far too important for me to not participate."

Barrio said last week that his decision not to seek the nomination was because he had his sights set on a higher office but had refused to elaborate.

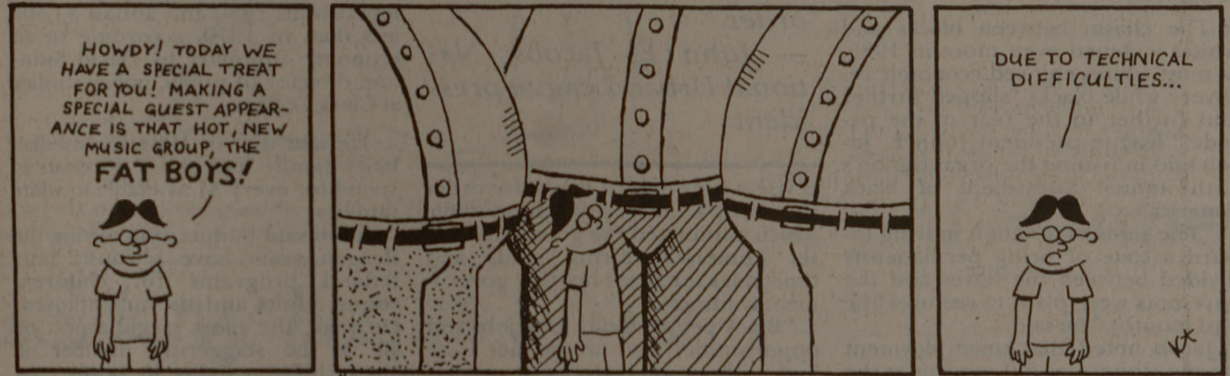
Should he be nominated during PAN's state convention in Chihuahua City Sunday, he will resign his job as mayor, Barrio said.

Barrio, whose term as mayor expires in October, staged a three-week hunger strike protesting changes in Chihuahua state election laws. He stopped his fast in early January when more than 100,000 signatures had been gathered in this border city against the electoral changes.

PAN officials charge that the electoral reforms are aimed at promoting fraud and preventing the party from gaining more power in Chihuahua, a PAN stronghold.

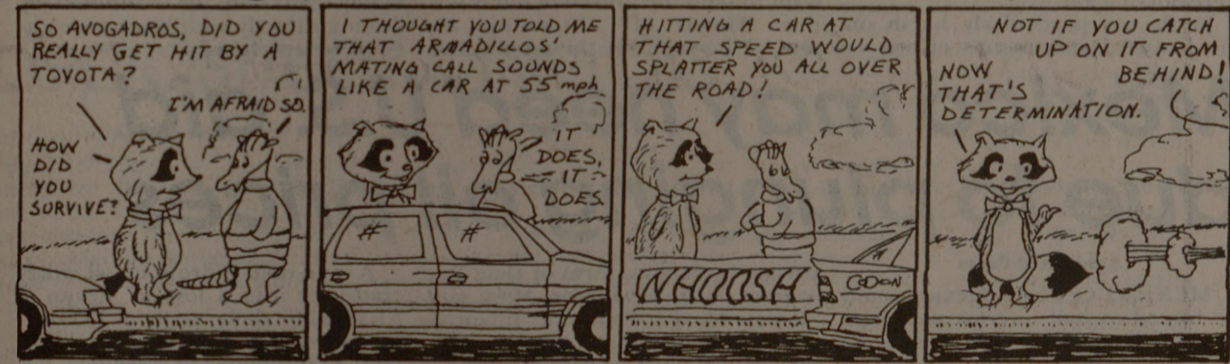
Waldo

by Kevin Thomas



Coon's Kingdom

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Intellectual growth

A&M prof devises way to measure advantages to college

By SONDRRA PICKARD
Staff Writer

Getting a college education involves a great deal more than learning a marketable skill, says a Texas A&M researcher who recently developed a method of measuring some of the less obvious advantages of going to college.

Dr. T. Dary Erwin, associate director of Measurement and Research Services and visiting associate professor of psychology, says the results of his Erwin Identity Scale and Scale of Intellectual Development prove that increased confidence and individualism are two aspects of a college education that reach beyond mastering a chosen skill.

"We've known for many years that a number of positive things happen to students while they're here," Erwin says, "but other things happen besides just the learning of marketable skills."

"We also believe things happen to students in a personal and social way that contribute to their over-all development."

In the past two years Erwin says there have been several efforts to try to measure and document these developments in an attempt to determine their significance, thereby eliminating some of the vagueness associated with the meaning of education.

"What does it mean when someone says they're educated?" Erwin asks. "It's a very difficult task to answer that question, so I'm one of several who are trying to do it."

Most studies in measurement research, Erwin says, try to measure traditional areas of student's abilities such as their knowledge of math or English.

"I wanted to choose some areas that were a little different to try to measure," Erwin says. "Some people say you can't measure those things and you shouldn't even try, but I think those areas are important and that we should try."

Already in use at several other colleges and universities around the country, the Identity Scale survey consists of about 50 simple questions and is administered to a random sample of 500 freshmen shortly before they begin their college careers.

An identical questionnaire is then re-administered to the same group of students at the end of their first fall semester, and then again at the end of their senior year.

Erwin's findings indicate a significant drop in a student's confidence and self-awareness levels during the middle of their first college semester, levels which later increase as they moved into their sophomore year.

Early college life has a tendency to deflate the confidence most students have after recently graduating from high school, Erwin says.

"It's kind of like a countercultural shock," he says. "When students leave home and come to college they do a lot more things on their own for the first time and they go through a variety of experiences."

"We would hope that their identity would increase and that they would become more aware

"There's a need to discover what experiences are out there and whether they influence development."

— Dr. T. Dary Erwin, associate director of Measurement and Research Services.

of themselves, gaining confidence in themselves as a result of the college experience."

The scores taken during the student's senior year, Erwin says, show a dramatic, positive change in the student's character compared to those of their freshman year.

Although conducted in a similar manner, Erwin's Scale of Intellectual Development consists of 115 questions that measure four sequential subscales, or stages, in a student's mental attitude toward decision-making. Different scores are given for the different stages and Erwin hopes to see a progressive movement through the stages as the students go through college.

The four stages are:

- Dualism: This is the lowest stage in which a student perceives alternatives as either completely right or wrong, with no allowance for a middle ground.

- Relativism: In this stage, a student recognizes the available alternatives and ideas open to them and can accept them all.

- Commitment: At this point, students have considered and studied various alternatives, but commit themselves to one of those alternatives, based on their decision.

- Empathy: This is the highest stage in which students commit to one decision, but also show an awareness of the impact that decision will have on the society around them.

Findings from the intellect scale indicate that students who finance their own education are usually more successful in school, excluding those who try to work fulltime while going to school.

Also, students who held leadership positions in high school scored much higher on both the Identity and Intellect scales.

While Erwin says his research has not yet been perfected, he says his next step is to look at the differences between students who show significant changes during their college years and those who do not.

"There's a need to discover what experiences are out there and whether they influence development," he says. "What do they do here at A&M or any other university that causes their development to be greater?"

He hopes to answer the question by closely studying groups of students who have common experiences and share common activities, both extracurricular and academic.

"I think it (the research) has probably raised more questions than answers," Erwin says. "There's a need to discover what experiences are out there and whether they influence development."

Although he says the areas still need further exploration, Erwin says he hopes the instruments can someday be used to increase retention of students at universities and can also be used as a supplement to the regular transcripts students submit to prospective employers.

Erwin was recently honored by the American Association for Counseling and Development for his research, which he developed on his own with no outside funding.

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