

Opinion

Batt endorses Cleary

After interviewing the five candidates for student body president — Marty Roos, Brett Shine, Mike Sims, Mike Hachtman and Jim Cleary — we unanimously agreed on only one thing: All five were qualified for the position.

Each of the candidates had concrete ideas on ways to make life better for Texas A&M students. Each wanted better student communication with the Board of Regents and had ideas for reforming Student Government.

But after serious and sometimes heated discussion, we decided on the person who we felt had the experience and leadership qualities Student Government and the students need — Jim Cleary.

Cleary currently serves as vice president for academic affairs in the Student Senate and as student representative on the pro-vo search committee.

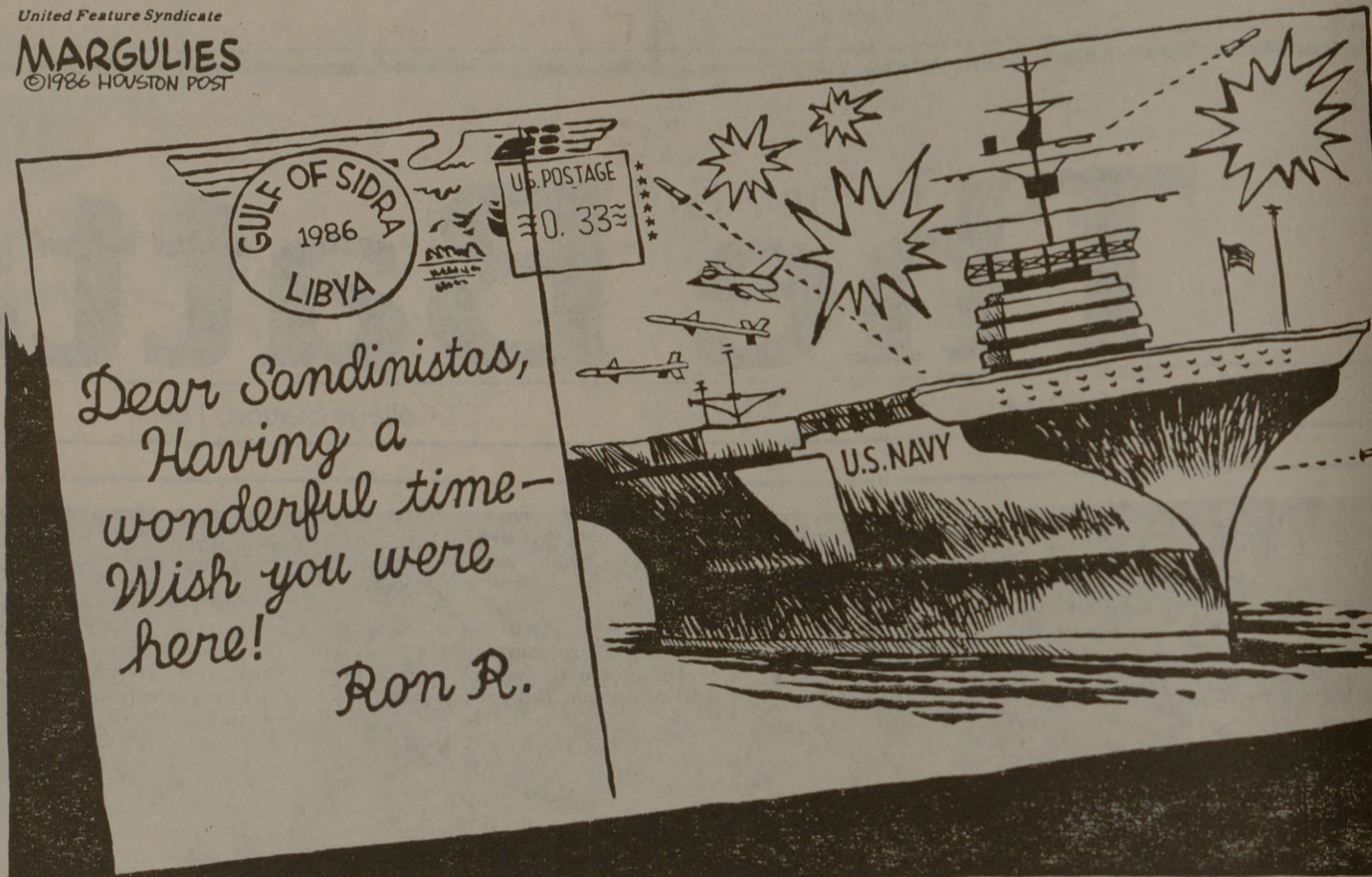
By serving in these positions, we feel he has opened channels of communication with faculty and administration. We also feel he has the dedication and assertiveness to accomplish the goals he has set for himself and Student Government.

Among Cleary's ideas are making teacher evaluations available to students and getting rid of the non-productive rules and personnel in Student Government.

Jim Cleary has the dedication and determination to lead Student Government to a more active role in voicing the opinions of the student body.

The Battalion Editorial Board

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Prostitution turns people into controlled commodities

The last time I taped columnist James J. Kilpatrick's mug shot to my dart board was in 1983, after he wrote a piece advocating high school and college newspapers as lapdogs of the administration.



Loren Steffy

Now Kilpatrick's picture once again is gracing my bull's-eye. Last week, Kilpatrick advocated legalizing prostitution. "The law has enough to worry about without worrying over discreet sexual relations between consenting adults . . . Let's let the ancient law of supply and demand quietly accommodate the oldest profession in the world."

Kilpatrick's idea is based on the conclusions of an Atlanta committee that determined "Prostitutes in Atlanta should be allowed to work out of escort

services, bars and hotels, as long as they do so discreetly and stay off the streets."

The committee stated that prostitution should be decriminalized and hookers periodically tested for diseases. The disease-testing idea is nothing new. In Nevada, house prostitution is legal in most counties. The "working women" are fingerprinted and routinely checked by public health officials. But house owners collect 50 to 60 percent of the earnings and the basic per customer charge is low. Even in this legal arrangement, prostitutes are a controlled commodity, not human beings.

The Atlanta committee also suggested that because licensed escort services would have to pay taxes, everyone in the city could benefit from prostitution. Everyone, of course, except the prostitutes themselves. Many hookers who work out of bars must pay the manager a sizeable chunk of their profits. Others must encourage their customers to drink, thus running up the bar's profits. Of course, then the owner would have to pay more taxes. . . .

It sounds good in theory, but many "escort services" are linked to organized crime, which is not known for responsible tax-paying. Legalizing prostitution and collecting taxes on it means a city would be endorsing sexual solicitation of men, women and children. I have a difficult time being thankful for the city repairing the sidewalk in front of my house if the money was generated by exploiting women.

Kilpatrick's assertion that the law has better things to do is wrong. The most common arrangement for a prostitute's services is the pimp system. Many of these relationships are based not on a monetary agreement but on a coerced psychological dependence in which the hooker is an exploited victim.

The law spends more time fighting this type of prostitution than the subtler forms. Call girls, the upper crust of the prostitution hierarchy, are rarely arrested. So even if prostitutes were restricted to bars and hotels, police would

still spend most of their time ensuring that "illegal" streetwalkers don't peddle their wares in the public domain.

The other problem with Kilpatrick's theory is the idea of "consenting adults." Most prostitutes don't start out as adults, and almost none of them are "consenting" at first. The drift into prostitution usually starts in childhood with the development of a negative self-image. What follows is sexual exploitation, including molestation, incest or rape. Eventually, the child accepts the image of herself as a hooker.

And juvenile courts don't steer wayward children in the right direction, they only enhance the problem. Adolescents usually learn the fundamentals of their trade and frequently meet juvenile pimps while under juvenile court jurisdiction.

For most young men and women, prostitution is not their "career," it's a temporary means of survival, a quick answer to their social and economic needs,

turned to when other alternatives are either not feasible or not available. Their choice as their career usually are addiction to drugs and/or alcohol and have other way to maintain their habits. These people need help, not a government supporting the actions of their employers/abusers.

Maybe all these deficiencies within legalized prostitution can be taken care of by a clever lawmaker. But this country has a basic moral concept that sells your body for material gain is wrong. The act in question doesn't change the environment, the status of the prostitute or the cost of the service.

Kilpatrick is right, within his limited frame of mind. The law does have better things to do than worry about sexual relations between consenting adults, only prostitution were that simple.

Loren Steffy is a junior journalist and the Opinion Page editor of *The Battalion*.

Imelda's secret shoe stash: fixation or front?

Sherlock Holmes was studying in the newspaper. "No matter where one goes to track down the secret of the Marcos fortune, the trail always leads back to the shoes."



Art Buchwald

"Why is that?" I asked him. "I'm not sure, Watson. Let's see what we know already. Imelda had 3,200 pairs of size 8 shoes in her closet, most of which had never been worn. Why, Watson, why?" "Suppose Ferdinand Marcos had a foot fetish. Many men with power do." "It's too easy, Watson. Even someone with an extreme foot fixation could

never go through 3,200 pairs."

"I've known people with fetishes who went through a pair of new shoes every day. Perhaps Ferdinand was one of them."

"I've checked around at the palace. No one ever saw Marcos playing with Imelda's shoes."

"Well then, Sherlock, maybe Imelda was the one who had a foot fetish."

Sherlock smiled as he usually does when he's caught me. "Wrong, Watson. Not a foot fetish. If anything, Imelda had a shoe fetish."

"What is a shoe fetish?"

"It's a compulsion to hold and caress a piece of footwear to assuage your guilt."

"And what causes one to have the fetish?"

"We're not sure. All we know is that many people who have a shoe fetish also have a numbered bank account in Switzerland."

"It's all starting to come together, Sherlock. Imelda bought shoes on her trips abroad to disguise the fact she was opening numbered bank accounts."

"Just the opposite, my dear Watson. Imelda opened numbered bank accounts abroad to disguise the fact she was buying shoes."

"Of course," I said. "But why?"

"Imelda had a very deprived childhood. The money she sent out of the country was to assure her that no matter what happened to the Philippine government, she would always have something to wear to the ball."

"But, Sherlock, we're talking about \$3 billion. Are you trying to tell me that all

this money was set aside for footwear?"

"Have you priced women's shoes lately, Watson?"

"That's all well and good. But suppose Imelda had stocked up on the shoes so that when she was booted out of Manila she could open her own store in Honolulu."

"Take a look at this photo. Does Imelda look like somebody who would work in a shoe store?"

"Probably not. But she could own it and not work there."

"Except for one thing, Watson. All the shoes are size 8. You can't open a store where all the footwear is the same size."

"Hmmm. Well, tell me, Sherlock, does solving the shoe enigma help you solve the problem of where the Philippine treasury is?"

"Not necessarily. A lot of it is hidden in real estate, gold, jewelry, bonds and legitimate companies that were bought when he was riding high. But that has surfaced after the shoes."

"Quite. Say what you will, Sherlock, the Marcoses always covered the tracks."

"Watson, I would like to go back and take one more look at Imelda's closet."

"Why, Sherlock?"

"The Marcoses had a dog guard their clothes. On the night they sneaked out of the palace the dog did not bark. Why not, Watson?"

"Why, Sherlock?"

"Elementary. The dog had a shoe in his mouth."

Art Buchwald is a columnist for *Los Angeles Times Syndicate*.

Mail Call

Use your heads

EDITOR:

Once again The Battalion Editorial Board, that infamous group, has left me wondering about its mentality. I am responding to the Mar. 24 editorial "A Cloudy Response." In it they praised the Soviet Union for their "self-imposed, unilateral test ban on nuclear weapons," and shamed the United States for recently testing a nuclear weapon.

Sure the Soviets want a test ban on nuclear weapons because they have already achieved a healthy advantage in this area and they would like to maintain it. This same article also praised the Soviet Union for their intentions of peace and stability. Do the Soviets support radical regimes like Libya and Syria who export terrorism in the name of peace? Do they invade Afghanistan in the name of peace? Do they fortify their borders with free countries with hundreds of thousands of tanks and other military hardware in the name of peace?

No, the Soviet Union's long range intentions are not of peace and stability, but of world domination and the spread of Communism. So before writing

your next liberal, naive article please use your heads and think about what you are writing.

Blaine Gillcoat '87

GSS anniversary

EDITOR:

A year ago, the Supreme Court, by refusing to hear Texas A&M's appeal, forced the University to finally recognize Gay Student Services.

Since then, our former "foes" — the administration — have done all they can to make our recognition painless. It's good to be able to work with the University.

The other students have been mostly complacent. Perhaps they support our right to be here, or they realize that we ARE here, whether they like it or not. Whatever the reason, the GSS is not the controversial subject it used to be. This week is Gay Week at Texas A&M. GSS is celebrating its first year on campus. It is also commemorating 10 years of service to Aggies. Saturday is the 10th anniversary of our original application for recognition.

Kevin McLeod Bailey
Secretary of GSS

Well-lighted books

EDITOR:

On Mar. 18, during spring break, I happened to walk by the Evans library about 8 p.m., and much to my disbelief EVERY SINGLE LIGHT WAS ON. There was not a soul to be seen inside, not even the janitorial staff. But here were all these brightly lit books.

It makes you wonder how the University, according to a quote by President Vandiver in *The Battalion* Mar. 25, is "doing everything to contain costs."

I know I feel pretty good knowing that my increased tuition and decreased financial aid is making sure that all the books in Evans library don't have to be afraid of the dark.

David Fuller

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

The Battalion

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