

Opinion

Cooperation will solve Brazos County poverty

It's been two years since the Harvard University School of Public Health and Physicians Taskforce on Hunger in America statistics were taken. It has been two years since statistics defined Brazos County as the hungriest county in Texas.



D.A. Jensen

The study found 22.3 percent of the Brazos County population lived below the poverty standard of an income of \$10,609 for a family of four.

Despite the figures, some prominent local leaders and study researchers insisted the study was inaccurate because the data was not adjusted to account for student population. The fact is the student population did not contaminate the majority of the

population blocks examined in the study.

Ruth Schaffer, a professor of sociology at Texas A&M, examined the population blocks in the county used in the study and found only two areas in College Station contaminated by students. No blocks in Bryan were contaminated.

Brazos County does have a lot of poverty. It was bad when the statistics were taken. It is getting worse and will continue getting worse until employment opportunities in the county improve.

"There are a lot of people who are in bad condition just because there isn't enough employment," Schaffer said. "You are always going to have people who cannot work and people who work the welfare system, but their numbers are really small compared to the number of low-income families who are going to work if they can."

The lack of available employment in Bryan-College Station is the largest

factor in the increase of poverty in the area.

"The area has lost industry," she said. "They lost the Texas Instruments plant. They lost International Shoes, which was the bottom of the barrel. International Shoes is a very poor community company anywhere you find it. It does nothing for the community. It pays the lowest wage. It's not good to its employees. But they did provide jobs for very low-income people who could not get other kinds of jobs. Now, that's gone."

"A lot of people do not have jobs. In addition, the University, in this time of dollar constraints, has held together the upper levels of the University but on the lower end, in terms of custodial services, it has not re-employed when it's lost someone. There are a lot of people unemployed who used to work for the University."

The prospects for the poverty stricken in this area are not good because industry does not show signs of

increasing. The amount of unemployment in Bryan-College Station area will increase. A large number of families will drift from middle-class positions into lower-class positions because Bryan-College Station is not a choice place for industrial development.

Schaffer said, "Bryan-College Station does not compete well for industry. They compete with one another, so they don't get very much money. The answer to the poverty problem in the area is work. You are always going to have some families whose income is so low they just can't make it, but the answer to poverty is work."

I think, given this information, the chances to rise above the gripping hold of poverty are grim in Bryan-College Station; the chances to fall into the gripping hold of poverty are good. Poverty exists in our community regardless of what community leaders want citizens to believe. Poverty is here, and it is growing at an alarming rate.

I've noticed an increase in services designed to help the poverty stricken Bryan. I'm glad the community citizens are attempting to confront a problem that they have been told isn't that bad.

It's time for increased cooperation between the community leaders, the community people and the college community, to find ways to make our area more attractive to industries searching for new locations.

I don't have the solution to poverty do suggest that everyone confront the problem instead of denying it. I do suggest that the leaders of Bryan-College Station work together to attract industry instead of bidding against each other. I hope that, as a community, we can improve the condition of the population.

D.A. Jensen is a junior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion.

Mail Call

Think before you bite

EDITOR:

Robert Morris needs a vacation, or at least a tranquilizer. His spastic tirade in Tuesday's *Battalion* must have left him with throbbing temples and a frothing mouth.

He should take it easy next time.

Now, about his exasperating diatribe, I offer some reflections. Unfortunately, most of the article was void of any cogent points which to dispute. Instead, it relied on trite liberal "sloganism" and some extraordinarily impotent sarcasm. As to one point which I think it tried to make, it seemed to be having a hard time. It said, "To insinuate that America ever was . . . morally corrupt is absurd." Then, in the following paragraph, it said that in 1980 peace was not important to Americans. Apathy where peace is concerned represents societal moral corruption of the highest form (e.g. Nazi Germany.) The characterization of liberals as having a monopoly on virtue and intelligence is both arrogant and preposterous. But then, the article's arrogance is most evident when it called the U.S. a nation of sheep that has seemingly awakened. Is Morris the only enlightened one?

This meandering nonsense saves its most ponderous parcels until the end when its degree of confusion was reaching its culmination. Was Morris aware that he actually accused the Reagan administration of funding Sandinistas? He must have been in a state of complete delirium when he made reference to "our Brazos bastion of young conservative ignorance . . ." Ignorance? — Robert, there is no such word as "conservatist." With your best interests in mind, I humbly offer the following advice.

The next time you sit down at your typewriter, all hot and bothered and ready to spew forth all manner of gibberish — STOP. Slow down. And find something to do that doesn't get you so excited.

Kirk Stebbins '88

Sailing away

EDITOR:

I had a bad first day of classes. Class was fine, but on the afternoon of June 8 I was loading my two windsurfing sails in my car at my apartment complex on College Main, and I locked myself out. After the manager's second key worked, I jumped into my car and left to buy new battens. After I took out my big sail at the shop, I noticed I forgot my small sail on the sidewalk at my home. I hurried back, but it was gone. It was a 4 square meter yellow and dark blue Marder sail made by North Sails. It was folded up in a pillowcase with brown stripes. It is a rare, out-of-business brand worth \$135 now. I really need it, so please be a good Ag and a good neighbor and return it. Or if anyone sees it on the lake, please call the police.

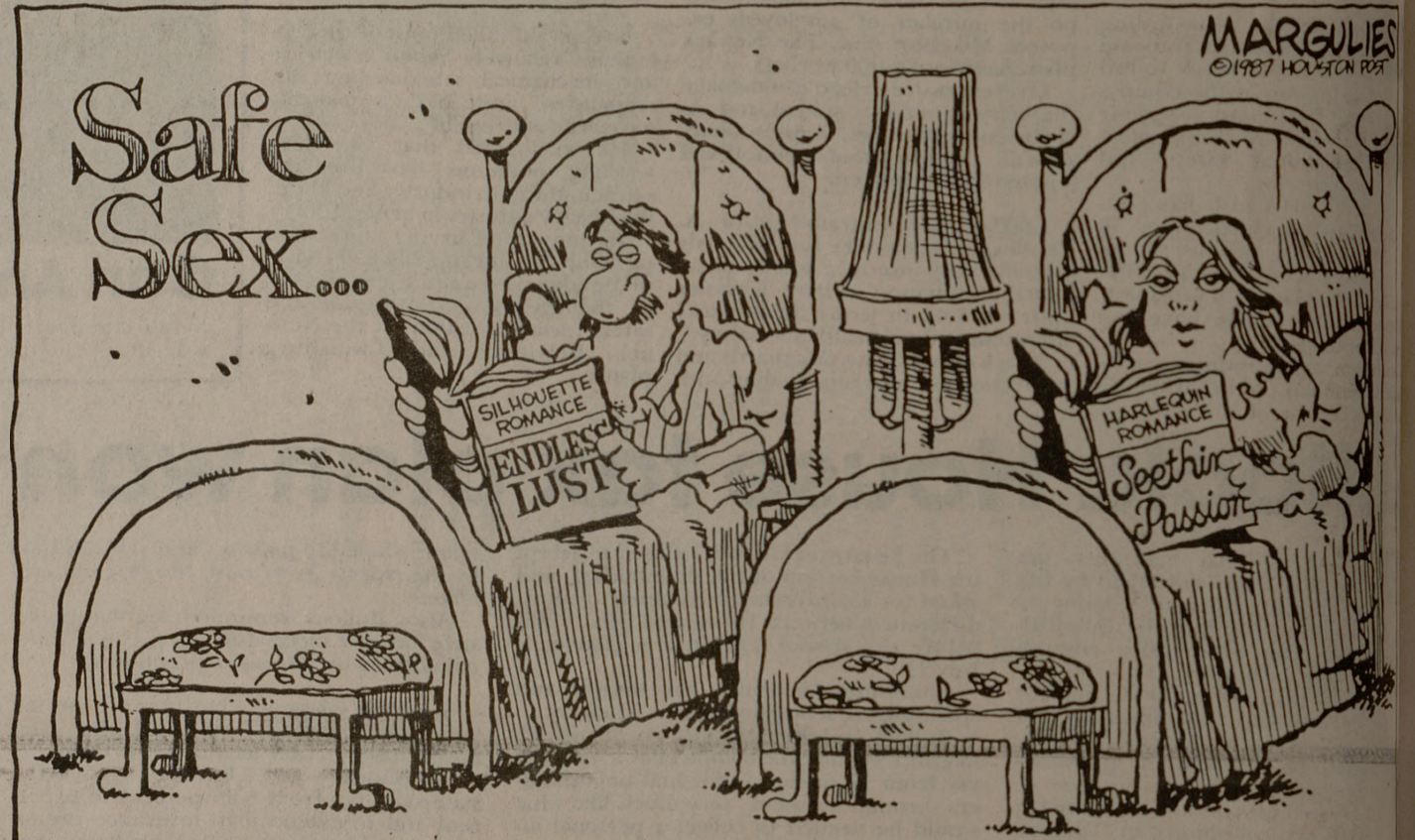
Paul Svecina '87

Get the "BS" out

EDITOR:

Dear God-fearing, upper-middle class Republicans, Please take note! Grab your Bible. Satan and the secular humanists are at it again. If you go to the library and look for a Bible, notice where it is located. The call numbers start with "BS"! Subtle yes, unimportant never! The disrespect the Bible suffers (and consequently God and worse, Oral Roberts) because of "BS" is horrible. We, as good Aggie Christians, must write our legislators and, better yet, our TV evangelists. We must form a PAC, Political Auction Committee, and get a Christian elected who will do something about this destructive disrespect. I know Oral Roberts can raise people from the dead, but can he save the Bible from "BS"?

Andy Vann '88



What's better than sex? Read on

The fear of getting AIDS or some other terrible disease has caused many people to rethink their attitudes about having sex.

Some even are giving up sex altogether. This is called abstinence. I have engaged in sexual abstinence often during my lifetime.

Usually, however, this was not a self-imposed situation. There have been periods during my lifetime I have wondered if the entire female population hadn't somehow gotten together and made a pact to keep my sexual activity to nothing more than a memory.

During these sexually-inactive days I often had to come up with all sorts of other pleasures of the flesh to give me at least some sort of satisfaction and to keep my mind off being the target of a sexual boycott.

Now that self-imposed sexual abstinence



Lewis Grizzard

may soon become quite popular, I have decided I might be doing a public service to offer certain alternatives to sex.

Your mother often told you, I'm sure, "You don't have to you-know-what to have fun."

She was right. You likely will never find anything that will make you scream and holler and jump up and down and spend your money like sex will, but there are a few things in which you can engage that will at least give you a Triple-A thrill or two. For example:

GET SOMEBODY ELSE TO SHAMPOO YOUR HAIR: It's great, believe me. And even if you can't get anybody to get into your shower or tub with you to do the honors, you always can go down to a local hair salon and pay for a shampoo, which is legal, even in Georgia, which has a law against most everything that is fun.

GET SOMEBODY TO SCRATCH YOUR BACK: Talk about tingles up and down your spine. The great thing here is you usually can convince somebody to scratch your back for free. I've only engaged in boy-girl back-scratching, but, like Jim Bakker says, "Whatever turns you on . . ."

PIG OUT: Just go crazy and eat a lot of something that is terribly fattening or bad for you. Hiding in the closet while doing makes the experience more erotic.

I often pig out on Dove Bars, which glorified Eskimo Pies. Eat 10 Dove Bars, your closet and I guarantee you your man won't be on sex again for hours. You'll be busy throwing up.

WRITE SOMETHING DIRTY ON A RESTROOM WALL: "Lassie runs after and sucks eggs" will do until you think of something original.

RUN AFTER CARS AND SUCK EGGS: If Lassie enjoys it, maybe you will, too.

WATCH THE EVENING NEWS IN THE NUDE: For you kinkier types.

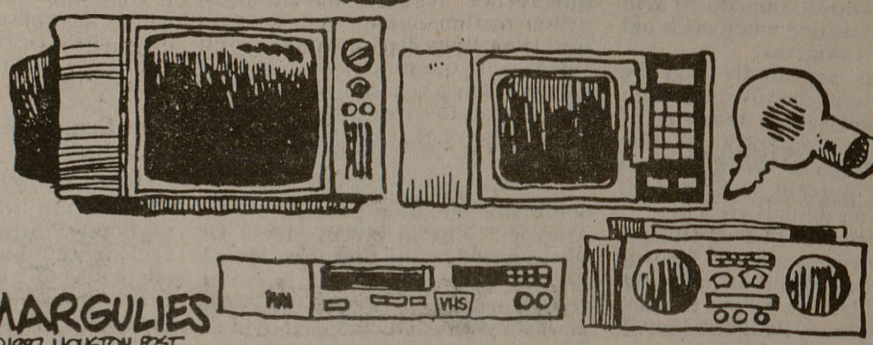
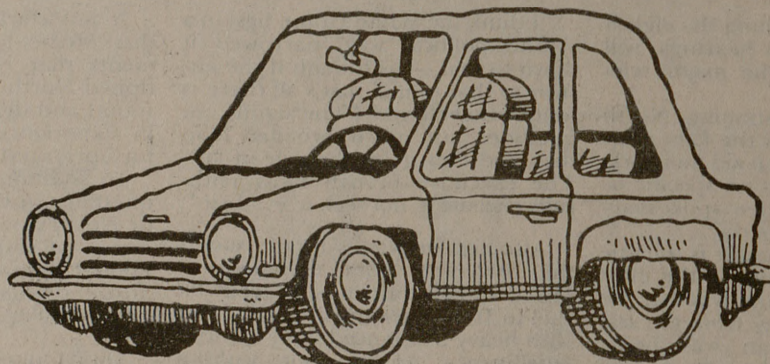
WRITE A LETTER TO PENTHOSES MAGAZINE: They'll print anything. Best by writing, "I was watching the evening news in the nude when my dog Lassie . . ." and on from there.

TAKE UP GOLF: As someone famous once said, golf and sex are a lot alike. They're both things you don't have to be very good at to enjoy.

Take it from me.

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The Battalion

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