

Opinion

The Battalion

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Opinions expressed in *The Battalion* are those of the editorial board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Journalism.

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Bye bye Biden

A candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination admits to wrongdoing but vows to continue his campaign. Days later, as new allegations surface, he quits the race. Can you say Gary Hart?

Maybe so, but the ex-candidate in question is Sen. Joseph Biden.

Like Hart, Biden admitted his wrongdoing — that he plagiarized a law school paper and had used material in his speeches without crediting the author.

But Biden continued to be dogged by new charges. His undoing came with a videotape in which he answered a questioner by saying he had attended law school on a full academic scholarship, ended up in the top half of his class, won an international moot-court competition, graduated with three degrees and was the outstanding student in the political science department.

Five statements. Five lies.

Biden attended law school on a partial scholarship based on financial need. He finished 76th of 85, did not win the award for the outstanding political science student and graduated with one degree, not three. There is no record, even in the senator's resume, of him ever winning a moot-court competition.

Hart's actions led to questions about his judgment. Biden's actions lead to no questions about his credibility — he has none.

Biden says he "will be there" for other presidential campaigns. But the man who makes Gary Hart look like a model of virtue is one candidate we can do without.

Mail Call

Have no fear of Bork

EDITOR:

I am writing concerning the nomination of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court of the United States. This issue has been much-debated, and I have been watching it closely for many months.

As an Afro-American, I foresee no danger to my rights as a citizen given by the constitution if Bork is placed on the Supreme Court. Besides, one justice doesn't make a Court ruling — eight other justices give verdicts also. Bork's opponents say his judgment will be that of the entire court, which is ridiculous. I see the events up to and during the hearings as a power struggle: justice in the courts as intended by the founding fathers of our democratic republic versus groups who would raise their ideology and interests above the law of this land, having no real regard for the citizens of this country.

Even though Bork has repeatedly indicated that his nomination would not mean the targeting of certain rulings by the Supreme Court, certain interest groups continue to say that he will. For example, pro-abortion supporters such as Planned Parenthood and National Abortion Rights Action League have pledged to stop Bork's nomination with a multi-million dollar campaign because Bork will not misuse his authority as a justice by inventing new "constitutional" rights not mentioned in the Constitution. These groups realize if certain rulings are deemed unconstitutional, the elected representatives will respond to growing public sentiment by curbing murder on demand.

Citizens of this country, you're the heart of the lawmaking process. Consider Robert Bork's qualifications and character. Then write your senators and ask them to confirm the nomination of Robert Bork and have the Senate vote quickly by voting in favor of cloture when the nomination comes before the full Senate.

Ricardo C. Davis
Department of Chemistry

Constitutionally correct

EDITOR:

In response to Dr. Robinson's letter of Sept. 21 regarding the lack of programming by the MSC Student Programs office to commemorate the bicentennial of the Constitution, we would like to point out the inaccuracy of your statement.

On April 1 of this year, the MSC Wiley Lecture Series produced a program that was recognized by the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution as an official event of the celebration. Entitled "Constitution & Foreign Policy: A Question of Control," the program featured a frank discussion on the limits of presidential power between Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick and Senator Edmund Muskie and was moderated by Mr. Howard K. Smith. Not only was the panel discussion presented for the benefit of the students, faculty and staff of Texas A&M, but it was also presented in an edited form to several hundred PBS stations across the country and aired by many of them.

In addition to the panel discussion, the MSC Wiley Lecture Series also presented two seminars on this topic. One featured Mr. Paul Warr of the Texas A&M political science department giving an overview of the Constitution, and the other featured Mr. Fredrick McClure, the former liaison to Congress for the Reagan Administration, who gave a personal perspective on the relationship between the executive and legislative branches.

The Memorial Student Center Programs Office strives to provide timely programming for the Texas A&M community. In the realm of foreign policy, the MSC Wiley Lecture Series has been a leader in producing forums featuring world leaders discussing important and controversial issues. It is widely regarded as one of the premier university lecture series in the nation.

The MSC Wiley Lecture Series Committee

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 classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

Being 'exposed' by the media: How to make it an advantage

Jessica Hahn will expose her life's story — in more ways than one — in an upcoming issue of *Playboy* magazine. Jim Bakker's lawyers claim that by exposing her breasts, Hahn has destroyed her credibility as a witness in the money-for-silence trials of the Bakker ministry.



D.A. Jensen

I think they're right. It's hard to believe a woman's cry of exploitation when she's willing to exploit herself.

I'm not too worried about Hahn — I understand *Playboy* paid her well. But I would like to point out that Hahn's actions are just another example of an ever-growing trend.

Public figures are blaming the media for the unfavorable attention they receive when they should be blaming themselves and using the attention to their benefit.

Politicians and public figures should not blame the media for exposing their faults. It is the media's job, acting in the public interest, to present a clear picture, good and bad, of those attempting to influence public opinion.

Those receiving media attention should realize that exposure does not spell disaster. The court of public opinion is not totally inflexible. Perfection is not expected. Reasonable judgement is required.

This is where all the exposed politicians, religious leaders and their sidekicks could use a lesson in how to use media exposure to their advantage. I have a few examples of good and bad exposure.

First there is Gary Hart. He blames the media for problems he created himself. He wouldn't stand up and take responsibility for his actions. He hid behind a "blame the media for ferreting out evil information" veneer. He insisted the media was out to get him. His real mistake was not using the unfavorable attention to show that he was willing to back his actions, right or wrong. Public opinion crucified him.

Jim and Tammy Bakker made the same mistake. Instead of admitting they took advantage of their television ministry, they blamed the media for ruining their lives. Instead of gladly giving up their misappropriated ministry wealth, they cried "unfair" when it was taken away. Another example of death by public opinion.

Donna Rice is guilty. She didn't want the media to make her a public figure. I

think the media gave her a more adequate opportunity to express her side of the story. The court of public opinion was kind to her considering the circumstances.

The last bad example is Jessica Hahn. It's true that she has finally decided to be honest with the public, but she has chosen the wrong vehicle to disclose that honesty. I expect that public opinion will turn sour following her *Playboy* fiasco. I hope it doesn't discourage honesty from other public figures.

And now I would like to end on a good note. Although I don't necessarily agree with Oliver North's actions, I would like to hold them up as an example of how to use unfavorable media attention so it has a favorable effect on public opinion.

North used media attention to his advantage. He rallied public opinion to his cause and won an outstanding round of support by standing by his actions, right or wrong.

Public figures should stop complaining about media exposure and start learning how to salvage their errors through honesty and openness with the media. The media cannot expose those who have nothing to hide.

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



Send the kids to a low-cost college

Everyone worries about how much it costs to go to college.

I read a figure that said the cost of one year of schooling at prestigious institutions such as Yale, Harvard and other places where the football teams never go to a bowl game was \$17,000.

One female student interviewed on the Yale campus said, "I think it's worth it."

A Porsche is worth it at \$50,000, too, if Daddy's check is coming in each month.

It's been 20 years since I was in college, but I still feel I am qualified to offer a few suggestions to parents as to how to cut down on the price of educating their little spoiled darlings.

If you can't finance \$17,000 a year on

what you make in annual salary down at the plant, but your kid wants to go to Harvard because that's the best place to go if you want to meet, and perhaps later marry, a Kennedy, suggest alternatives.

"How about good Ol' State U?" you might ask.

Your kid's eyes will roll back in his or her head, the classic teenage expression that means you have been completely out of touch with what's been happening since the year Rome was sacked.

Then say, "OK, I can't afford Harvard, and you don't want to go to State U, but I can get you on the third shift at the plant." That should work. You wouldn't want your kid to meet and marry a Kennedy anyway. Those people probably wear ties at dinner.

Speaking of work, here's another way to cut down on what it costs to put your child through college.

Suggest he or she get a part-time job to help pay for some of the expenses. This suggestion likely will send your

child into a fainting spell. "But how," your daughter will once she has been revived, "can I still have time to be on the Homecoming Float Committee and sorority house?"

Explain how you had to sell magazines door-to-door to put your child through college and how, if she gets a job, there won't be enough money for sorority dues.

Your daughter will hate you — only until her own children reach college age.

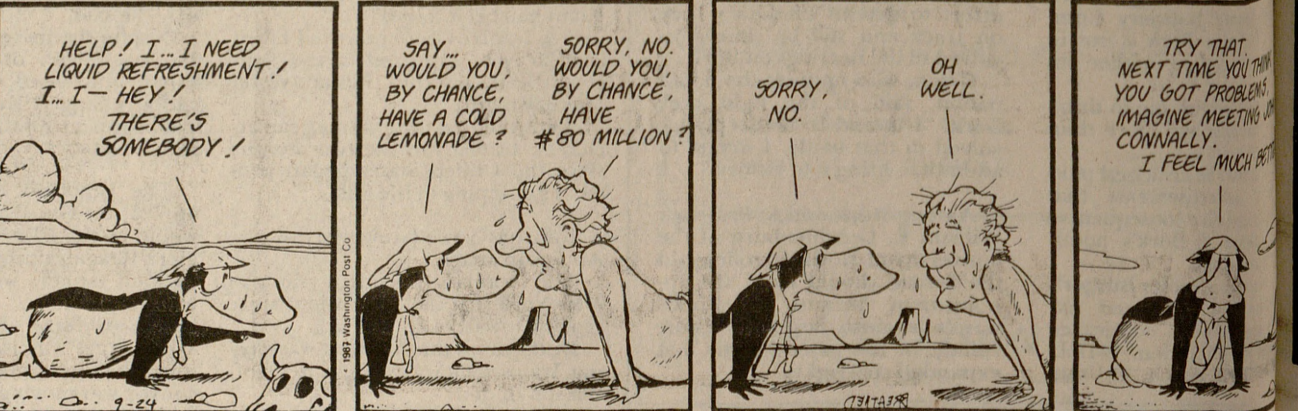
And as soon as your child leaves college, move to a new address and an unlisted phone number so you won't be getting any letters or phone calls begging for money.

This may seem cruel, but it's the only way to use them or wind up spending a fortune on your kid's education so he or she can marry a Kennedy. Then when they come over for dinner you won't have to eat in your shorts.

It's your decision.

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BLOOM COUNTY



by Berke Breathed