

Opinion

The Battalion

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Bad medicine

The Texas Medical Association is looking foolish after setting contradictory policies on Friday. First, the group decided that physicians who test positive for AIDS aren't ethically required to inform their patients of that fact.

The decision, which parallels one by the American Medical Association, was spurred by the case of Dr. Robert Huse, a Mesquite pediatrician who reportedly tested positive for the AIDS virus. When community members found out, he lost most of his patients and eventually his practice. Both medical associations say the chance of contracting the AIDS virus from a physician is so remote as to make disclosure unnecessary.

But the TMA board also decided that doctors who are qualified to treat AIDS patients can refuse to do so if they find another qualified physician to provide medical care. This decision stretches the bounds of reason. Does the board believe the risk of passing the virus is low only if it's the physician who has the virus? The AMA's policy, on the other hand, says doctors qualified to treat AIDS patients "may not ethically refuse" to treat patients with the disease or the virus.

Neither group's policies are legally binding, but both are supposed to provide ethical standards for physicians to follow. Physicians who follow the TMA's advice now have ethical standards that ignore ethics and promote AIDS paranoia. The Texas board has the authority to fix its own misdiagnosis: It must ensure that the medicine prescribed is the same for the doctor as it is for the patient.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Mail Call

Call off the cops

EDITOR:

On Nov. 13, the video yearbook sent out a crew to cover Dr. Ruth Westheimer's book signing at the MSC bookstore. While the crew was shooting this event the president of MSC Great Issues and the adviser, Daryle Richmond, ordered us to pack up and leave. They said that they were responsible for Dr. Ruth while she was on campus and that they would not allow us to film her because it was in Dr. Ruth's contract that she would not be filmed or recorded.

This book signing was "open to the public," as stated on the ads for the event. Because Dr. Ruth is a public figure and she was at a public gathering, we as members of the press have a right to film this event. This is not the same as Dr. Ruth's lecture, for which admission was charged, and which was not filmed or recorded. We taped the entire exchange between our crew, the president of Great Issues and Ms. Richmond, and it is interesting to note that Dr. Ruth is signing books in the background and does not seem to be bothered by the presence of our crew at any point in the tape.

The video yearbook is not interested in confrontational tabloid journalism; we wish to capture the events occurring on our campus this academic year in a new and different form from the usual yearbooks. It is our opinion that calling the University Police department's emergency line was overreacting to the situation. We would like to thank all the organizations that have helped us record their events, and we hope that in the future, other groups will use more common sense in dealing with our staff.

Peter Hughes
video yearbook staff

Call off the cops, part 2

EDITOR:

Last Monday I went to the College Station Public Library to look at a copy of the *San Antonio Light* for a project I was working on. As I parked my car, I saw lights on and people walking around inside the library. I went through the open door and began walking toward the newspapers. Before I reached the papers, one of the people in the library came over to me and told me it was closed.

I thought he must have been joking and was about to ask why, when one of the librarians rushed over to me and said I would have to leave NOW! I didn't know what she was talking about and asked if it would be all right if I took a few minutes to write down a few facts about the paper's layout. Then this crazy woman started getting excited and told me that I was not able to be in there and if I had read the hours sign on the door I would see they were closed.

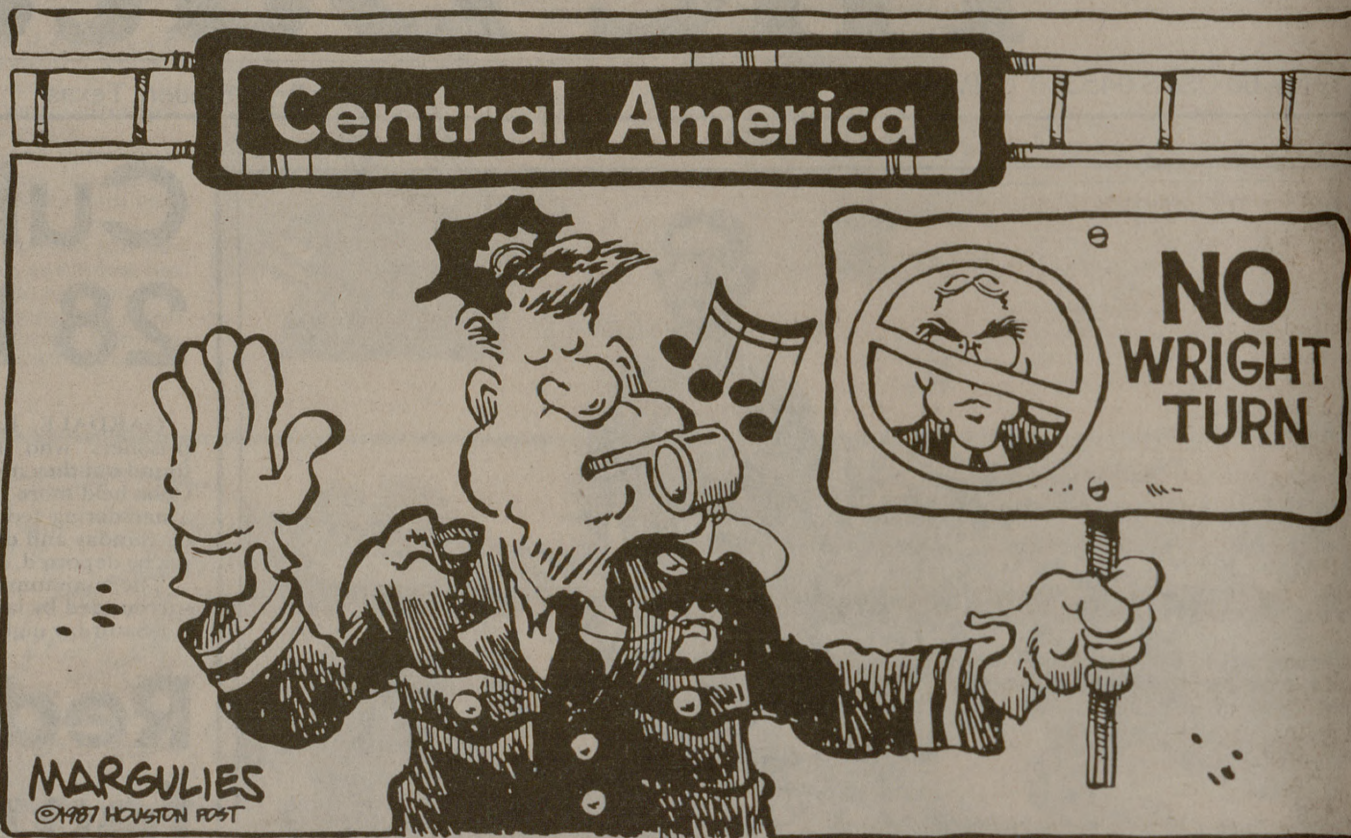
Well, usually when I see lights on inside a building, people walking around inside and the front door open, I don't stop and check if the little "hours sign" says the place is open or not.

But I figured if she said they were closed, they were closed. Since she and the other people were standing around talking, I asked if I could take a few minutes to study the paper's layout. Now she was nearly hysterical, and started to rush over to the phone and said, "Sir, if you don't leave NOW, I'm going to have to call the POLICE!" I didn't believe what was happening. I said "WHAT is the MATTER with you!? All I asked was if I could look at the papers for a few minutes!" But she was adamant, and so I left without looking at the papers.

I eventually got a copy of the paper elsewhere, but I had to let that librarian know that she is the rudest person I have met in my four years in this town. I've never seen such an overreaction to a simple misunderstanding before. So I hope that the next time you have a misunderstanding with someone, Miss Librarian, that instead of becoming hysterical and threatening to call the police, you use a little common sense and reason in dealing with the situation. You've tarnished my image of the helpful librarian forever.

Ed Holtgraver '88

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.



Presidential Campaign '88: Debunking electoral myths

Ah, there's nothing quite like this time of the year. The air is crisp, the wind biting. College football games abound. Turkey dinner is just around the corner. Department stores are waiting patiently for the surge of Christmas shoppers after Thanksgiving. Term papers are coming due, and finals are almost upon us.



Mark Nair

But we should not fail to overlook the most important thing of all. The fall of 1987 brings the beginning of the 1988 presidential campaign.

Admittedly, the first wave has hit us already. Candidates have declared, Bill Buckley has supervised quasi-debates for both the Democrats and Republicans, candidates are typesetting bumper stickers, statisticians in secret crowded rooms are taking and re-taking straw polls, volunteers are asking for money, and the "Duke" has come to Rudder to teach us about politics. We've even had candidates (no names will be mentioned) who have already dropped out of the race before it's even gotten good.

It's the start of something great. America's proudest tradition. The envy of countries everywhere.

But what exactly is this thing called the Presidential Race, anyway? What makes the American electoral process so good at selecting the best man for the job (heck, look at Ronald Reagan)? What is this thing made up of campaigns, caucuses, primaries, and personality, personality, personality?

I suppose that, since this is in my field, I should know a little about it. And, trying to portray an image of a responsible journalist, I should share the knowledge and try to correct misunderstandings many people have about our

illustrious political system. Welcome, then, to column number one — The Presidential Campaign 1988, the Early Days.

History, Television, and the Colgate Smile.

Rumor: The Kennedy-Nixon debates. Many people have the belief that the first live televised debates were between Kennedy and Nixon. This is FALSE. The first live televised debates were actually between George Washington and an obscure conservative from the Toupee party, Ronald Reagan. It is a fact that if more people had owned televisions in the late 1700s, Ronald Reagan might have won. Fortunately for the Bill of Rights, television wasn't quite invented yet. Issues were still the first priority.

The Popular Vote and Admissions to the Electoral College.

Rumor: The Electoral College is one of the best institutions for politicians, proteges of politicians, and mistresses of politicians. This is FALSE. The Founding Fathers designed the electoral college system to protect the presidency from the stupidity of the popular vote. It is supposed to provide insurance that we get great leaders as president (heck, look at Ronald Reagan).

The Running Game: Who's on First?

Rumor: Iowa is a pokey state in the middle of nowhere and presidential campaigners should go for bigger game early on, like College Station. This is, in a manner, FALSE. Iowa is a big deal to these guys since it is one of the first electoral testing grounds during the campaigning. If you win in Iowa, the interest groups see you have potential and give you money to win in all the other states. If you lose (by a large margin) it's back to watching "Gilligan's Island" reruns for another four years.

Primaries, Secondaries, and Tertiaries.

Rumor: The primaries are where candidates send their kids. This is FALSE. Primaries are little state elections that determine who the state selects as its top running Republican and Democrat. Primaries are important early in the campaigning stage. Later on, they mean diddly.

The Conventions, the Nominations, and Why is There a Lamp Shade on Your Head?

Rumor: The Democratic and Republican conventions are huge parties that really mean nothing that we don't already know. This is TRUE. We already know who's going to get the nomination. I don't particularly want to hear this again (the Texas Delegate is speaking): We hail from the great Lone Star State of Texas, home of rolling prairies, high peaked mountains, valleys and ranches. We grow the world's largest cockroaches, dig the deepest oil wells, have the worst accents. We own the raging rivers of the Rio Grande, sail the shark-infested waters of the Gulf of Mexico, etc. etc. etc." This goes on for ten minutes, and then they announce their candidate whom Dan Rather announced would get the Texas vote just the night before. These conventions are embarrassing, boring, and they pre-empt some good TV.

Hi Ho, Hi Ho, It's Off To Work We Go.

Rumor: A lot of people don't vote. A lot of people don't care. This is FALSE. Many people care. Heck, we got Ronald Reagan, didn't we?

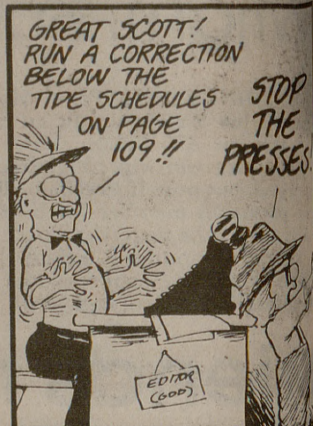
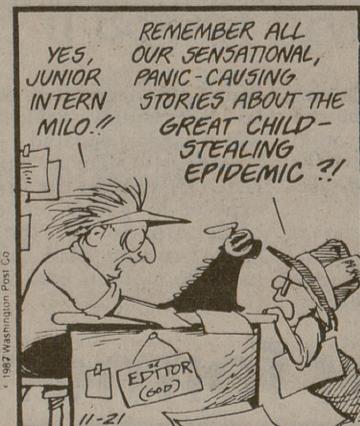
So, with the smell of a new crisp election year fall in the air, we should turn our thoughts to our candidates. Hopefully, these dispelled rumors will help you all select and vote for the best person.

As for me? George for King, of course.

Mark Nair is a senior political science major and a columnist for The Battalion.

by Berke Breathed

BLOOM COUNTY



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