

Opinion

Mail Call

No kid gloves

EDITOR,

One can only applaud Sue Krenek's desire "to treat Jackson like a real candidate." Her column of April 1, however, does not lead us very far in that direction. Instead of offering a careful analysis of the issues that Jackson has addressed, she merely presents a series of 'ad hominem' queries about his past record. In that respect, she follows the same mainstream press that she criticizes, blurring or even ignoring substantive ideological questions by dwelling on matters of character.

That leads to the second point. Krenek's contention that Jackson owes his emergence to kid-glove treatment from the press is not only presumptuous but contemptuous of the thousands of voters — I happen to be one of them — who cast their ballot for Jackson not because he's black, not because he's "charismatic," but because he has taken the most stridently progressive stance on the problems of Central America, corporate power, unemployment, economic injustice and drugs. If Texas Agricultural Commissioner Jim Hightower and *The Texas Observer* (among others) have given Jackson their endorsement, it is, as *The Observer* notes in its Feb. 26 issue, "because Jackson has consistently promoted the progressive and humane political and economic agenda." (Not everybody takes their cues from Time and Newsweek.)

Finally, Krenek would do well to give closer scrutiny to the real beneficiary of kid-glove treatment from the press: Ronald Reagan, whose repeatedly erroneous statements go beyond the "wacky" and "off the wall" to the point of revealing a shocking ignorance and insensitivity. What will history have to say about the media's contribution to America's adulation of a president who cited trees as a major source of pollution, who claimed that segregation no longer existed in South Africa, and who stated that no living German had experienced World War II as an adult?

Nathan Bracher
Assistant professor of French

We already have a standard

EDITOR:

In reading Brian Frederick's column Tuesday, I wondered why he looked past our already existing standard of morality (for generating civil and criminal laws) to find his answers. The standard is the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

These documents were written, not by Christians, but Deists who regarded God as an aloof spectator who neither responded to prayer nor demanded immolation. Deism was a stage in the atrophy of religion. All men, said Jefferson, are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; Jefferson meant our individual rights derive from the 'nature' of man, not from the ideal of God as a creator. So the source of man's rights is not divine or congressional law, but man's identity; rights are required by man's nature for his proper survival.

All national or state legislation which contradicts or imposes upon this standard of individual rights should be rejected. A law's purpose is only to protect 'rights', not the prejudices of a mob.

Abortion, sodomy and evolution, have nothing to do with the violation of man's rights. A clear cut division can be drawn between the rights of one man and another — no man has the right to initiate the use of physical force against another man. Because this is an objective division, it cannot be changed by differences of opinion, by majority decisions or by the arbitrary decree of society.

Brian's solution to unlimited arbitrary power in our government avoids the basis for moral law (not to mention the Fourteenth Amendment). Brian proposes to put this unlimited power in the hands of many little governments. Ayn Rand summed it up when she said, "The break up of a big gang into a number of small gangs is not a return to a constitutional system, nor to individual rights, nor to law and order."

Kevin Coppes '89

You will burn

EDITOR:

We are a group of 'ordinary' Ags who are absolutely appalled by the actions of some of our Aggie friends. It seems a number of misguided individuals, possessed by their insatiable desire to tan, have found their tanning spots at the All Faiths Chapel. Skimpily clad, these individuals lie in the grass on Chapel premises inside the brick fences. Even a bold few men have taken their desire to exercise inside the Chapel — without shirts on!

The point of this letter is to point out the blatant level of disrespect shown towards the Chapel. The Chapel is more than a building erected on campus. It is an inviolable sanctuary of God for all those who choose to utilize it. These people have desecrated the purpose of the Chapel, and it had ought be stopped. The Chapel is used for religious services, Voices of Praise choir rehearsal and just as a haven for anyone who needs it.

If you must tan, don't do it on the Chapel premises. If you must do it at the Chapel, do it with your clothes on. THANK YOU!!

Chris Henderson, '91
accompanied by three signatures

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.



Springtime sponsor madness

Ah, yes, weekends during springtime. There is nothing quite like them. Saturday and Sunday, two days of pure bliss and relaxation. Time to watch the trees bloom, the birds chirp, the small filthy neighborhood urchins chase cars. Ah, yes, the weekend.



Mark Nair

Oh, wait, wait, wait. I almost forgot. We're supposed to be in college. We're not supposed to relax. We're supposed to research and do homework and study. After all, these are the best years of our lives.

So, there I was. It was a dark and stormy Friday afternoon. I sat, stunned, looking at the piles upon piles upon piles of work I had to do. I waded through the assignments, slashing away with my machete. So much to do, SO MUCH TO DO! THEY'LL NEVER LET ME GRADUATE!

So I said hose it, and I went to Houston for the weekend.

A quick note about Houston, my home away from home, domicile and residence and domain of my parents, my high school and Mac the furniture man. Every time I go home (once since the War of the Roses, and that's only because I won the betting pool and had to collect), I have this uncanny feeling that my parents will rush to the door, look at me strangely and then announce that, no, they don't need any more magazines, hair care products or any other sundry you-rip-it-we-fix-it products. Either that or they will engage in the following dialogue:

DAD: The prodigal son returns! How much do you need?

MOM: My gosh, son, how you have grown!

DAD: Last time we saw you, you were knee-high to a grasshopper.

MOM: You look awful. You're starting to look like a sports writer.

ME: Oh, excuse me. I have the wrong house.

Anyway, back to the story. It was sud-

denly Saturday, and we decided to have a nice family outing. We quickly decided on The Houston International Festival because it sounded so soothingly cultural and important. Far be it from us to miss something soothingly cultural and important. After discovering that the thing between us and the festival was Houston traffic, we argued for hours on how to arm the car. And then we were off.

We found parking (don't ask how; I still don't understand how we did it) and traversed downtown (on foot, no less — a dangerous stunt) to the festival grounds. And there, before me, two huge blue signs flanked the International Stage. On the signs were the letters that, if read in sequence, said: "AT&T."

I was expecting phones to start doing a show on the stage. I was disappointed. The Scandinavian Folk Dancers showed up instead! They weren't phones, but they were OK.

We walked around to all the other stages, expecting performances (as the signs led us to believe) by such groups as "Jack in the Box," "J.C. Penney," "Texaco" and other corporate giants. Instead, we saw things like the Middar Aboriginal Theatre Group, Wilfred Chevis & The Texas Zydeco Band and the Australian Jazz Orchestra. Imagine how upset we were.

Up to this point we were wandering around aimlessly. It was time for a change. It was time to get a program of events. It was time to know what we were missing.

This is what the official program of events told us:

That the Official Australian Wine of the Houston International Festival was Wolf Blass Wine. I tried to find the Official German Wine, the Official Canadian Wine, the Official Vatican City Wine but was stymied. Oh, well.

That the Official Headquarters Hotel of the festival was the Four Seasons Hotel. I do not know what a "headquarters hotel" is, but as long as it is an official headquarters hotel, then it must be important.

That the Official Temporary Service of the festival was Kelly Services. Like I always say, you can't have a real Interna-

tional Festival without at least one Official Temporary Service.

That we were missing several events by stewing over who and what we were the sponsors of the festival. We were missing several neat events deciding who and what had the largest most obnoxious sign/banner/pamphlet that told everyone they were sponsors of the festival.

For instance, it was hot. People were hot. AT&T gave out little pieces of cardboard attached to little wooden handles. If one were to hold the wooden handle moving one's wrist back and forth, thereby making the piece of cardboard move back and forth, one could expect a fairly nice breeze to cool one off. Now on these pieces of cardboard that were attached to little wooden handles were the words "I am a fan of AT&T." I found this a rousing indication of spirit of internationalism that prevails over the festival.

Finally it was the end of the day, was time for us to dodge the "hot" group of some 200 artisans (including five from Australia) on the way back to the car. It was time for us to go home, sit around (the phrase "hang around" can be substituted here with "penalty") and reflect in a wondrous way on our day at the International Festival. It was a time to ask, "Was it the Oil Company or the Westpac Bank Corporation that sponsored Larry Zak and Sax-No-End?" It was a time to count how many sponsors we could remember and then count how many shows we could remember, finding that the number of sponsors always outnumbered the number of shows.

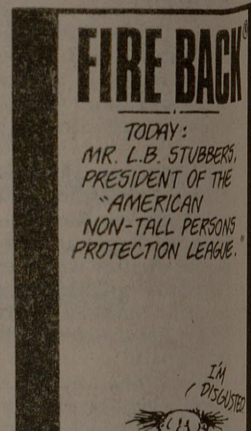
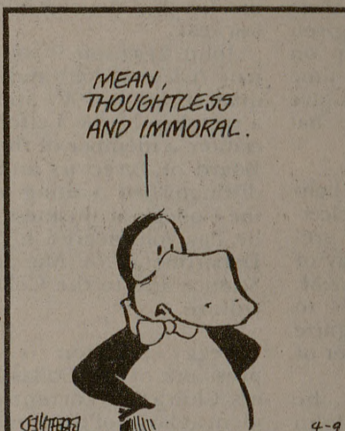
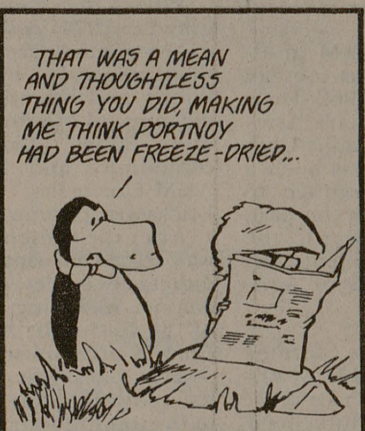
And it was a time to think about merits of sponsorship, billboards and late-night commercials. And then it was a time for reality to hit me square in the face like a bowl of Hamburger Helper and for me to remember those famous words, "I am your term paper shall not wait."

After such a fantasy weekend, you can be such an ugly thing.

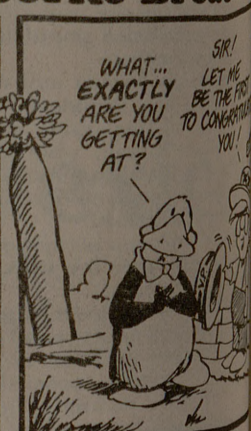
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by Berke Breathe

BLOOM COUNTY



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The Battalion

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