

# Opinion

## Students' shenanigans ruining library's environment

Choose the answer that best completes the following statement:

Sterling C. Evans is:

- A.) a new singles bar on campus
- B.) a meeting place for social events of every kind
- C.) a museum which exhibits archaic, out-dated library science procedures of yesteryear
- D.) Texas A&M's library.



Suna Purser

the deplorable depths to which our library has fallen.

The Bryan-College Station Eagle ran a story which expressed deep concern over the problems confronting our library and questioned its usefulness as a learning resource.

On August 31, *The Batt* ran a column by Dr. Donald McDonald, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Texas A&M. The headline read "Evans Library's Problems Being Solved." In that article, Dr. McDonald outlined some of the problems and solutions concerning the library. Chief among the problems discussed by Dr. McDonald was the "excessive noise, which is detrimental to patrons who have need for the library collections."

Thank goodness someone was able to hear our cries for quiet above the uproarious din that emanates from the facility called Sterling C. Evans Library.

Case in point: One evening toward the end of the spring semester, I was studying on the fourth floor, at a group of tables located near the stacks. Mind you, NOT a designated group study area. Several young women (should I be so bold as to term them "women," complete with the maturity and responsibility normally associated with being a young woman OR man?) were laughing and talking with a zeal more appropriate to the Dixie Chicken than to the Evans Library.

After numerous attempts, I caught their attention and politely asked them if they could either be quiet or take their "party" to a group study table, or better yet, out of the library entirely. My, my... if looks could kill. Well, need I say I wouldn't be here kicking a dead horse. Obviously, my request went unheeded, because they continued their rude and inappropriate behavior.

"Oh, well," I said to myself. "I need a break anyway." So, I went to the second floor snack area. Lo and behold, if I didn't see a group of young men mixing what I think were alcoholic drinks. Complete with all the needed mixers, i.e., Coke, Sprite, and 7-UP, supplied by the vending machines — which have been provided as a service to library staff and patrons — these yahoos were taking out their pocket flasks and really seemed to be having a grand time getting a buzz in between study sessions. If that, in fact, is what they were at the library for.

Correct me if I'm wrong, but isn't there SOME University regulation that expressly prohibits consumption of alcoholic beverages on University property? And the library of all places! I mean really, folks. My idea of r & r does not consist of getting blitzed in the library lounge.

Which reminds me of yet ANOTHER travesty. "Well," I said to myself. "I think I'll go to the sunken lounge and read the paper." This area, as most of you know, is notorious for its couch potatoes and lounge lizards. But I was not quite prepared for a slumber party!

Toward the end of the semester, the library thoughtfully keeps its doors open on a 24-hour basis. At that time of the semester, this is an invaluable service to those of us who are in need of the library's resources, albeit during oddball hours.

Imagine my dismay when I saw a group of girls stretching out their blankets, fluffing their pillows, and winding their alarm clocks — obviously ready for the infamous all-nighter. I'm surprised they didn't have on little bunny sleepers and gym socks. They were laughing, giggling, and raving about how they were going to tell their friends of the library all-nighter.

"Doing what," I mused. "Seeing who could stay awake the longest?"

Well, I was far beyond the point of exasperation and decided to call it quits. I was so tired, maybe I was imagining all this library lunacy.

And so what's the moral of this sordid story? Simply this: Yes, Dr. McDonald there IS a noise level problem, among others, at the library and I'm not sure all

the grants and donations in the can solve it.

I appreciate the fine effort of other administrators are taking proving both the inside AND outside the library. However, we must have our student population the importance of the library, its function as a resource, and the atmosphere to the learning environment a should have.

On Monday, library employees passing out fliers at the library. Titled "Life In the Quiet Zone," handouts remind us of what the is and how we should act. Granted, it's unfortunate that we to be reminded at all, but such case. Nevertheless, this is a definite step in the right direction.

If I had a hat on, I'd take it off in respect to the faculty and administrators who are trying to improve our library. And I only hope the students will line, realize they are both a part of the problem AND solution, and strive to make the Sterling C. Evans Library and Texas A&M University world class institutions they are to be.

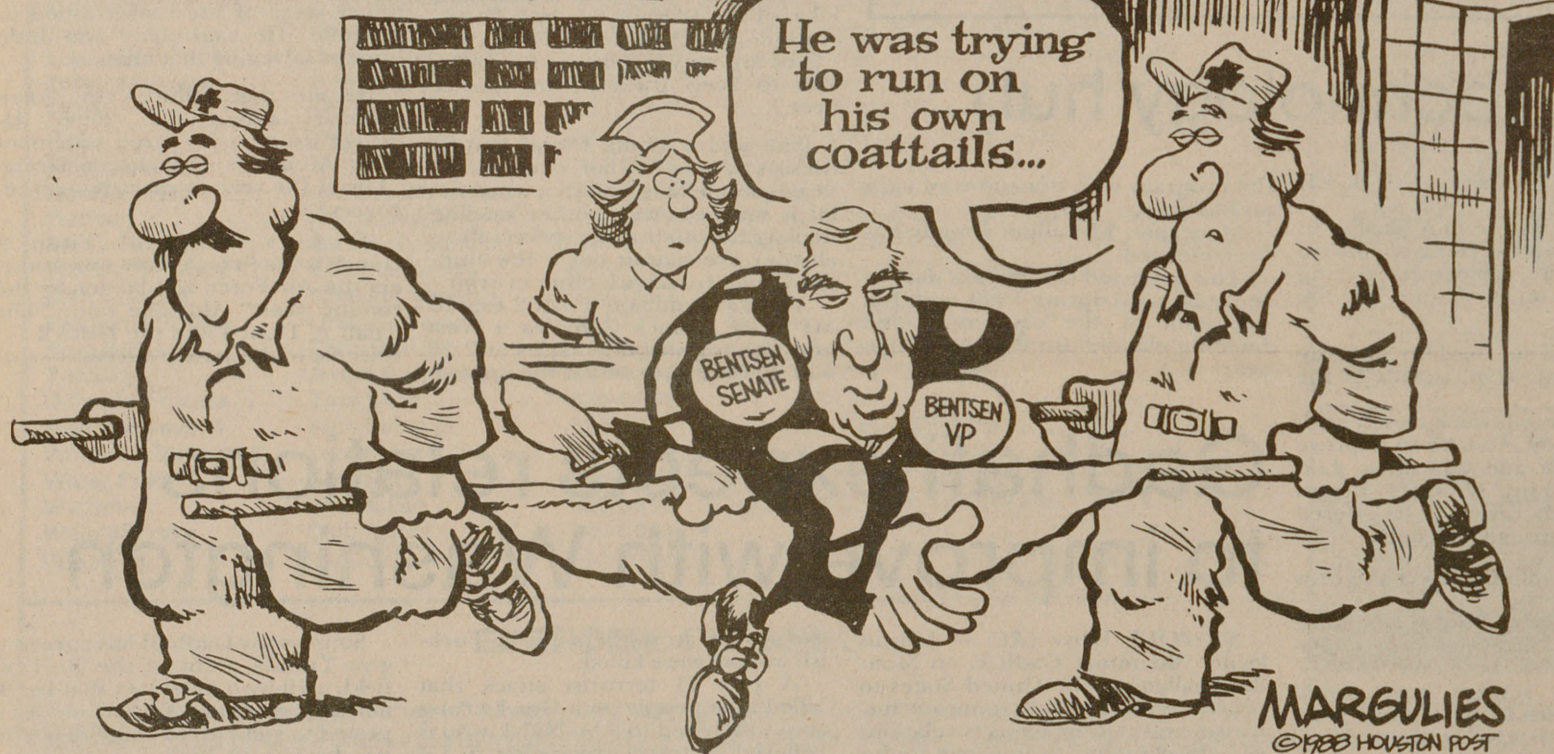
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The alarming — and sad — fact is that all of the above are true.

Recently, *The Battalion*, and other local media have been the forums of scathing attacks on our library. On July 19, Mark Nair, who was then the opinion page editor of *The Batt*, ran a column titled "The Evans Library — A Sorority House in Disguise?" Nair, in his typically satirical style, lambasted the library for everything from missing volumes to its sorority/soiree atmosphere.

In that same issue, Dr. Larry Hickman, associate professor of philosophy and humanities, wrote a column in which he severely grilled Dr. Irene Hoadley, director of Sterling C. Evans Library, for

### EMERGENCY ROOM



### Mail Call

#### Be hip, not a library dip

EDITOR: The moment silence in our library becomes hip, cool and traditional, we experience a transformation in our attitude toward why we are here. The talking hiring monitors to patrol and control reading environments is embarrassing. A serious reader must inform library conversationalists immediately to discuss elsewhere.

This can be gentle: "If you want to talk, you need to go somewhere else." This way we each become responsible and involved in our immediate environment and bypass the third grade monitor mentality.

Just once I want to see a library reader explain to a violator of the silence (much in the same way I have seen scores of Corps members patiently explain MSC lawn care code) that the library is a memorial to every person who has lived on this earth, and we must walk softly among the ghosts of our ancestors. This gentle reader would go on to say that the library is an affirmation of the present and an invocation to the future, and therefore it is uncool, unhip, and Aggie-traditional (not to mention unacademically, unimpressive and impolite) to converse within these hallowed halls.

Let's see what we can do this semester.

Let's create a new attitude and watch the transformation.

Edward Gabrielsen '89

#### Attaboy, Lloyd

EDITOR: Lloyd Bentsen is doing the right thing by not dropping out of the senate. If he were to drop out his senate seat would go to his Republican opponent, Bob Boulter, by default and Texas voters would have no say in the matter.

Supporters of Boulter criticize Bentsen because when he wins, a special election will have to be held to replace him in the senate and that will cost taxpayers some money.

Well, democracy (like freedom) can be expensive, but it is damn well worth it, for one, want to have some say so in who our next senator will be.

We do not need another right wing extremist representing Texas in the senate. We already have Phil Gramm, and that is one too many.

Mike Thomas '87

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

## Weakening continues in presidency

WASHINGTON — Republicans have learned from Ronald Reagan to look on the bright side of everything from deficits (growth stimulated by them cures them) to Gorbachev (good liberals come for Moscow, not Boston). So Republicans, preaching what Reagan practices, can say their presidential campaign will recover from its rocky start.

Reagan himself had an awful August in 1980 when he said, among other interesting things, that trees cause pollution, then arrived at a rally and found a tree decorated with this sign: "Chop me down before I kill again."

But this year, both parties' campaigns are likely to produce an anemic President and therefore produce congressional government. Such government will be the result of a second consecutive vacuous election.

In 1984, there barely was an election.

George Will

There was an Olympics and Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." tour, and in that celebratory atmosphere Reagan elevated contentment to a political platform. The result was a landslide and the reassertion of the national norm: congressional government.

If in 1988 the winner wins principally because he is not the other guy, then by 1992 the nation will have gone 12 years without a clarifying, energizing choice. With either Dukakis or Bush we're apt to enter an era of unheroic politics. It will be an era more typical of American experience than either the Reagan era or the Kennedy era that Dukakis invokes so insistently.

Under either Dukakis or Bush, few Americans are apt to regard the presidency heroically, as many did under, say, Teddy Roosevelt and Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy. Few will regard it as a tone-setting institution imparting fundamental direction to national life. Conservatives, with their Jeffersonian impulses, may say: Splendid. That role is not for government, let

alone the central government.

But Hamilton, a source of a more sensible conservatism, warned that energy in the executive is a prerequisite of good government.

A weak presidency does not produce sweet passivity in Washington and the blooming of 100 flowers of local control. Rather, it produces congressional ascendancy. That means the enervation of foreign policy and, in domestic affairs, the primacy of parochial interests at the expense of national aspirations. Try to imagine either Bush or Dukakis going over the heads of Congress to appeal directly to the people.

Conservatives, forgetting their enjoyment of Reagan's success doing that, may say: Fine. But, again, they should consider the real alternative. It has been increasingly visible since Reagan's 1986 failure to hold Republican control of the Senate. The alternative is government by a committee of 535.

Reagan's presidency has demonstrated the perishable nature of even a real mandate. Reagan's mandate was

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