

## HEY EVERYBODY!!!

MEET SOME OF THE PEOPLE CURRENTLY TRYING TO FORCE THEIR BELIEFS ON THE REST OF US...



GEORGE BUSH. HOW MANY AMENDMENTS DOES HE PLAN TO RAM DOWN OUR THROATS?



TIPPER GORE AND HER CRONIES AT THE P.M.R.C.



RADICAL PRO-LIFERS.



... AND FINALLY, THE SUPREME COURT FOR THEIR RECENT DECISIONS ON ABORTION AND MINORITY RIGHTS.

## Texas Legislature lacks empathy

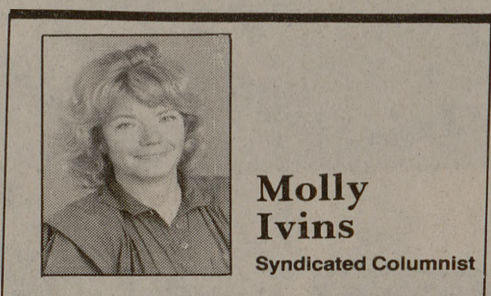
Well girls, as they say in the Texas Lege, we're in trouble. Big trouble. It's actually worse than I thought it was going to be.

Clements says he will call a special session on abortion as early as this fall. Gov. Mario Cuomo has announced that the state of New York will continue to respect a woman's right to privacy in abortion decisions and that the state will continue to fund abortions. They've got Cuomo, and we've got Clements, the man whose ethical sensibility is so advanced he thinks it's all right to lie when there's no Bible in the room.

I was standing at the back of the House chamber Thursday. It was resolution time and they were being unusually silly.

Deep, deep doo-doo.

Now I know the Texas Legislature is not nearly as bad as I sometimes pre-



Molly Ivins  
Syndicated Columnist

tend when I'm particularly exercised: A brief scan of recent coverage reveals that I have referred to them, both severally and individually, as airheads, pinheads, droolers, mean-spirited, gutless, a public disgrace, ludicrous, nasty, ignorant, "not the brightest porch light on the block," "no rocket scientist" and many more loving terms of endearment. I would be the first to admit that I went entirely too far the day I said the whole bunch of them "suck eggs, run on all fours, molest small children and have the minds of adolescent pissants."

Shameless hyperbole.

Still, do you really want the Texas Legislature (I mean, the Texas Legislature?! — have you ever seen these guys?) deciding if you should have a child?

I have long maintained that these citizens are not, in fact, representatives. I've been covering them for 20 years and I'm still convinced that you can go into any community in this state, take the first 181 people to cross the main street, and you'd come out with a higher average of caliber than in the Lege.

There are high-class politicians in this world. There are even high-class politicians in the Lege — a few of the finest people I've ever known have served in that body. But I'm here to tell you — there have not been many. I doubt, in the aggregate, that they're much worse in sensitive situations. It is precisely where some delicacy and tact, subtlety and empathy are called for that government does its worst.

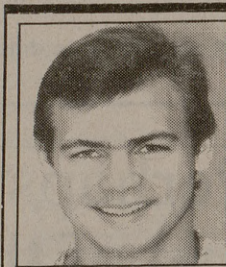
## Drinking age law definitely worth whining about

As the spring semester drew to a close, an incident occurred that became the crowning blow that forced me to take a firm stance against the drinking age law.

Two friends (one of whom chose anonymity but is really fellow columnist Timm Doolen) and I were enjoying a domino game at the Dixie Chicken. Though I have never frequented the College Station landmark on a regular basis, I had heard horror stories told by underage drinkers who were caught drinking there. None of us were 21, but we still were enjoying a pitcher of beer with our game.

Well, we made it through almost one-half of the pitcher before we were seen by a loyal Chicken employee who herded us up the stairs to wait and talk to the legendary Mr. Chicken. After a few tense seconds of waiting had passed, we were called into what I guess is the Chicken coop. We were all behaving as third-graders dreading the wrath of the principal. What we got, though, was really quite a surprise.

Mr. Chicken, called that simply because of my ignorance of his real name, was very reasonable and his words were thought provoking. He told us that people like ourselves endanger his business due to the law. He also shared his gen-



Matt McBurnett  
Columnist

eral disgust with the legal drinking age by bringing out some good points. (He mentioned the age requirement for military service and something similar about a New Mexico bordello, I think.)

At any rate, my experiences that night were sobering.

I realized that Mr. Chicken was correct about the unfairness of the drinking age law. It also became clear that the law is ineffective, as was evidenced by the relative ease with which I attained alcohol then and since.

Alcohol is a very volatile subject and quite a few people have opinions on the drinking age.

Looking at the law on a purely theoretical basis, it is obvious that the rights of quite a few adults are not being upheld. By adults, I am implying persons 18 and older. Never mind the examples such as "If I can go to jail, or fight for my country, I should be able to

drink." These examples are often effective, but very overused. The only thing which matters substantially is the fact that at age 18, one is considered a free-thinking adult able to make his own choices and accept responsibility for his actions. Why is alcohol removed from this realm of choices?

Either the legal drinking age should be lowered, or the legal adult age should be raised. In our system, an adult can be a "minor."

Upon looking at the law in retrospect, one can see that it is a failure.

For a minor, beer is just a hops, skip and a jump away. I do not know of any person who wants to drink and cannot find a way to get alcohol. The law is a sad commentary on our lawmakers.

On second thought, the law does

serve a purpose. It provides something for College Station police officers to do.

The key argument against the law may be that it is unnecessary.

The State of Texas presently has laws which ban public intoxication. I have no beef with this law. The State also does not allow open alcohol containers in automobiles and has strict driving-while-intoxicated laws, both of which I strongly agree with. If an individual cannot legally be intoxicated, and if he also is severely punished if he drives under the influence of alcohol, what purpose is served by an additional law regulating adult consumption of alcohol?

Many people claim that an 18 or 19-year-old person is not responsible to drink, or should I say obey the other laws which regulate drinking.

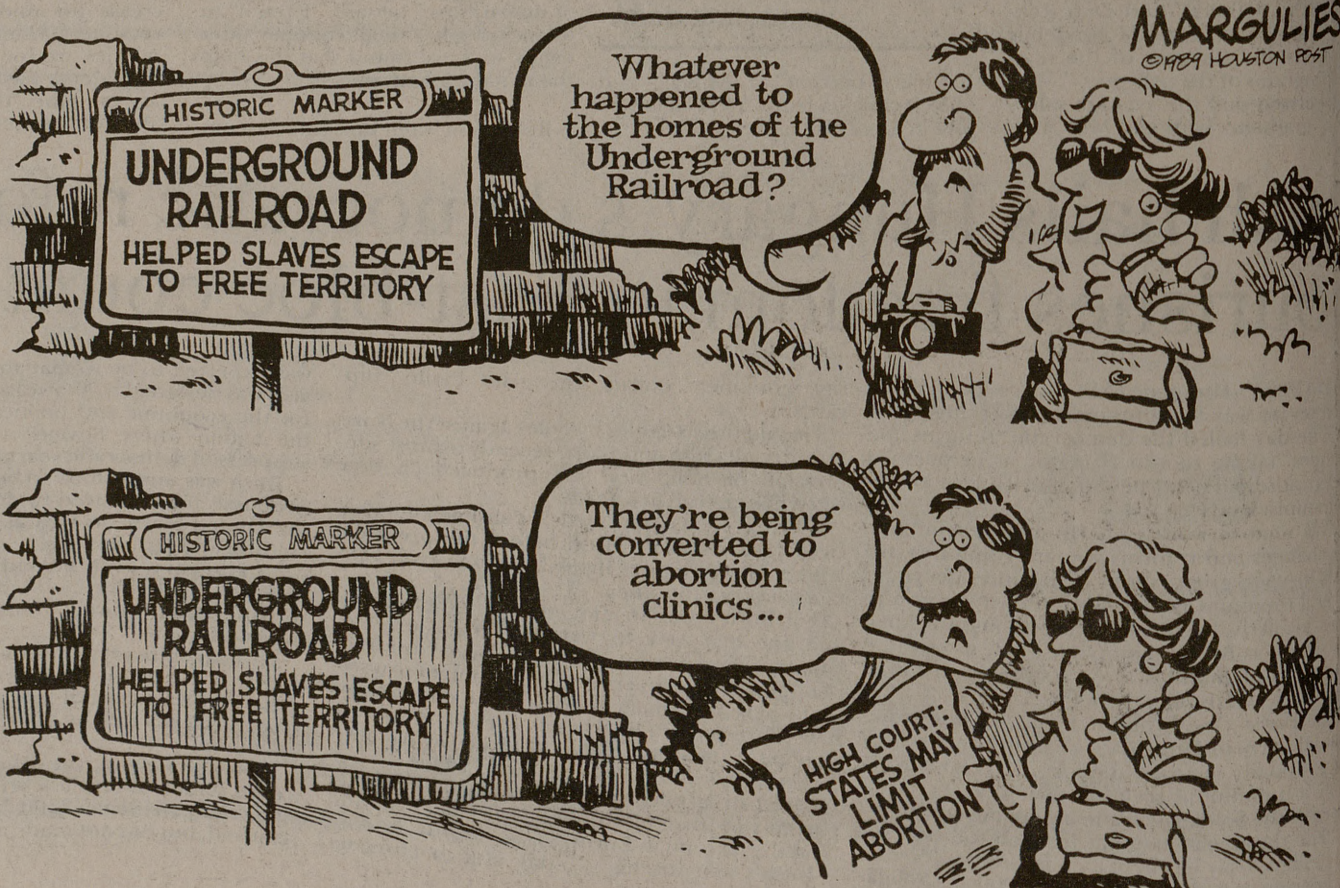
What I am attempting to convey is

that the drinking age law is not effective anyway and it is useless because the damaging effects of drinking are regulated by other laws.

Finally, the methodology used by the federal government to force states to comply with its suggested drinking age is almost immoral. Essentially, the government ruled that states not complying with the new drinking age would not receive their allotted amount of federal aid. This is a blatant case of governmental blackmail.

Though I am quite aware of the terrible facts surrounding alcohol abuse, I am also aware that the present system is inherently flawed. I cannot see two different classes of adults with unequal rights. I'll ponder it over a beer or two.

Matt McBurnett is a junior electrical engineering major and a columnist at The Battalion.



## Mail Call

### Soldiers with AIDS deserve more respect

EDITOR:

Discrimination and prejudice have many forms. The worst type of discrimination and prejudice are against AIDS patients. Recently, the Dallas Herald ran an article about U.S. soldiers stationed at Fort Hood in Killeen. The article reported incidents of soldiers being discriminated against by top army officers and enlisted men at the military post.

The article revealed that the high command at Fort Hood broke Department of Defense regulations by transferring some soldiers with the AIDS virus to less creditable jobs. It also recounted that the infected men were placed in a barracks called a "leper colony." These soldiers were also denied essential medical aid, were even up for court martial. Discrimination and prejudice go beyond the administration at Fort Hood; discrimination is also thriving in the form of personal harassment. Many soldiers were called "faggots and queers." One individual was harassed to the point of suicide. Is this the type of behavior exemplified by America's best?

Being enrolled in the Reserve Office Training Corp at A&M, I feel that there are alternatives. The administration should be more informed of the subject. It should create a program to help these men, not fight against them. If worse comes to worst, these soldiers should be given honorable discharges instead of being buried by personal harassment and meaningless regulations. If these men dedicated themselves to the defense of their country, I feel the country owes them at least respect, not discrimination and prejudice.

Seong U. Kim '92

### Syndicated flag column gets flack

EDITOR:

To say that I am sick of hearing people defend flag-burning as an act of free speech would be, to say the least, an understatement.

Molly Ivins column makes all flag burners out to be a group of passionate, heroic people protesting some great evil. That's a lot of crap.

How is it that all radical dissenters are heroes and martyrs, and anyone cherishing conservative-type values is a mindless idiot? I won't begin to sit here and say that all things conservative are right and all things liberal are wrong; I don't believe that. But I also don't believe that Ms. Ivins or any of the other people promoting the "ideal" of flag burning really give a damn about what free speech really means, or those for whom the flag actually means something. It's just something to get up on their soapboxes about and start yelling.

Ms. Ivins likens the flag burning furor as some sort of fascist fad that those who care about the flag and the ideals it represents have always carried.

I have been in the military for over six years, and was stationed overseas for three of them. I, and the men and women I served with, worked very long hours in often wretched conditions and sometimes in hostile surroundings. We didn't do it for the big payday, because you certainly won't get rich serving your country. I remember many times getting off work only to get to the gate to see protesters throwing rocks and burning the flag. It hurt to see it. I'm sure the majority of those who don't find flag burning offensive have never served it and the country it represents. That's fine. It's a free country. For those of us who have, and in particular those who died doing it, however, it is a slap in the face.

Michael Ternus '91

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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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