

New financial aid plan does not make any cents

I should be ecstatic. I just found out that I only need 32 more hours to graduate. Two more semesters and I'll walk off that stage, into the "real world," and I'll... have to immediately start saving money to pay back my loans. So much for the sudden burst of happiness.

In order to be the proud owner of a degree from this University, I've found out it takes a lot of money, especially if the ol' parents aren't the ones footing the bill. And speaking of bills, I was doing fine as far as money was concerned until this semester when in the mail I found a statement from the Fiscal Department informing me of my combined four-year debt. I've accumulated a grand total somewhere in the thousands (I can't even count that high).

Now I'm not worried about the money I'll have to pay when I graduate. That's all taken care of, right? Isn't it true what I heard somewhere down the line that an Aggie diploma is almost as good as gold? I'm sure I'll have to turn away many a company begging to employ me.



Juliette Rizzo
Opinion Page Editor

It's my present situation that worries me. I haven't even finished paying my fall tuition, and spring tuition is almost due thanks to a new law passed by the Texas legislature.

Those of us who pay our fees on installments got our holiday surprise a little early this year. The new statute, which will affect a good number of students, has significantly increased the amount of the first installment payment some students (depending on registration date) have to pay before they leave for winter break.

Effective this spring, the law replaces two- and four-payment installment plans with a three-payment installment. The first payment, which

must be paid before the first day of classes, includes parking fees (nondeferrable fees), one-half of deferrable fees, miscellaneous University fees and tuition.

This is what confuses me. How can the University and the legislature claim to be acting in the students' best interests, financially, if in fact I, as a student, am inconvenienced and cannot benefit by the implementation of the law?

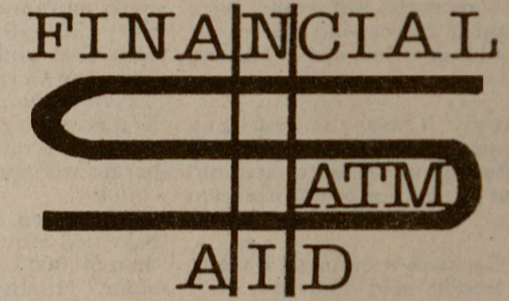
The new law makes it impossible for a student like myself, who hasn't finished paying for the current semester, to pre-register for the following semester until the last payment is paid.

This may benefit the University and the administration as far as limiting pre-registration and collecting fees go and state collections will increase, but it definitely won't help me.

Supposedly, the new law was enacted to decrease the number of students in the state who are delinquent in paying their installments on time (even though A&M has one of the lowest payment delinquency rates). Well, that

rate may increase, at least by one anyway.

Even though the law lessens the number of payments I have to make throughout the semester, unless money starts falling from the sky, I don't know how I am supposed to come up with a final payment and the "up front" money in such a short pe-



riod of time.

Doesn't this defeat the purpose of the installment plan? (Not to mention it's already contradictory enough that a student who cannot afford to pay his fees must pay a fee to put his fees on

installments.)

This whole financial situation is a game of Monopoly. I finally got all the way around the board (other), but I can't pass GO until I pay fees and I definitely can't collect. I feel cheated.

Now I know I should be thankful for the installment option, which lessens my immediate financial burden, but I do not like the other options I have to take to make an initial payment so close to the holidays (To my friends, make note: gifts will be a pain. I will have to take out a loan to back my emergency loan that I'm standing for this semester, a loan to pay my first installment, a loan to pay that loan and a loan to pay for a senior ring. But I can't take out a loan to pay for my senior ring because though I could place the order on the completion of my final payment at the end of the semester, the bank requires having completed those payments just doesn't make cents.

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MLK's reputation tumbled by Abernathy's book

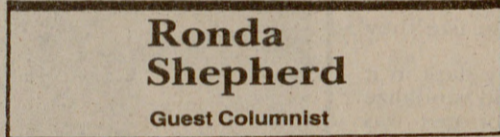
Toni Morrison wrote, "a man ain't nothing but a man."

This line has haunted me since I read Morrison's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *Beloved*, because I felt those words were profound in their simplicity.

And now in light of all the controversy surrounding a man I greatly admire, third only to Jesus Christ and my father, Morrison's words give me comfort.

The man, of course, is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The controversy is that produced by Rev. Ralph Abernathy's book *And the Walls Came Tumbling Down*.

The book claims Dr. King was an ad-



Ronda Shepherd
Guest Columnist

dicted womanizer who, according to Abernathy, spent his last night with two women.

Immediately after the book's release, a panel of nationally known "friends and beneficiaries" of the King Dream issued a statement denouncing the "gross inaccuracies and the painful distortions."

The panel includes Rev. Jesse Jackson, Mayor Andrew Young, Benjamin Hooks and Bernard Lee. Each of these men was present on the King's last

night and hotly dispute Abernathy's allegations.

I can't help but be reminded of the

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story of Joseph in the book of Genesis.

Joseph's brothers plotted to kill him because of his dreams: "Behold the dreamer...let us slay him and see what will become of his dreams."

Like Joseph's brothers, Abernathy was a good man who grew tired of living in his brother's shadow.

Since Dr. King has been dead for over 20 years, Abernathy decided to slay his character.

Fortunately, the media won't find what some have penned King's "second assassination" interesting for very long. Something else will soon have the limelight.

Abernathy knows this as well, so he's enjoying royalty checks at King's expense.

But long after the dust has settled, the hurt will continue.

Little black children have been

robbed of a role model, and King has been robbed of his rightful place in history.

A national holiday has been turned into a national disgrace.

Because actions speak louder than words, the legacy of King's work will live on despite rumors.

King was a man of action.

He spent his life trying to make America "live out the true meaning of its creed," but he wasn't perfect.

After all, "a man ain't nothing but a man."

Ronda Shepherd is a senior journalism major and a guest columnist for The Battalion.

The reality of abortion: it kills the innocent

I certainly agree with Scot Walker's column on abortion. To use his terminology, abortion does "suck." In fact, it sucks thousands of children to pieces every year! I respect his boldness in presenting his personal opinions concerning abortion and pro-lifers. But, I would like to ask a few questions:

First of all, I would like to ask what his definition of viability is? Does he really know what the term means, or is he just copying the terminology used by other pro-abortionists to make it sound like he does?

Secondly, how does he know pro-lifers do not put forth money, time and effort to save children from starving in the streets? Where is his evidence showing we do not? Also, let me ask him this: If he is so concerned as to the welfare of starving and homeless people, what is he doing about it?

On behalf of people in poverty and homeless situations, I would like to charge him for insulting such individuals. How can he insinuate that just because they are poor, uneducated or unloved, they will inevitably become a perpetrator of a violent crime.

I can think of a lot of crimes committed by rich people. By the way, I am so glad he wasn't around when I was conceived. He might have tried to talk my parents into having an abortion because they were poor.



Michele Stanfield
Guest Columnist

I would also like to ask Mr. Walker where his proof is of pro-lifers bombing clinics? If he is going to make such statements, he needs to provide factual evidence instead of just subjective biases.

CPC's and other pro-life agencies do offer women medical assistance. They allow women to acquaint themselves with what is "actually" happening in their bodies. Notice I said "in" and not "to" their bodies; a life is developing as a totally separate entity.

Is he aware that no one has ever been killed or even injured in the bombing of an abortuary? No matter who planted the bomb, as long as no one was inside, I couldn't blame anyone for blowing up an abortuary. As a Christian, I believe we are to storm the gates of hell.

I resent Mr. Walker's accusations of misleading women and enticing them into crisis pregnancy centers under the pretense of receiving medical help.

CPC's and other pro-life agencies do offer women medical assistance. They allow women to acquaint themselves with what is "actually" happening in their bodies. Notice I said "in" and not "to" their bodies; a life is developing as a totally separate entity. If it were not, then how come almost 50 percent of the time the fetus is male?

Our so called "bloody horror films" are not used to scare anyone or hurt them while in a crisis pregnancy situation, but to point out the realities of abortion. Excuse me, CHILDKILLING, let's call it that for what it is instead of hiding behind euphemisms or masks. That's what Hitler and the Nazis did to the Jews. We look at gross pictures now pertaining to the Jewish Holocaust and think how terribly those people must have suffered.

As far as birth control goes, does Mr. Walker know that condoms have been around since at least WWII, and since then, "unwanted" pregnancies have increased due to the "no-ties" casual sex promoted nowadays, not to mention the staggering epidemic of AIDS. If people are going to play adult games, they have to pay adult prices.

I know, I know, what about rape and incest, right? I am so tired of people using those two examples to justify having abortions out of convenience.

I'm not saying we should ignore those situations, but I'm concerned about the other 98 percent of abortions being done just because two people are irresponsible.

I am also tired of people making claims that pro-lifers just want to take away woman's rights. I can't think of anyone else but a pro-lifer who would

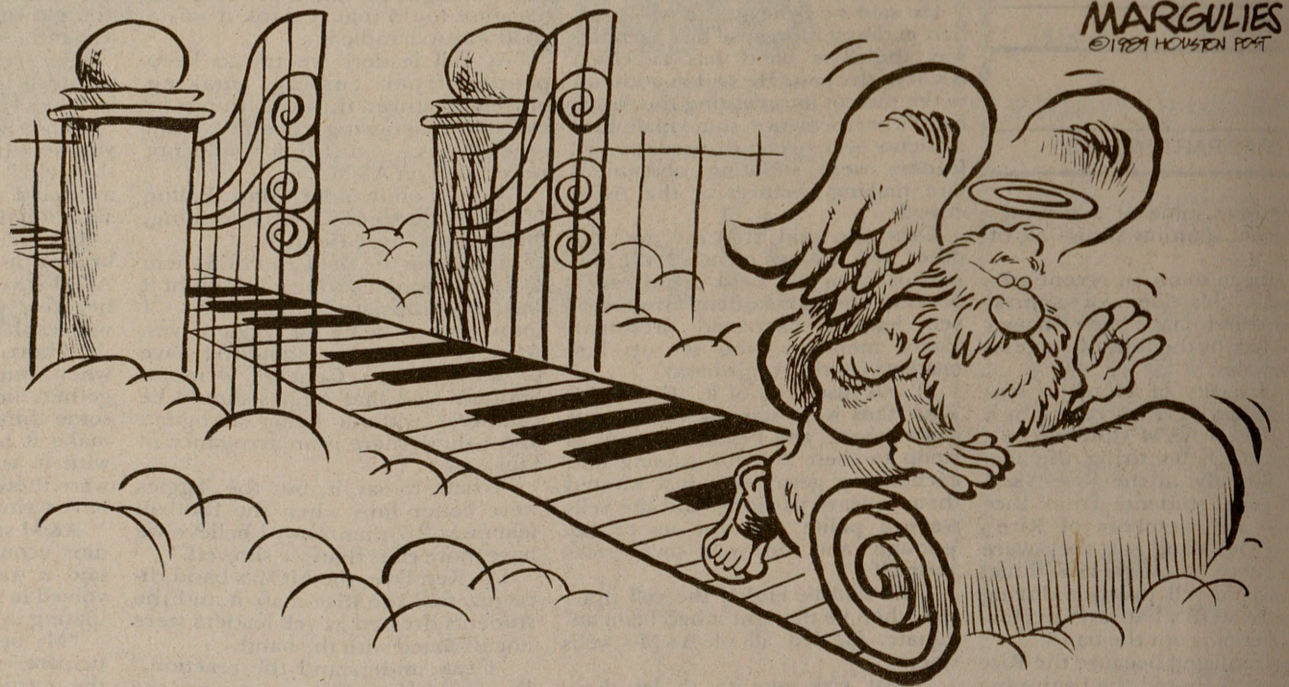
come close to risking all they had and go to jail to prevent a child from dying.

Yes, Mr. Walker, I am going to pay for saving babies. Not because I want to deny women their rights, but because I love women and their babies. I want to protect all sanctity of life; physical and emotional for all parties concerned.

In conclusion, feminists do not appreciate when a man decides a woman's value based on whether she wants her or not. But at the same time women can decide the value of a child based on whether she wants a child or not.

So you see Mr. Walker, it is not a question of pro-lifers imposing their morals and beliefs on others, but rather what women (pro-choicers) are imposing on the babies.

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