

Need cash, guys? Open account at sperm bank

A friend was telling me about the Fairfax Cryobank, the new sperm bank in Bryan. The concept was hard for me to conceive. "You mean I can get \$40 from this bank for making a deposit?" I asked. "Yes, and you never have to make a withdrawal," he said.

I decided that this bank was worth a check so I went to Bryan to experience it first hand. The thought of a sperm bank is amusing to most people. I didn't know what to expect, either. What I found really impressed me.

Once I located the Fairfax Cryobank, I was given a tour of the facility by the assistant lab director, Brent Hazelrigg. He also answered many of my questions about Fairfax and the entire semen donation process.

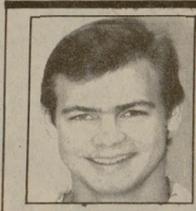
In recent years, women's fertility has decreased because many of them choose to wait until they are older to have children. Coupled with a marginally fertile male, these women will find conception quite difficult. The founders of Fairfax Cryobank, based in Fairfax, Virginia, noticed that America was virtually barren in regards to sperm banks so they started their service.

A branch of the cryobank (cryo-meaning cold or freezing) has been operating in Houston for a year. The demand for semen was so high that, during Christmas break, branches were started in Bryan as well as in Austin. Fairfax targets college males because they typically fall into the donor age range of 18 to 35. Thus far, the response has been tremendous. At \$40 a whack, many students find that the program fits their lifestyles quite well.

Do not get me wrong, though. The main thing that I noticed during my tour was the amazingly high quality semen the cryobank demands — so few males pass the test. Only 48 donors were accepted at the Houston facility in its first year of operation. This amounts to less than 12 percent of the prospective donors.

My tour included a stop in the "specimen room," a secluded spot with specimen jars, magazines and a couch. After collection, the semen is examined under microscope and frozen in a vat of liquid nitrogen. It is dehydrated with glycerol so the sperm will survive. There is no expiration date; the storage time is indefinite.

The semen and the 16-page medical and genetic information packet that each prospective donor must complete are distributed to gynecologists and their patients. I was assured that the gene pool would not be altered because the semen is sent throughout the United States and even to Singapore.



Matt McBurnett
Columnist

Guy Stone, the lab director, told me that he chooses to think that many donors become involved with the program out of compassion and generosity. He relayed a story to me about a local businessman who is friends with a barren couple. Apparently the program hit close to home with him and he wanted to be a donor.

At first, I thought that most prospective donors simply felt that the \$40 would come in handy. After all, every prospective donor gets paid for filling out the information packet and producing a sample.

My opinion changed. The questionnaire is long and the screening process is rigorous. I do not think that any male would go through all of it without having some concern for childless couples.

Many women would rather have a child who carries her genes instead of adopting one. The semen donation program provides for this fruitful outcome. Fairfax charges \$115 per dose of semen, so, in addition to being more personal, the program is much less expensive than adoption.

It also appeals to the ego. Hey, I'd like to see more people like me running around.

The childless patient has full access to the medical and genetic history questionnaires of the donors with the exception of the donors name, address and so forth. Essentially, the woman or couple can choose the characteristics that they desire for the child. If a tall, dark, athletic blue-eyed father with thick wavy hair and a flair for music is desired, the option is there. Or if a short, thin haired, electrical engineer with an interest in journalism is wanted, they might even find one of those.

The demand for donor semen is certainly present. If you are a male in the specified age group and have a genuine desire to be helpful, give Fairfax Cryobank a shot. If not, be content in knowing that the program is quite worthwhile.

Matt McBurnett is a junior electrical engineering major.

TWO WAYS TO DEAL WITH AN X-RATED MOVIE AT A&M

RATIONAL

IRRATIONAL

AN X-RATED MOVIE AT A&M?
NO THANKS, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN OTHER PEOPLE SHOULDN'T WATCH IT.



AN X-RATED MOVIE AT A&M?
THAT'S DISGUSTING!!! NEXT THING YOU KNOW THEY'LL BE PROMOTING LIVE SEX SHOWS ON CAMPUS IN THE NAME OF EDUCATION. LET'S CIRCULATE A PETITION TO BAN THIS FILTH!



Today's civilrights leaders distort facts about blacks in America

Since Martin Luther King's birthday, we students have been inundated with a deluge of speakers, articles and letters about the subject of discrimination and minority civil rights. Unfortunately, much of this discourse has consisted of emotive rhetoric with little rational thought.

The Rev. King should rightly be admired for his accomplishments. Under his guidance, the civil rights movement was able to abolish government-imposed segregation. However, an evaluation of the current movement must be based on their actions today, not on the accomplishments of the past.

Unfortunately, such organizations as the contemporary National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Urban League, because their erroneous explanations of black income differences, lack any credibility.

In truth, the actions of the NAACP and Urban League actually are hurting the advancement of the people they claim to represent.

A simple examination of the major myths propagated by the civil rights establishment can shed some light on the fallacies of these political interest groups:

Myth number one: The lower average family incomes of blacks can be attributed to discrimination.

The civil rights 'leaders,' upon seeing that the average black family earns only 60 percent of the income that average white family earns, scream that discrimination is the cause. The problem with such a claim is that it ignores all the other factors which contribute to family income.

Many factors such as education, age, geographical location, occupation and number of working parents need to be taken into account before any approximation of the effect of discrimination can be determined.

Obviously, a family with two 40-year-old college-educated working parents living in New York is going to earn more than a 20-year-old single parent working as a sales clerk in Houston, regardless of race.

A look at the evidence shows that



Andrew Matthews
Columnist

blacks on average are younger, less educated and more likely to live in the lower-wage south.

Black families are also twice as likely to have only one parent at home as white families.

To find the extent of discrimination, black and white families with many of the same characteristics must be compared.

So what happens when these factors are held constant? Income differences between blacks and whites disappear.

Over the last two decades, young husband-and-wife families outside of the South have had virtually identical incomes as their white counterparts. And those black families with two college-educated working parents actually earn more than whites of the same description.

If discrimination is the the major factor in statistical income differences, how do black leaders account for the prosperity of Jews, Chinese and Japanese Americans?

I hope civil rights activists would not argue that these groups have not experienced racial discrimination. Members of these groups would argue differently.

Myth number two: Political power and government policies are the key to black advancement.

Contrary to what Jesse Jackson or the Urban League head John Jacobs may claim, political power will not promote the economic advancement of blacks. The most dramatic rises from poverty to wealth in the United States have been by those groups which have not used the political route.

The Chinese, Japanese and Jewish,

the three wealthiest ethnic minorities all rose to the top of the economic ladder by concentrating on running businesses and acquiring marketable skills, not by seeking political office.

All three of these groups have encountered fierce racial animosity and discriminating government policies. Yet, all three races earn, on average, more than whites do.

Federal or state legislation will not help the economic advancement of blacks. Over the last two decades more than one trillion dollars of aid has been spent on programs which attempt to alleviate the plight of the poor. If throwing money at the problem has solved it in the past, why should it work in the future?

The key to prosperity lies within the hearts of men and women who strive to improve their own lives. The success of all the 19th century immigrant groups and today's Vietnamese lies in their inclination to work much harder than the average comfortable native citizen.

The civil rights leaders also claim black economic improvement was instigated by the major civil rights legislation passed in the 1960s. It is true that black representation in professional fields has grown since the the 1960s. However, the number of blacks in professional fields doubled in the decade preceding the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

For decades, blacks have been acquiring skills, becoming educated and starting businesses. They had embarked on the path to wealth long before black politicians could claim all the credit.

Much of what the NAACP says regarding the status of blacks in society goes unchallenged by the media. To argue against the rhetoric of the black establishment invariably brings accusations of racism or white elitism.

This is not only unfortunate for those who want to engage in rational discussion, but also diverts attention from the true causes of black poverty, such as inferior public education and broken families.

Andrew Matthews is a junior economics major.

Mail Call

Hobbs' view of BVCPS slanted

EDITOR:

Ellen Hobbs takes a rather slanted view of the local Crisis Pregnancy Service and at its director, Judie Bruegger. The BVCPS simply presents the facts about abortion, as well as alternatives such as adoption. It is ultimately up to the woman being counseled as to what she decides.

I would suggest that if Hobbs wants to find out where the true bias is, to read "Grand illusions" by George Grant. This book will open her eyes to the deception of the Planned Parenthood Organization, which takes in \$17 million a year in its referrals to its own abortion mills.

Gary Gaither
Agricultural Education Department

Don't waste time with abortion issue

EDITOR:

This abortion issue is a waste of time. Instead of concerning ourselves about some future event that may or may not happen to a woman, why don't we work to help the less fortunate children and battered women in this country who need our immediate attention. The homeless, malnourished (and probably illiterate) children today are our future tomorrow. Don't you think it is just as wrong to let an innocent child die because of starvation than to let one be terminated by abortion?

Joy L. Marshall '91

Adventures In Cartooning

by Don Atkinson Jr.



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