

Mail Call

Abortion happening now

EDITOR:

I write this in response to the letter written by Joy Marshall in last Thursday's Battalion regarding abortion. I ask her now, how does abortion fit into the category of something that will happen in the future?

Abortion is happening now, most likely at the very moment you read this letter. Certainly, probability plays a role in whether or not women get pregnant, but what about battered women? Is it an absolute that all women get battered, or does probability become involved as well?

I am not diminishing the importance of dealing with the problems of abuse and hunger. I am merely stating that all of these problems are of equal magnitude and deserve equal attention, rather than addressing one as a "waste of time" and sacrificing it to make room for others. Is it reasonable to release a murderer to make time for a court to try someone else? Is it reasonable to dismiss drug abuse in order to concentrate more on alcohol abuse?

It is a tragedy that so much of this nation's future is lost to starvation, but isn't an equal amount of this nation's future lost to abortion? At the very least, starving children have the opportunity to live to experience starvation. On your final point, Ms. Marshall, yes, it is just as wrong to let a child die of starvation as it is to have an abortion, but consider your argument the other way around: Isn't it just as wrong to terminate a child by abortion as it is to have one die of starvation? I think perhaps a better argument for your purpose would be to suggest ways in which equal attention can be brought to battered women and starving children as to abortion, rather than taking the extreme viewpoint you now maintain. Perhaps then your arguments would have a more practical value.

Casey Motl '93

Run complainers should 'zip it'

EDITOR:

In response to Chris McNess and all of the other cry babies who oppose the Corps units running in daylight hours across main campus: ZIP IT. The Corps has only been upholding this tradition since 1876. Maybe you get in the way of their running. But I've never seen the Corps cry about it in The Battalion. That's not their style. McNess' suggestion that the Corps run on the track around Kyle Field or at the Research Park is not a compromise but is shutting them out. I don't think shutting the Corps out of our sight is the desire of most Aggies.

But this running issue is not what we are really talking about, is it? There are some people who attend this University who simply do not like the Corps' existence, period. Because of some inferiority complex, they will try to badger or belittle an outstanding institution (from the lack of anything better to do).

The Corps running across campus in blocks represents unity. I think unity is our most valued asset at Texas A&M. Without unity, all of A&M's traditions would fall by the wayside. These traditions have set us apart from other boring institutions of higher learning such as t.u.

Since the Corps is doing most of the work honoring and revering Texas A&M's time-honored traditions, we should at

least support them. The benefits from these traditions are worth it. Ever wonder why Aggies hire Aggies? Not because they loved Bryan/College Station.

Texas A&M has one of the most loyal former student associations. Why are former students loyal? They remember bonfire, Silver Taps, Muster, the Twelfth Man; they remember the Spirit of Aggieland.

Oh, I forgot the point I was making about the Corps running across campus. Yell as loud as you can. It makes me proud to be an Aggie.

Cary Moore '90

Death penalty must be used

EDITOR:

In Damon Arhos' column of February 6, he asserted that embracing the death penalty represented pure hypocrisy on the part of a society which emphasizes "the value of the individual and his life."

It is precisely because of this emphasis that the death penalty must continue to be used. Mr. Arhos, if you truly believe in the value of the individual and his life, how can you suggest that life imprisonment should be used as the only punishment for a capital offense? Does an inmate lead a life of value? Not only is life imprisonment economically unfeasible, it is not a particularly humane alternative.

If I thought that by poisoning your Wheaties I would invariably be shocked into eternity, I would be much more hesitant to indulge my whim. Capital punishment is not merely a means of "getting even" with capital offenders — it is a warning to society that the individual and his life are valued indeed, and that the taking of a life will not be condoned. It is meant to serve as a deterrent to future crimes, as well as a compensation for past ones.

Jennifer Maloney '91

Council lacks condom sense

EDITOR:

What is this idea presented by the Aids Policy Council and endorsed by a Battalion columnist that condom machines should be placed in bathrooms across the campus because "even though condoms are readily available at supermarkets, one is hardly at a supermarket when the need occurs." Foolish me. I thought the buildings on campus were here for students to learn.

I suppose we should also supply beds for heterosexuals and drill holes in stall walls for homosexuals to make it even more convenient for the sexually active. Why, we could have "sex" and "no sex" zones. And to think — all the time I've been here I have not utilized my "building use" fee to its fullest.

Kevin E. Davis '92

Petition a 'ridiculous notion'

EDITOR:

The petition being circulated around campus requesting a boycott of Aggie Cinema is a ridiculous notion. If people do not want to attend films brought to us by Aggie Cinema, they

just need not attend them. It is their choice. Why sign a petition claiming such nonsense? Is there some underlying need for these students to belong to a group so they can feel self-righteous about their own morals?

I, unlike Jennifer Wolling and Matt DeWoody, saw the film. I did not find it any more sexual than say, "Dirty Dancing." I did not find it any more graphically violent than any Rambo movie. There are many American movies that deal with subjects more taboo than "The Last Woman." I don't see Wolling and DeWoody circulating petitions about "Sex, Lies and Videotape," which deals with the topic of masturbation in detail.

While I probably have a different set of values than do Wolling and DeWoody, at least I can respect their morals as being good for them. But who are they to tell me what I can do with my own being. I pity people like them who can't be open-minded in a free society that fundamentally guarantees freedom of choice.

Mark Barnes '90

Scholarships earned, not given

EDITOR:

Minorities don't deserve to be at this school?

I, an African-American male, wholeheartedly disagree, but what are minority students to think when they read these disturbing opinions about this new monster called reverse racism. Why does it seem that everybody is crying themselves silly just because a little handful of minority students worked hard in high school to earn competitive scholarships?

The minority population at this school is nothing more than a handful compared to the general Great Body. However, the Great Body seems threatened, and is spilling its tears all over The Battalion. Mr. Babin is crybaby number one. Don't you know, Mr. Babin, that while you say that it is a miracle for you to be here, I proclaim it a miracle for the whole minority population to be here.

I too was in the top 20 percent of my class in 9th grade, but that didn't stop me from becoming the valedictorian. It didn't stop me from applying for and later earning most of the large scholarships that were offered to everyone in my class. I am compelled to believe that you, Mr. Babin and many others of the Great Body are the ones that are complaining about what someone owes them. How do you know that those scholarships were given only because the students were minorities? Did you apply for the scholarships? Did someone tell you, "No, no, Mr. White Man, this money is for our poor little dummies!"? Did you even try, Mr. Babin?

Besides, scholarships aren't given, they are earned. Moreover, I feel comfortable asserting, on behalf of the minority population, that we've earned ours. Incidentally, do you need a loan, Mr. Babin? I am the only African-American male in Lechner Hall. I shouldn't be too hard to find.

Henry Earl West '93

Have an opinion? Express it!

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. All letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald, or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

Market ends racism without affirmative action

In a recent edition of The Battalion, I read a Mail Call letter about affirmative action. In her letter, Karmen Moss said, "(If) affirmative action is taken away, it will result in qualified minorities not being judged by their credentials, (but) by their race. Because qualified people will be denied the chance to succeed."

This argument attempts to justify the existence of affirmative action programs. The basic premise of the argument is that without government regulation, businesses would freely discriminate against minorities.

Though this is seen by civil rights activists as true, this theory needs to be examined in a less emotional and more analytical manner.

In spite of common belief, businesses do not have much freedom to discriminate. There is a good reason why they cannot.

It is called greed. Greed keeps businesses in check.

A simple study of the market would show that acts of discrimination impose an economic cost on businesses. If an employer hires an unqualified white man instead of a qualified black woman, that employer will have jeopardized the future of the business.

So if the employer wants to ensure



Andrew Matthews
Columnist

the flow of profits to the firm, it would be in his economic self-interest to suppress his personal preferences and hire the black woman.

Economic theory predicts that since businesses are profit-maximizers, they will attempt to hire mainly on work performance.

This does not rule out discrimination entirely, but whatever discriminatory actions businesses engage in will be subject to competitive market forces.

It therefore follows that the more competitive the market, the less discrimination will exist.

This theory can be easily seen operating within two of the most competitive and lucrative industries in our society: entertainment and sports.

When Art Shell, a minority group member, was hired as head coach for the Raiders, all the sports writers talked

about a new humanitarianism in the sports industry.

Nonsense!

Al Davis hired Shell because he thought Shell could win, which produces more revenue for Davis. Greed. Not humanitarianism.

The same holds for entertainers. Minority group members have been in the entertainment business for years. Is it because club owners and record companies are good people? Of course not. The talented singers and comedians could bring them megabucks.

But what happens when no money is at stake? People are free to indulge without any regard to the costs. Government is the perfect example of an entity that can freely discriminate as it pleases. The historical record supports such a claim.

A study of non-profit enterprises shows numerous examples of racial discrimination.

Before the civil-rights legislation, regulated telephone companies refused to hire blacks in any position, and even

limited the opportunities of Jews and Catholics.

In 1936, only three black Ph.D.s were hired in all of the universities in the United States, whereas there were 300 black chemists hired by private industry.

An examination of the railroad industry shows that while the railroad companies were private, blacks were "over-represented" as employees. But after the government federally regulated the industry, blacks were totally excluded from most railroad jobs.

The big joke about affirmative action is that it attempts to eliminate injustices in private industry which do not exist. I support policy which punishes blatant discriminatory hiring practices, but this sort of policy is not needed in private firms.

As it stands now, the government imposes regulations on firms which require that minorities must not be "under-represented" in the company. Such statutes actually make companies hire with race as a factor, when only the job requirements should matter.

Much of the evidence about affirmative action programs shows that only highly educated minorities benefit. The uneducated, unskilled workers are not helped at all.

Affirmative action policy usually equates education with qualification. An uneducated white or black who is hard working, honest, responsible person could find themselves rejected by a company which hired an educated person solely to meet affirmative action regulations.

Intangible personality characteristics usually determine job performance. They are hard to prove in a court of law.

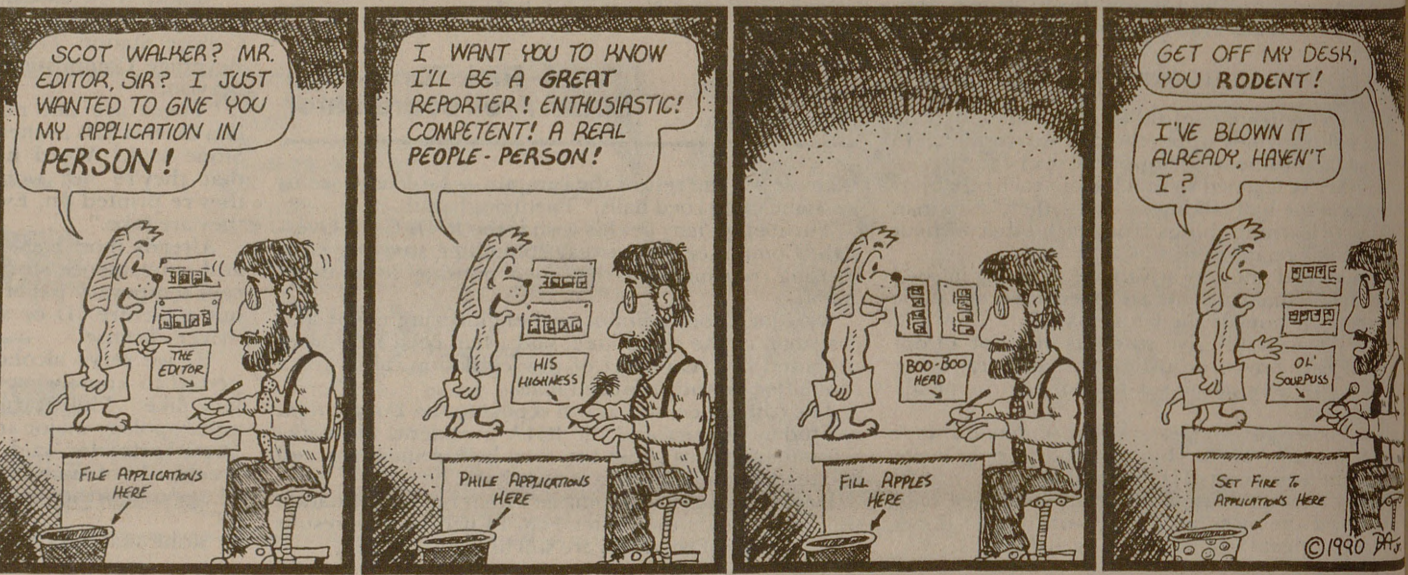
I think everyone hopes for a society which judges people on the basis of their character and not of their sex or race. The marketplace enforces it. Our government should also.

But with policies which promote discrimination, this dream will never be attained.

Andrew Matthews is a junior economics major.

Adventures In Cartooning

by Don Atkinson Jr.



The Battalion

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