

Vote for McBurnett for governor of Texas

Texans are about to make a terrible mistake. We are about to elect a governor.

Either Ann Richards or Clayton Williams is about to take office and there is not a damn thing that we can do about it.

Even with the election very close at hand, many Texans are unsure of which candidate they support. Those who have chosen a candidate probably have a very hard time substantiating their choice.

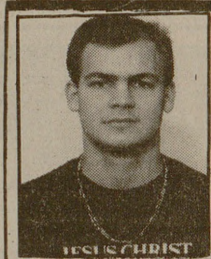
What reasons are there for choosing either candidate? None that we know of. We just know what we hear from each candidate about the other.

Regardless, voters will choose a candidate and will subsequently bear the burden of that choice.

There is but one way out. Elect Matt McBurnett

Why not elect me? In taking a good look at the major issues brought up in the campaign thus far, it is clear that I am the superior candidate.

• Ann Richards is a recovering alcoholic, and, as Jim Mattox was



Matt McBurnett
 Columnist

prompt to point out, may have a history of drug abuse.

• She is accused of being a liberal, God forbid. Liberals are those scary creatures who are rapidly becoming extinct in Texas. It is rumored that a candidate in our last presidential election may have been one.

• Richards even has the support of homosexuals, a factor that will, amazingly, loom large in the minds of quite a few voters.

• Ann has even had a divorce.

• Oh yeah, she was State

Treasurer.

When turning our attention to Clayton Williams, we are able to see that the outlook is just as bleak.

• Williams has admitted to

frequenting brothels as a West Texas youth. In his infinite wisdom, he assured the public that it was simply a part of growing up.

• Last March, he joked that bad weather was like rape. "if it's inevitable, just relax and enjoy it." Williams's mother even told him to watch his mouth after that one.

• He is rich because of oil and some businesses he founded. This has allowed him to outspend Richards two to one.

• He is a good ol' boy with stereotypical Texas conservatism.

• He refuses to shake the hand of a liar.

This about sums up the campaign, does it not?

My credentials seem equally impressive, which is not saying too much.

• According to most sources, I have never had an alcohol problem. Drugs are not my thing, either.

• I am not a liberal, or good ol' boy conservative. I do not own any boots, but I am from a small town.

• I have as much political experience as Claytie.

• I have never visited a brothel. If I had, though, I have the sense not to tell the press.

• I am sure that I have the right opinions on all of the political issues in the campaign, whatever they are.

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The ball is in the voters' court, now. Much to my chagrin, I do not stand much of a chance. I probably could not even win a majority vote here at Texas A&M. After all, I do not have any buildings named for me.

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The polls indicate that Clayton Williams is leading by a substantial

margin. Ann Richards's private polls indicate that she is gaining on Williams, but as he kindly pointed out, "She must be drinking again."

The Republicans did not have a very good campaign strategy. If they had locked Williams in a closet back in January with plans to let him out after the election, he would have won by a landslide. His locker-room humor and silly antics are keeping Richards in the race.

Richards, on the other hand, never really pulled her weary act together. Her campaign strategy was about as effective as the Aggies' offensive scheme this football season.

I am afraid that I, a mere college student with a slight interest in politics, am as capable as either major candidate to live in the governors mansion.

For those of you interested in real issues and other silly political things such as that, write me in. Otherwise, you are out of luck.

Matt McBurnett is a senior electrical engineering major.

First Amendment doesn't protect just everything

There seems to be quite a bit of discussion about the right to free speech these days. There also seems a lot of it we could do without.

Our First Amendment rights guarantee that we are able to express any idea regardless of its popularity without being subject to government censorship. But they do not, as some would have it, act as a shield to be dutifully wrapped around any objectionable behavior or action just because that action happens to express some view.

For instance, if I went to the 1992 Democratic Convention and mooned the delegates to express my distaste for their politics and their candidate, I would be promptly escorted away by the men in blue and fined a healthy amount, because we as a society have determined that exposing one's backside, to Democrats or Republicans, is not an acceptable way for us to express our opinion. Other forms of

Stephen Beck

Reader's Opinion

behavior such as lacing one's public address (or letter to the editor) with profanity are similarly proscribed.

It should be painfully obvious that the restrictions on what may be done in the expression of our beliefs, as opposed to restrictions on what we may express, do not violate the right to free speech because the First Amendment provides that we have the right to express any idea, no matter how unpopular — not the right to express it by any means possible, no matter how vile or offensive.

I am writing this because it seems to me that there has been a great deal of acrimonious debate (if you can call it that) in the past year about First Amendment rights concerning

government action where the First Amendment just doesn't apply.

Flag burning is just such an issue. Nobody is arguing that our society's malcontents shouldn't be allowed to express their anti-American sentiment. But there is a large number of people who find the public burning of our flag to be obscene and are deeply offended by it. And the people, through their elected government, should have the right to restrict or ban such practices as long as it does not run counter to the principles of the Bill of Rights.

Another hot topic which I believe has received a lot of undue Constitutional scrutiny is the controversy over government funding for obscene art. There are those that proclaim that the movement to restrict the doling out of public funds is a violation of the First Amendment.

This is pure bunk. Whether you like Mapplethorpe's work or not you must realize that the First Amendment does

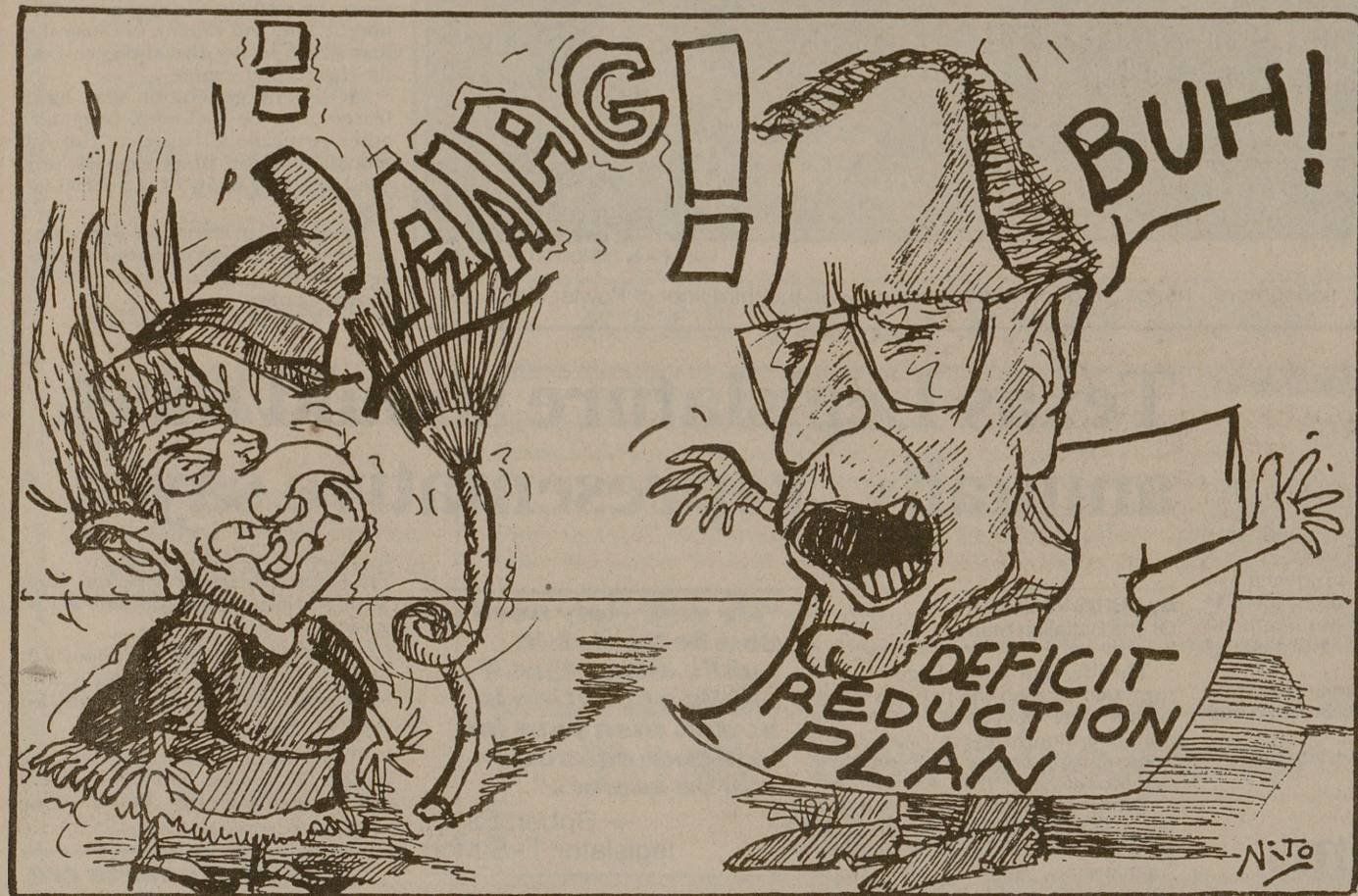
not guarantee our nation's artistic community the right to feed at the public trough. But then I guess we'll always have fights like this when government continues to expropriate funds that it has no business meddling with in the first place.

The flag burning and National Endowment for the Arts debates are really just footnotes in the larger battle over our First Amendment rights, and I hope lively debate will continue on the editorial page and in the halls of our government on these issues. But I also wish that people would put the issues in

proper perspective and stop spouting off indignant rhetoric based on the erroneous assumption that everything under the sun is protected by our First Amendment rights.

The seemingly limitless number of such trivial appeals to Constitutional protection clouds public debate and degrades this great document that has done a pretty good job protecting us from ourselves for the past two centuries.

Stephen Beck is a senior electrical engineering major.



Mail Call

Come see other side of bonfire

EDITOR:

I would like to invite Keith Arnold to come with us and participate for a day in the building of bonfire. Come out to cut and, after the mandatory safety class, work with us in the woods. If it is too much of a hassle to go out to cut site, join us at stack on Duncan Field. Contact me. We will provide a pot and glasses you can use. This also goes for anyone else who wants to spend time learning the other side of the bonfire issue.

Mr. Arnold, as it has been said before, bonfire is not Nov. 29, it is all the days spent at cut site and Duncan Field building it. Bonfire is too big to be built by one person. I enjoy hard work and a job well done. I consider myself lucky to be chosen to teach people this year how to build bonfire safely and build it well. Come see for yourself this weekend.

David B. Nash III '93
 McInnis Hall Crew Chief

Batt ignored issue of safety

EDITOR:

I am writing in response to The Battalion Editorial Board's position on parking garage space allocation (Oct. 18). I was very disappointed in the glaring omission of a very pertinent aspect of this issue. The position discussed convenience and fairness but totally ignored the issue of safety. If one considers the enormous security risks associated with remote parking, one will probably come to the conclusion that on-campus students should retain parking priority over off-campus students. Off-campus students not using the shuttle-bus system do park at night and do walk to their cars. However, the faculty-staff parking lots of the inner campus are generally open to night parking of off-campus Aggies. That is not a viable option for on-campus students who eventually must find a permanent parking space during the night or face a parking citation in the morning. If off-campus students were given the option of garage parking. Rather, I hope they will be given the option after more garages have been completed. For now, parking is obviously limited. For security reasons, on-campus students should still have priority. This is a need. Convenience is merely a luxury. I ask you which should come first.

Kyle R. Jacobson '91
 president, Residence Hall Association

The Battalion

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