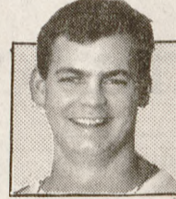


A lesson to learn Gay basher deserves to contract AIDS virus



Matt McBurnett
Columnist

The AIDS epidemic prompted an unheavenly host of religious folks who claimed the disease was God's wrath against the people with whom he was displeased. I never thought this to be the case; after all, what does the divinity have against hemophiliacs?

At any rate, the case of a 49-year-old married man is certainly one of just desserts.

The British medical journal Lancet details the story of the poor fellow. He claims to have had no possible exposure to the AIDS virus except for a stint as a truck driver in New York when he and friends beat up gay men "too many times to count."

So basically, the report states that this man contracted the virus through the blood of at least one of his bashed victims via cuts in his hands.

most brainy guy. If he did not contract the virus because of gay bashing, couldn't he have made up a better excuse to tell his wife and doctor? Maybe he thinks that they will feel sorry for him because he happened to contract this disease by beating the hell out of people.

If his disease is from beating gays, maybe he should have considered the risks involved in this bloody mess.

Very few experts agree the truck driver's case would serve as a deterrent to the practice of gay bashing. The Post also quoted Larry Kramer, the New York City playwright who founded the AIDS activist group ACT-UP.

"My first thought was that maybe they will stop beating us," he said. "But then again, maybe they won't. Maybe they'll just start using guns. It serves him right."

The implications of this are not quite clear. Logic dictates that there are risks involved in engaging in fisticuffs with an AIDS victim. The "experts" in the Washington Post story seem to believe that this gay bashing is quite a common occurrence.

Whether this is true, I believe that one New York truck driver will not be beating any gays in the near future. If he cannot resist the temptation, maybe he will be smart enough to use a stick or something.

I hate to think that this man will die for what he did, but he will. If stupidity were criteria enough for the death penalty, this guy would be one of the first to go.

Matt McBurnett is a senior electrical engineering major.

The medical community presently is skeptical of all of this. The Washington Post reported that David Henderson, an HIV-transmission expert, stated that in only three cases of 1,000 does a direct, accidental needle stick with a syringe containing HIV-infested blood result in transmission. He also said blood on an open cut or scratch and other less-direct exposures are associated with an even smaller risk.

The infected man's doctor, on the other hand, said he hoped the experience would serve as a "deterrent" to the "dreadful practice of bashing people because they belong to a particular minority."

The doctor also is quite confident the man received the virus via open cuts because the man claims never to have shared needles and never has engaged in sex with anyone other than his loving wife.

Maybe I have a sick sense of humor, but not only do I have no sympathy for the man, I almost find it amusing. Who does this fellow think he is?

First of all, he is obviously not the

VOTE for Me
YOU KNOW YOU SHOULD,
YOU DON'T KNOW A THING
ABOUT ME
BUT MY SIGN LOOKS
GOOD!

MAIL CALL

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers and welcomes all letters to the editor. Please include name, classification, address and phone number on all letters. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Because of limited space, shorter letters have a better chance of appearing. There is, however, no guarantee letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

It's a sweet deal for TCA

EDITOR:
In addition to questions concerning the ethical aspects of forcing all on-campus residents to pay for a service only a small percentage use or whether a University known for its academia should be responsible for making a luxury such as cable available to all on-campus residents, I would like to offer yet another reason for voting against the cable referendum Wednesday and Thursday.

The completion of this contract with TCA Cable Company closes the door to all further price negotiations and clinches the cable company's control. Not only will most be unaware of the fact that they or their parents are paying the cost, but also, TCA will no longer have to deal with nor provide the same quality service to its real users, the students.

In fact, TCA would be thrilled to have this contract signed because it would no longer have to compete for students' business — everyone on campus will be forced to pay for cable.

Because of this, the quality of its product and services is likely to deteriorate since the company would no longer depend on its reputation for its business.

Furthermore, when the cable prices go up (which they inevitably will), TCA has no fear of losing any of its obligatory customers. You can be certain TCA is eager to close this deal.

Those of you who use cable and who feel this is a great idea, realize that all consumer control — your choices and voices on the matter as a consumer — is being shifted to the University. There will be no need for negotiation over prices or quality service, and all on-campus residents will be obligated to be customers of this service.

The rejection of this cable proposal does not mean that we are agreeing that the current cable rates are fair: On the contrary, our rejection of it would force other negotiations for lower prices to take place.

Although the cable rates at TCA are not yet extremely high, all avenues of working with TCA have not yet been explored.

This proposal is only an alternative offered by TCA. Our agreeing to it essentially kills discussion, something TCA would love to happen. The cable company would get a sweet deal and be guaranteed to haul in a hefty profit under the guise of providing cheaper rates.

The Residence Hall Association has given us the opportunity to express our views on this issue to the administration involved in making the decision. Please vote — your opinion matters.

D'Jelma Coughran '91

Be honest with Aggies

EDITOR:
I don't want to hear any more b.s. from Business Services about why they have to charge exorbitant prices. I am fed up with the weak explanations that Business Services has so gloriously tried to make us believe as true.

The excuse that prices can't be lowered because it would be unfairly competing with off-campus businesses is ludicrous. We are not asking that prices be reduced below off-campus prices; we are just asking that prices at least be close to convenience store prices.

A dollar or more price difference on some items in a convenience store is totally out of line.

Could it be Business Services knows students' mommies' and daddies' money (Aggie Bucks) is used to buy food and convenience items on campus?

I am outraged Texas A&M and the business community has the audacity to take advantage of the students and their parents with unfair business practices and policies. It's time Business Services examines its pricing policies and procedures and starts being honest with Aggies!

Tim W. Byrd '92

Control of minds, bodies, souls

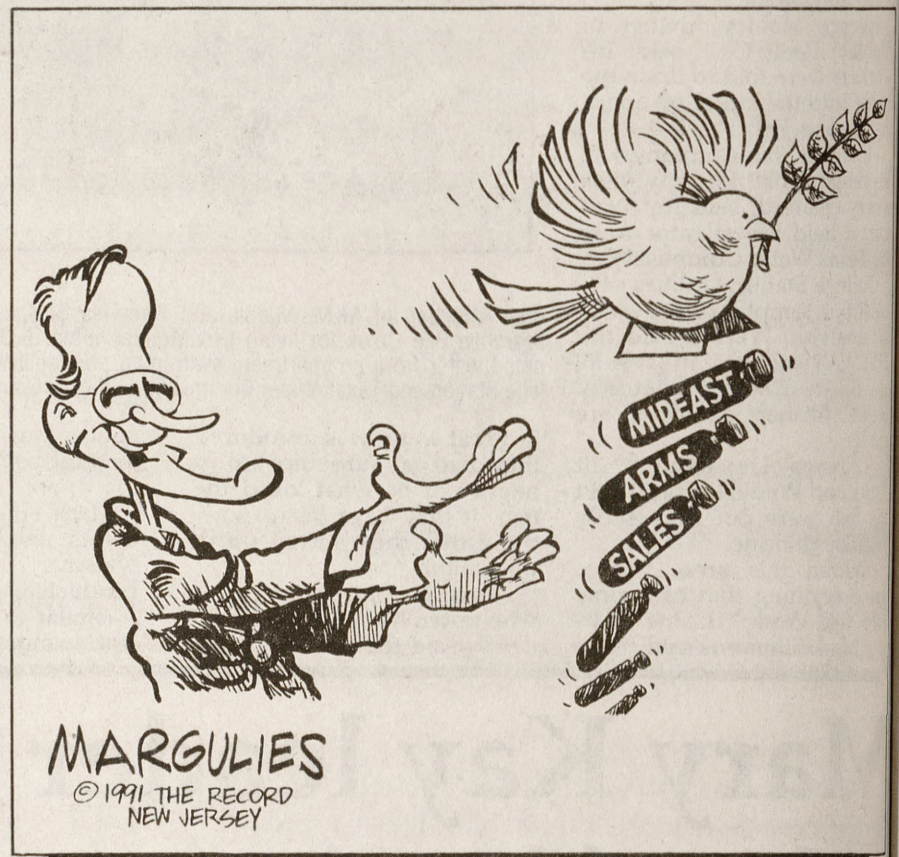
EDITOR:
This letter is in reference to Larry Cox's column: "Bush should take advantage of his popularity" in Tuesday's Battalion.

Cox blames libertarians for the "heavy hand of government" and says libertarians and conservatives promote "empowerment of individuals."

I am appalled that Cox puts conservatives in the same league as libertarians. Conservatives are aggressive antagonists to individual liberty. They promote censorship, censorship, government-led prayer (Christian, of course) in public schools, restriction of reproductive freedoms and limitation of education to prevent the "poisoning of young minds" with ideas they might not agree with.

Conservatives oppose most of the principles of the Bill of Rights. They have shunned the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union), which exists only to eliminate laws which can be proven unconstitutional. Perhaps it is true that liberals want control over our money, but conservatives want control over our minds, bodies and souls. Which is worse?

Suzanne Adams
graduate student



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