

Government should not sponsor individual artists

Public patrons must judge works as worthwhile

The National Endowment for the Arts was created in 1965 to "encourage and support American art and artists." It supplies funds every year for shows like "Live from Lincoln Center," "Great Performances," and "Metropolitan Opera Presents." These programs allow people across the nation to hear or see classical performances previously seen only in cities like New York or Washington, D.C.

Museums of all kinds are supported by grants from the NEA. That money allows museums to rent shows and pieces that they would like to showcase. Unfortunately, the NEA also funds individual works. Grants for individual projects, whether created by one or many artists, should be ended.

The idea of government-sponsored art smacks of propaganda. In the 1930s the Nazis collected "approved" artwork that showed good Aryan people working hard for the German state. Paintings and statues of Jews or Jewish themes, communist themes or any "politically incorrect" ideas were hung up for ridicule.

Graffiti was painted next to the works explaining what was incorrect about them. Many observers laughed, perhaps because they felt they had to. Bauhaus, one of the modern world's greatest art schools, was shut down.

Communists in the Soviet Union and China were no better. They hired artists who believed in communism to paint their propaganda posters and pamphlets.

Artists traditionally have survived because of the good will (and money) of supporters and patrons. Lack of resources, though, is not censorship. If one speaker has a soapbox and stands

capture the eye of a philanthropist will be able to survive.

Many good bands have died because of lack of local interest. This doesn't mean they were no good or had no talent, but rather there was no appreciative audience for their art.

Now I am not a spokesman of the religious right, but this argument is also used by them. I want to distance myself from them.

The American Family Association says that government should not sponsor art, but it has for very different reasons.

Members of the association do not like the types of work some NEA grants have produced, like the Serrano and Maplethorpe photographs. They say, of course, everyone has a right to say anything, but they just don't want to hear it.

The truth is they would like to remove anything that they see as unclean. Homosexuality, anti-Jesus things, etc., are offensive to these people, and they want it removed. The American Family Association would like to see the National Endowment for the Arts dissolved.

This would be disastrous for the museum community. Museums and art galleries should get money with no strings attached to showcase the art and artists they think are worthy. Money given that way can be offensive to no one and there is still no government control. This plan would be much better than the current one which places limits on what can be created with that money. An artist should be free to do as he or she pleases, and the government should get out of the art patron-business altogether.



David Nash

Nash is a junior biochemistry major.

"Artists do not define art. Art critics do not define art. The public defines art ... Many good bands have died because of lack of local interest. This doesn't mean they were no good or had no talent, but rather there was no appreciative audience for their art."

on it to tell his story, people will listen to him. If another speaker stands nearby with a 2,000 watt PA system and many more people come to hear him, the first man is not being censored.

The temporary removal of MTV by TCA Cable was not censorship. Because we can't hear some great band in Miami play here, that band is not being censored. Don't say it's not the same thing, because it is. There was no way to get MTV unless you bought a five thousand dollar satellite dish, and you cannot see a great band in Miami unless you go there. But when that great band gets a record label then we all rejoice. Those artists have found their patron, a record company.

An artist who cannot get sponsored by the NEA is not getting censored. Artists should not come to expect government grants to fund their works. Artists do not define art. Art critics do not define art. The public defines art. Shows which are largely successful at one museum will be booked by other museums. If the artist's work is not popular then it will die a natural death. Artists that

Now that I have said all that, I am not recommending to you that you all skip art. Rather, art is a treasure of the people.

It just seems that a government organization should not be able to decide which artist gets national exposure and which does not. Museums and art galleries book shows that are successful and pieces that are provocative to draw crowds. Hopefully they will make enough money to rent some different pieces for the next show.

Go to AnNam Teahouse or your favorite local club and see some great local bands. Several, like ARB, left for Austin because they got very little support from the local community.

OPAS season tickets are sold out, but there are still tickets available for the individual shows.

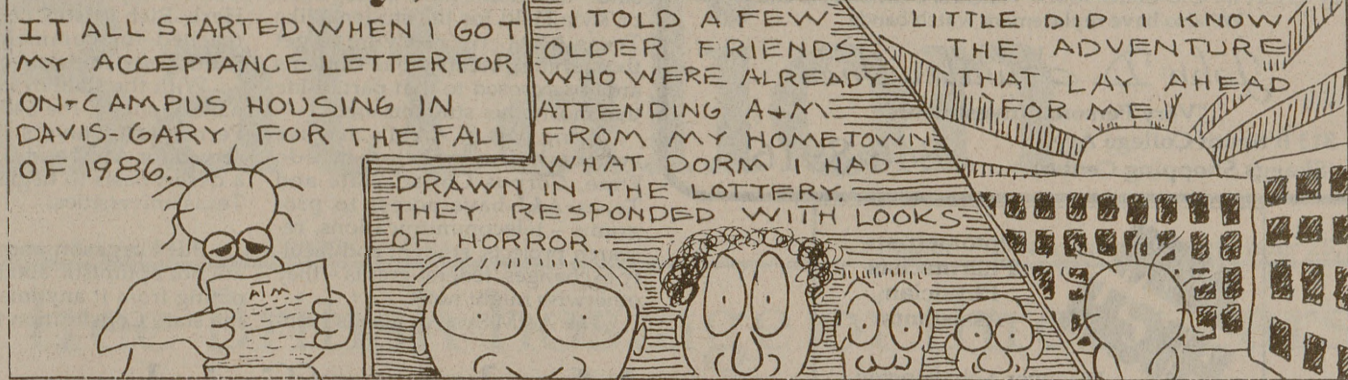
The Warsaw Philharmonic will be here Friday.

The University offers art history and music appreciation classes as well as drawing and writing classes for those who show talent.

If the government should not fund the creation of art, the slack must be taken up by you.

Davis-Gary, The Olde Years

by Bingo Barnes



Corps members must not protect alleged assailants

A recent incident at this University reminded me of a movie I once watched. The title of the movie escapes me, but the plot goes something like this:

The movie was set in a Southern military academy with a storied history of training young men in the mental and physical disciplines. A secret organization called the 13 was formed by some of the cadets at this institution and consisted of 13 elite members of the corps who meted out justice as they saw fit - justice sometimes of the vigilante variety. Their goal was to maintain the elitist traditions of the school at any cost.

Much of the plot involved premeditated actions of the 13 in discouraging the school's first black student from remaining there. This was done through threats, physical and mental intimidation, physical abuse and other terroristic activities. My reaction to the movie was of course extreme anger at the injustice portrayed.

Last week a female Texas A&M Corps of Cadets member filed a complaint that she had been beaten by other Corps members, allegedly in connection with her application to the Parsons' Mounted Cavalry. If this allegation is true, it would mean certain members of the Corps are engaging in the same sort of coercive activities that were depicted in the movie.

Unfortunately, all the facts have not been ascertained. This is in part because the cadet has refused to talk further about the matter. The investigation by University officials and police is progressing slowly.

In the spirit of communication that falls somewhat short of openness, reporters from The Battalion questioned members of the Corps and cavalry who replied "no comment" to the majority of our questions Thursday. Members of the cavalry said all they could tell us was how to shoot the cannon.

While most responses were merely non-communicative, cavalry members responded rather flippantly about such a serious matter. The Corps has not released an official statement on the incident but instead deferred to the Office of Public Information.

The victim herself also responded with no comment to our questions. One might presume it was suggested she do so or the consequences for her violating this "suggestion" would be serious indeed.

The implications for the University community are quite serious. If these allegations are true, it means one segment of the student population believes it can victimize other students with impunity. If this veil of silence which shrouds the incident continues, it suggests some officials are quite willing to protect certain students based on their extra-curricular affiliations to the detriment of other students and to the detriment of the truth.

If the female cadet has been instructed to remain silent about these events to protect the Corps or its subgroups, it would mean her victimization is being perpetuated.

Many serious questions remain unanswered. And they should be answered. An investigation should be initiated at the highest levels of University administration. The University cannot and should not tolerate organizations, secret or otherwise, which smugly violate the law and trample the rights of other students.

Why won't someone come forward? Surely out of all the Corps members, someone knows something - yet he or she stands idly by and does nothing. Why do members of the Corps, which is strong on this campus, feel the need to

protect a few who have violated what all Aggies stand for? "True to each other as Aggies should be..." - maybe. But who is being true to the cadet who was victimized? Are these the kind of individuals the Corps covets? Can the Corps as a whole be viewed favorably if some of its members seek blindly to protect alleged criminals? Would knowingly hiding the truth and subverting justice not taint the image of the Corps which is pledged to a code of honor?

How can we rely on these future military members to protect the Constitution and our liberties when they cannot protect these rights among themselves? How can anyone in the military feel comfortable under the command of someone who has committed such atrocities against his own sister member? What would the military be if its officers went around beating its privates for such trivial action as applying to a club which goes against tradition?

Action must be taken. A slap on the wrist will not prevent this from happening again nor will it justly punish the perpetrators. The matter must be resolved with utmost severity and swiftness.



Carrie Cavalier

Cavalier is a senior psychology major.

Mail Call

Cajuns invite Aggies to feast

❖ Congratulations on your win against LSU. But don't recline on your laurels yet. You (once again) have to face the intimidating Ragin' Cajuns of USL. And this year Louisiana is a brimming powerhouse of football. Consider Sagarin Computer ratings in a national newspaper:

6. Texas A&M
7. NE Louisiana (1-AA)
83. LSU
85. Nicholls (1-AA)
86. NW Louisiana (1-AA)
94. Louisiana Tech
99. Ragin' Cajuns of USL
111. Tulane

The four major colleges in Louisiana now boast a cumulative record of 1-9-0. So don't make us mad, and maybe we'll go easy on you. (I don't suppose you could send that blasted cannon out for maintenance during the game. If not, better stock up extra shells. We lost two of our players in duck-hunting season last year - the first time somebody fired a shotgun, they suffered from flashbacks and had to be carried out on stretchers.)

Anyway, some of you may remember that I wrote you guys after the A&M - LSU game last year. At the baseball regionals in Baton Rouge this Spring, I met

some of your fans who had read my letter, and we visited awhile.

Well, if I have to drive all the way to College Station again this year, I'm going to make sure I enjoy at least part of it. Since Cajuns don't seem to be very successful at carrying/throwing a pigskin, we will have to do what we always do in such situations, we will cook the damn thing.

Q: How is a Cajun zoo different from other zoos?

A: At a Cajun zoo, we list the common name, the scientific name and at least two recipes.)

Although we aren't very entertaining playing on a gridiron, we are second to none at cooking on one.

Therefore, I hereby invite the first 30 A&M fans who call me (or leave a message on my machine at (318)235-1013, to a veritable Cajun pre-game feast. (No collect calls for all of you skinflints.) This is no prank, there will not be an Aggie joke when you call. With master chef Irving Pratt, we are bringing ice chests, pots, cookers and all the ingredients to cook crawfish etoufee and Alligator Sauce Piquante for 30. We will play some Cajun music, drink a little carbonated ethanol and generally pass a good time.

See you at the game.

J. Abraham, M.D.

P.S. If Slocum runs up the score on us again this year, would somebody please pour Nair on his head and put his hairline out of its misery?

Stand in right place at games

❖ The Aggie student tradition of standing during football games has, and is, creating problems for the ushers and students.

The ticket holders of these sections should stand in the order as follows:

Ticket holder for row 1 stand in front of seat next to railing; ticket holder for row 2 stands in front on row 2; ticket holder for row 3 stands in front of seat on row 3 ...

The point is: The student ticket holder should not stand on the seat of the row indicated on their ticket but in front of the seat. The cooperation of the students in this matter will be greatly appreciated by the ushers of these sections.

Harold O'Neil
student section usher

Have an opinion? Express it!

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers. All letters to the editor are welcome. Written letters must be signed and include classification, address and daytime phone number for verification purposes. Anonymous letters will not be published.

The Battalion reserves the right to edit all letters for length, style and accuracy. There is no guarantee letters will appear.

Letters may be brought to 013 Reed McDonald, sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111 or can be faxed to 845-5408.

HONORS ANYTHING?



ANYONE CARE TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION?

ANNEX 003

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Tuesday, September 24, 1991
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