

The Battalion Editorial Board

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The following opinions are a consensus of The Battalion opinion staff and senior editors.



Both ways

Fudged answers hurt Clinton's image

"When I was in England, I experimented with marijuana a time or two, and I didn't like it and didn't inhale and never tried it again," Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton said last week.

Clinton's confession of smoking marijuana was unnecessary. The issue of whether Clinton smoked marijuana occasionally during his youth should be of no concern.

Even opposing Democratic presidential candidate Jerry Brown defended Clinton, saying it was "not relevant," and even he went on to criticize the media for bringing up the subject of Clinton's past drug use.

Indeed, the most important issue is whether Clinton is currently using any drugs. Americans should not condone his past actions, but rather acknowledge the fact of Clinton's mistake and his ability to correct his action.

However, Clinton should still have been forthright in his answer about his past or simply refused to answer. Instead, Clinton's indecisive nature in discussing his past has only hurt his candidacy. This wishy-washy and weak-kneed approach to issues has tired the majority of voters.

Clinton cannot have it both ways, answering but not answering the

question. In fact, a poll taken by WABC-TV in New York last week stated 57 percent would not be content with Clinton's honesty and integrity as president.

In past interviews, Clinton avoided questions about his past drug use by saying he never violated "state or federal laws." Clinton's excuse for never admitting his drug use before was "because nobody's ever asked me that question point blank."

Perhaps, reporters need to scream in Clinton's ear, learn sign language or paint a big banner, so Clinton can answer the more direct or "point blank" questions.

The art of dodging questions by politicians only angers and frustrates the public. They see these politicians as devious and manipulative individuals who are not concerned with the public good.

The media has a responsibility to uncover the truth about each presidential candidate. It is up to the candidate to make the decision of whether to discuss his past. If the candidate chooses not to answer a question, then the public must respect that decision; however, the candidate needs to be resolute in discussing his past.

Off the hook

Courts play needed role in school equity

Last week, the Supreme Court eased the way for school districts to escape court supervision of desegregation in their schools.

In one of the few recent desegregation rulings, the court ruled that lower courts do not need to continue indefinitely trying to correct racial imbalances in the schools.

The decision could lead to poorer education for many students by taking unjust school districts off the legal hook.

School districts, however, will still carry the burden of proof to show that segregation is due to factors other than racial discrimination, and that the schools are taking "all steps necessary" to remedy the imbalance.

This decision is looked upon as a victory for the Bush administration as well as for hundreds of public school systems that have desegregation cases pending.

On the other hand, minority students and parents, as well as civil rights and civil liberties activists who have joined in the fight for the integration of schools, are the losers.

With the Supreme Court taking a hands-off role in this issue, America's school systems run the risk of regressing to the dismal state of schools in the '60s: school systems that

discriminated against many of its students.

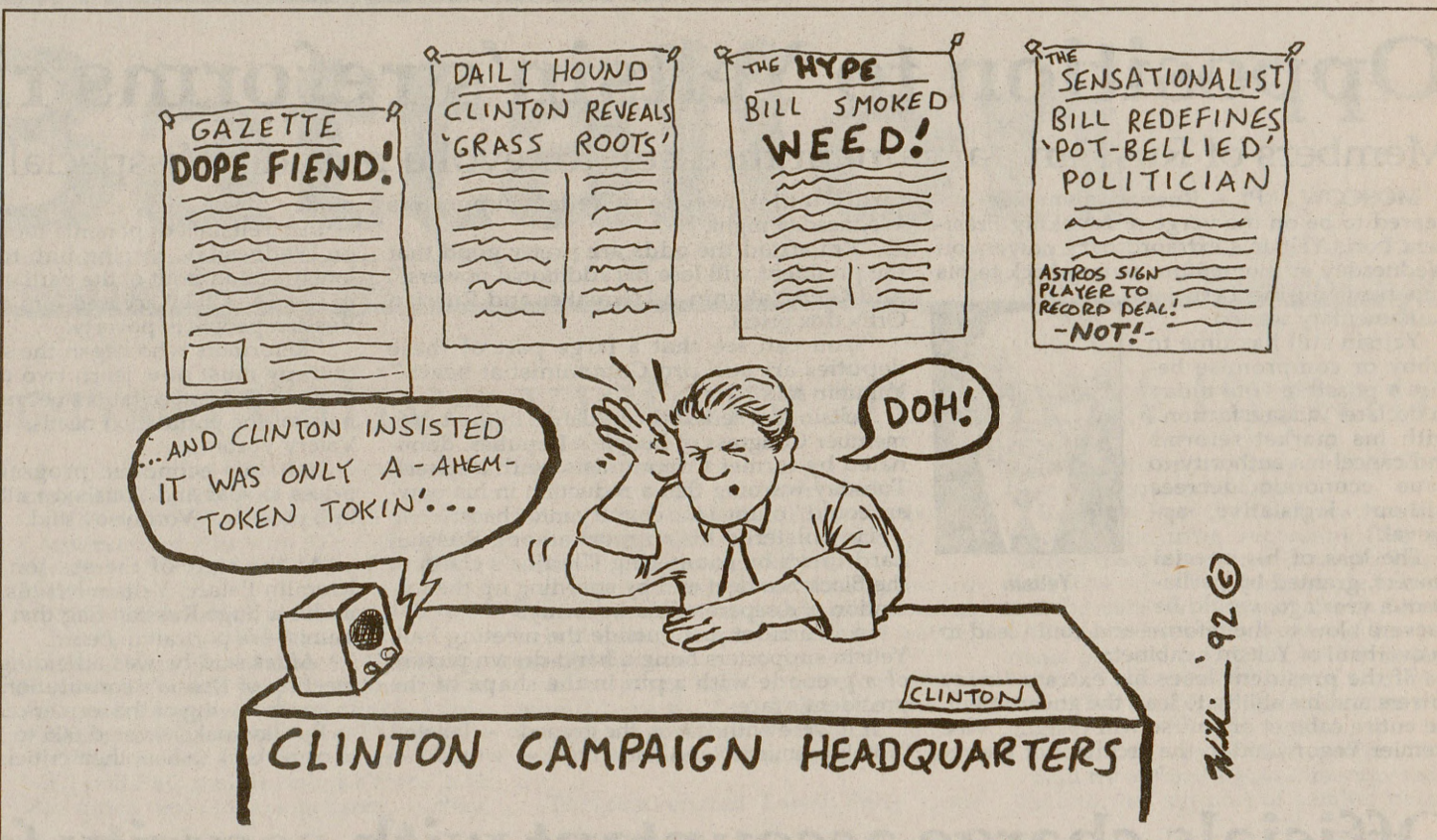
Another winner in this battle is a Georgia school district that after 23 years of court-supervised desegregation has yet to integrate.

"Federal courts have the authority to relinquish supervision and control of school districts in incremental stages, before full compliance has been achieved in every area of school operations," Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote in the majority opinion.

With this ruling, the Georgia school district will not be required to put into effect a busing plan to remedy the racial imbalance. Without integration of the district, the school system will remain as unequal as it did 23 years ago.

Busing students in to integrate schools is not always the best solution. Without court supervision, school districts might completely demolish busing systems, which is often the only way for minority students to obtain equal education opportunities.

If school districts will no longer be court supervised, it will be important for them to either retain their busing systems or begin distributing district funds on an equal basis to all schools, as well as requiring equal standards for teachers.



Of mice and me

Rodent madness pervades more than just students' homes

This is going to be fun. Last week, in the morning womb of my room, while drinking my morning cup of black coffee and perusing the news in my paper, The Batt, I discovered two new cohabitants moving into my room. Of course, they were

of the rodent variety, the scurrying type, and since they weren't really causing me to have a bad day aside from some unnecessary shock and trauma, I decided to leave them alone and maybe even feed them some cheese — attached to a poisoned-for-death mousetrap.

Now I realize all of you animal rights activists will have a beef with this column due to the graphic violence and mild language which will entail my tirade of death on your furry friends, so you might want to roll this paper up today, quit reading, and use it to line the cages of the rodents which you have recently freed from the bowels of science.

The rest of you, save for the rats and weasels in the audience (i.e. members of the Student Government), can sit back and enjoy this non-animal-rights column. By the way, Student Government readers, that was foreshadowing.

But first, a return to rodent madness. Normally, I wouldn't resort to violence in these instances of infestation, but since my room was in its traditional state of disarray, and since I didn't particularly feel like cleaning it up, I thought I'd take the lazy way out and flatten 'em like flies on a Mack truck windshield. I also talked to my apartment manager who benevolently presented me with a piece of cardboard with some glue

smeared over it — talk about faces of death, what a way to go!

Unfortunately, the vermin (the mice, not Student Government) have outsmarted my arsenal of doom. In fact, they even told me what I could do with my sticky-board: They left me little black, pointed presents on it, after gnawing on the moldy American cheese which was welded to the glue. I was impressed. Still am.

In fact, I even called in for some reinforcements. My friend, Chris, a marketing major, has decided to profit from my mousy misfortunes by building a better mousetrap for my rodential dismay. He wants to call his product "Pestilence" and thinks the mice would dig it more if it came in a wide variety of fashion flavors like "American Cheese Anarchy."

Unfortunately for Chris, I think no endless amount of "Bleu Cheese Bazooka"-flavored Pestilence could rid this campus of its rodent madness — namely that conflagration of vermin that now infests the new Student Services building (here it comes), i.e. Student Government.

Being from Louisiana, where the state legislature is primarily inbred and overwhelmingly stupid, I consider myself an expert on political pestilence and legislative vermin, and being at A&M right now feels a lot like home.

Talk about elections, had this one run on for a couple more weeks, we would have started to hear rumors that the candidates might have smoked marijuana in college — wait a minute, they are in college, aren't they? I mean, these people are supposed to represent the students, right? They're supposed to give the administration an idea of how the average student feels, correct? But do these people in any way, shape, form or substance really resemble the actual college student? They don't drink as much beer as we do, and they certainly are a helluva lot more anal retentive than the rest of us.

What do these people do in their

spare time, read The Batt? Well obviously, David "I ain't afraid of no Batt" Brooks does, but I think that's about all he does — that and pad his resume. Let's face it, these people have way too much spare time on their hands — and they take themselves way too seriously. What has the Student Senate actually done in the past four or five years that has had any meaningful effect on our lives? If they really wanted to represent the student body on an important issue, why don't they lobby to make A&M a wet campus instead of passing these weasel-brained resolutions about free speech for everyone who agrees with the Student Senate? I'd much rather drink beer — but I am having fun exercising my First Amendment rights right now.

Do these people actually have any power? Well, yes they do — in a sense — they have the right to allocate OUR student service fees to the projects of their choice — like the "No, we're not biased at all" Election Commission. Do you want these people handling our money? I don't! But fortunately for us, all of their allocations have to be agreed upon by the administration, and maybe the administration will elect to allocate our funds toward the extermination of the vermin infestation of the student senate — dare to dream! Dare to dream!

Or maybe the administration will throw some of our student service fees my way to help pay for my "I'm Glad-that-Ty 'I'm not illegal, just unethical' Clevelenger-is-Graduating" Party. It'll be this summer at my place, the rodent palace.

And don't blame me, I didn't vote for this plague upon our campus — I wrote myself in for Student Body President.

You heard it here first.

Feducia is a senior English and history major



Stacy Feducia

Mail Call

Show t-sips Ags' sportsmanship

In recent years, I have heard many stories of low-class, obnoxious behavior on the part of t.u. fans at football games and basketball games. Many of my friends have attended football games in Austin and had hot dogs and ice thrown at them. Just recently there have been letters published in several Dallas papers complaining about the behavior of t.u. fans at the SWC basketball tournament. I personally had not witnessed such behavior myself until I attended the baseball games between Texas A&M and t.u. at Disch-Falk Field in Austin on March 21.

I suppose that most of the t.u. fans were smarting from the loss to A&M the night before. However, I don't think that losing to A&M justifies their boozing when the Aggie fans tried to sing the Aggie War Hymn (a tradition before each game and at the beginning of the last inning). Nor does it justify that obnoxious person rudely telling me before I ever sat down that I needed to go sit with the rest of the A&M fans. What really made things worse was that it was not just the t.u. students exhibiting this obnoxious behavior — it

was 90 percent of all their fans in attendance at the game whether they were old, young, middle-age, graduate, or non-graduate.

I have always believed that in competition you need to learn how to be a gracious loser and a gracious winner. It was obvious to me on Saturday that the average t.u. fan is not only a very poor loser, but a very poor winner.

Texas A&M and t.u. are universities very rich in tradition. Both schools have a tradition of excellence in academics and athletics. However, it seems that t.u. has added another tradition — that of obnoxious fans at athletic events.

On April 10, 11, and 12, A&M will again play at t.u. in baseball, but this time it will be at Olsen Field in College Station. I am certain the stadium will be filled with enthusiastic Aggie fans who will show the handful of t.u. fans in attendance how to behave with class whether A&M wins or loses. After all, a university's greatness is not determined by what's on the scoreboard, but by the quality of its education and by the quality of the individuals who represent it, whether they are current or former students, professors, administrators, employees, or fans at athletic events.

K.C. Hubbard
Class of '93

PC has no place here on campus

My letter pertains to the political cartoon published April 2 dealing with the student government resolution against political correctness. I don't know if you realize what your cartoon suggests, but it implies to limit the First Amendment abridging the freedom of speech. Like it or not, a person has the right to say "homo, dyke, nigger, honky," etc. political correctness limits these rights and many more. One example is at Mildred Magowan School Library in Edgewater Park, N.J. Two books were pulled from the library's shelves "due to racial ethnic and sex bias." "Read About the Policeman" was pulled because it should have said "police officer," and "Negro in America" was also pulled because it should have said "black" or "African American." The purpose of the Student Senate resolution is to stop things such as these from happening at Texas A&M. That is why the Student Senate proposed the following insertion into the Texas A&M University Rules and Regulations handbook:

"As an institution of higher education devoted

to academic freedom as well as freedom of expression, it is inconsistent with the values of Texas A&M University for any group or individual within the university community to impose their opinions of 'Political Correctness' through intimidation or harassment upon any other part of the university community."

I totally agree. We shouldn't have government tell us what is correct. We should be smart enough to figure it out on our own.

Bret J. Ramsey
Class of '95

Have an opinion? Express it!

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers. All letters are welcome.

Letters must be signed and must include classification, address and a daytime phone number for verification purposes. They should be 250 words or less. Anonymous letters will not be published.

The Battalion reserves the right to edit all letters for length, style and accuracy. There is no guarantee the letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 013 Reed McDonald, sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111 or can be faxed to 845-2647.