

## EDITORIALS

### Gambling in Texas

#### Act will create revenue and jobs

In its next session, the Texas Legislature will debate the merits of the proposed Texas Riverboat Gaming Act, which would legalize Las Vegas-style floating casinos on Texas' inland waterways.

If this bill is approved by the legislature, the Texas Gaming Commission will issue maritime licenses for slot machines and gaming tables to operate around Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, Galveston and Corpus Christi. Voters will have the opportunity to decide the ultimate fate of the bill through local referendums in the cities seeking to receive such license.

Promoters of the Texas Riverboat Gaming Act are quick to point out that riverboat gambling, and the accompanying shoreline development around it, would generate 10,000 new jobs and an estimated \$800 million in annual tax revenues. Anything that would help Texas' ailing economy during these trou-

bled times would normally be seen as a godsend. Yet in regard to the Riverboat Gaming Act there is the suspicion that such a venture could bring with it unwanted side effects as extra baggage; namely crime, (both organized and random) graft, corruption and prostitution.

While these concerns are warranted in light of the gambling fallout that cities like Reno and Las Vegas must face, we would do well to remind ourselves that crime, corruption and prostitution are burdens which Texans have carried for many years.

The genesis of regulated riverboat gambling in Texas would not necessarily lead to a dramatic increase in such vices, if any increase at all. If approved, the Texas Riverboat Gaming act will only serve as a logical extension of America's open-armed embrace of gambling, which stretches from horses to football to bingo at the local Catholic parish.

### Eliminating illiteracy

#### Volunteers pursuing noble goal

As political campaigns whine about the pathetic state of affairs in the American educational system, Americans may take solace in the courage of a growing group of students who overcome the shame of illiteracy to enroll as adults in programs that teach them how to read and write.

One such program, the Literacy Volunteers of America, commenced its volunteer training program here in the Brazos Valley last week. Concerned Texas A&M students and Bryan-College Station residents enrolled in a six-session certification program in order to fill a volunteer slot in the Brazos Valley.

The drive and determination of these adult students serve as a testament to the importance of literacy in our culture. Ours is a literate na-

tion. Information is constantly conveyed in print through newspapers, books, advertisements, magazines, street signs, billboards — the list goes on and on.

For many illiterate individuals, to be basically blind to the wealth of important news and information available in print means the difference between unemployment and opportunity.

We commend the efforts of Literacy Volunteers of America and salute the time and commitment of Bryan-College Station residents and A&M students who recently enrolled in the tutor training program.

At the same time, we praise the courage of the individuals who brave the embarrassment of illiteracy and triumph over it through learning to read.

## Racism: not always the same tale

### Sometimes hatred is just a universal phenomenon

Something happened to me this past summer. I worked every day, all day in an office filled with many different women.

Some were my age. Some were my parents' age. Their heritages ranged from Mexican-American to Asian-American to African-American to Anglo.

I am, as is quickly observable, white — a white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant at that.

Since I have been at college, I have learned many things. The most important of these is the realization that if I believe in something, and know it to be true, I must be willing to suffer for it.



TONI GARRARD  
Columnist

Yet, none of this prepared me for the summer's lesson. You see, someone discriminated against me because I belonged to a different race. This may seem to be a non-event to some or, sadly, commonplace to others. But let me tell you, it was astounding to me. It kept me up at night. It occupied my mind when I needed to concentrate on work and demanded more of my time than I thought it worthy of owning.

I will not specify her race, because this is about discrimination, not a racial showdown. She was not an employer, but a fellow worker who had no authority over me and nothing to do with my duties.

We were introduced, she and I, on my first day at work. I determined to be on friendly terms with her because there was something intelligent in her face. The first time I spoke to her, she looked at me with eyes as calmly angry as I have ever beheld. She refused to be drawn into conversation and interacted with me as if I were literally dirty.

I will never know her, and somehow, she managed to hurt me.

It wasn't just me, either. It was all the women in the office who were "different" in her eyes. Many told me they had tried to befriend her, only to give up eventually. This woman talked to no one. She worked in solitude, like a machine, and read during her breaks. Her face hardly ever turned out of her cubicle, and her silence was palpable.

On one occasion, when one of her co-workers placed a hand on her shoulder while explaining a procedure, she jerked her body around saying, "Get your hand off me."

Another time, someone of the same racial heritage as

this woman invited everyone to a party. When one girl announced that she would be unable to attend, this woman immediately accused her of being a racist. In actuality, it was against the girl's religion to go to parties.

Many of the women had grown to spite the woman. They shared stories of her various rudenesses and laughed at her remoteness. Sometimes, I found myself joking with these women.

It seemed to be a way of handling her power over our state of mind. When I say power, I mean it. Her refusal to smile or laugh or greet or share was the most effective tool I have ever encountered.

Perhaps no man is an island, but this woman was, and she must have suffered for it. On my better days, I walked away from the laughing women, because I realized that something was broken inside of her.

Her weapon was a double-edged sword, and her effectiveness in shunning everyone else left her without one friend in that place. She must have hated every single day of work. Yet, she seemed to prefer the isolation.

Why?

I suppose if I knew the answer to that question, there would be no L.A. riots, no songs about killing cops or David Duke actually getting votes. What I do know is that it made me angry when she treated me like something less than herself. Very angry.

So, maybe I understand things a little better now. Perhaps I needed to taste the medicine before I could realize why so many are so bitter. It was an important lesson, and the way I think about some things changed.

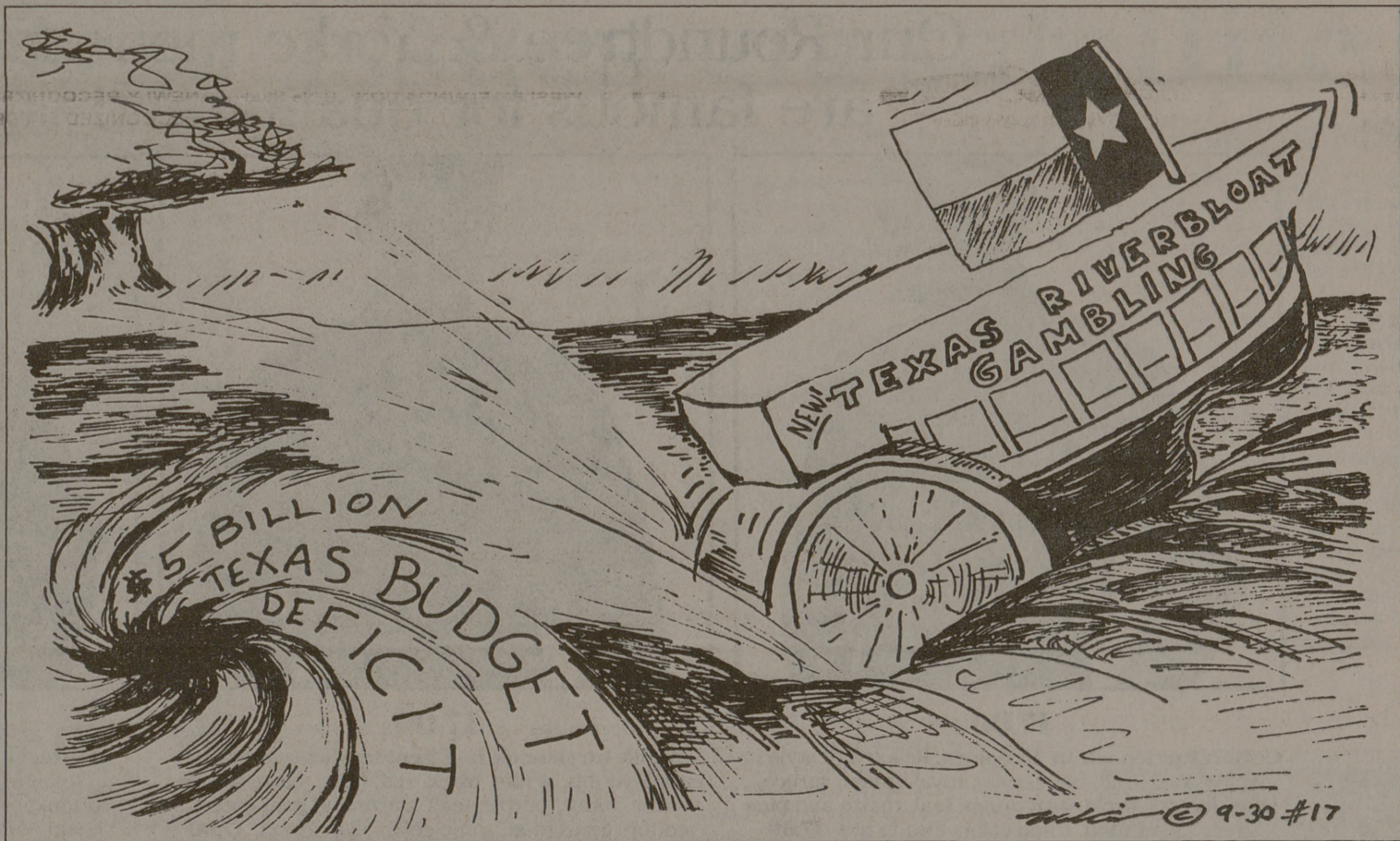
However, I still believe that anger cannot and should not ever be accepted as a justifiable reason for criminal action. Wrong is always wrong, and color does not have a thing to do with it.

I won't say anything about peace through understanding. It's not that there is no truth in that. There has to be. It's just that I presently feel uncomfortable being the one to say it.

You see, I spent the whole summer entertaining the idea of sitting down with this woman and saying, "Why do you dislike me so much? What happened to make you feel the way you do?"

But I never did. Not because I didn't have the chance, but because I was afraid. I hope the world can do a little better than I did.

Garrard is a junior speech communication major



## MAIL CALL

### Nasty remarks don't earn people's respect

On Tuesday, Sept. 22, while sitting at the Aggie Democrat table in the MSC, a group of three Corps members walked by and one commented, "They're a bunch of neo-Nazi socialists." Well, I had to differ. Maybe you slept through your political science classes through high school and here at A&M, but there are severe, fundamental differences between the Socialist Party and the Democratic Party.

I have never tried to impose my views and opinions on you or anyone else, and I would appreciate it if you would keep your small-minded, snide remarks to yourself. It seems that you have a problem with accepting people different than yourself and accepting dissenting views. Maybe I'm mistaken,

### Straight ticket voting not shooting straight

Over the past few months, I have had the pleasure of working with a candidate for the 272nd District Court, Judge John DeLaney. I found him to be a man of genuine sincerity and integrity, with a verifiable record of accomplishment on the bench. Since becoming a judge in 1983, he has introduced computer-assisted case management, telephone hearings, and other time saving techniques that have reduced civil case backlog by over 50 percent. In addition, Judge DeLaney has pioneered tape recording of trials, saving Brazos County over \$31,000 per year, speeding up appeals, and reducing risk of rever-

sals. What could threaten such a well qualified candidate?

The answer is the traditional straight ticket Republican vote on this campus. In spite of the fact that a majority of resident Brazos County Republicans and Democrats alike are supporting Judge DeLaney in his bid for re-election, many students on campus will vote for his opponent simply on the basis of party identification. These voters should consider the fact that judges' personal political philosophies do not affect the conduct of the government as much as other officials.

Unlike legislators and members of the executive branch, trial judges do not set state policy, vote on taxes, create government agencies, or even act together with other members of a party in reaching decisions. In fact, party labels tell nothing about how a trial judge rules on cases. Most decisions are dictated by law, so a judge's personal political philosophy seldom determines results. Selecting a judge on the basis of party label is clearly unwise.

I hope the student body will inform themselves on this important local race, and vote for the best qualified candidate. If they choose to do this, I'm confident they will vote for John DeLaney.

Russell Langley  
Class of '94

### To armchair coach: sit down and shut up

Reading the vile spewings of some two-percent sophomore turns my stomach.

Last Monday, Glen Portie and a few of his friends decided that they had some "wise words" for Coach Slocum and Jeff Granger, comparing Granger to that burnt-orange bozo, Peter Gardere.

Glen went on to say things about Jeff that the Battalion wouldn't even print. The fact is, Jeff Granger has more talent and class in his right pinky than Peter Gardere, period. After all, Granger is an Olympic contender, doing his best for the maroon and white.

R.C. Slocum, on the other hand, happens to be coaching for the fifth-ranked team in the nation. His recruiting record and Southwest Conference coaching honors speak for themselves. Add to this the fact that he has almost two decades of experience with the Aggies, and I think his qualifications for the job of head coach are clear.

What qualifies you to be coach, Glen? What's your NCAA record? I'll bet it's not 30-9-1. The Aggies seem to be doing just fine without your amateur, negative, derogatory, vulgar, and useless criticism.

In fact, the words you choose will do

more harm than good. Jeff needs more confidence and support, not the random ramblings of some armchair quarterback.

I would expect to see letters like yours in the Austin paper, not the Battalion. R.C. Slocum and Jeff Granger are doing their best for the team — maybe you should try the same approach.

Mark E. Mason '90  
James D. Legg '88  
graduate students

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