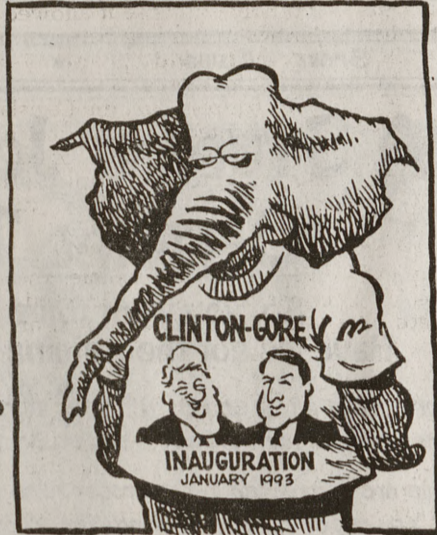


MARGULIES
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NEW JERSEY



EDITORIALS

Power to the people Keep election-year enthusiasm

Like it or not, Bill Clinton is president. Last fall, over 80 percent of all registered voters cast their ballots, and the majority voted for change. Clinton will be inaugurated today, and supporters affiliated with any political party can either fall asleep for the next four years or rise to action. Regardless, the political process will continue no matter who holds the office. The people's involvement in politics, however, will ultimately determine the outcome of the next four years. Republicans and Perot supporters could not sit in the dark and wait for the Democrats to fall from the prized presidential seat in order to see their policies enforced. Similarly, the Democrats cannot afford to grow too comfortable in office; the job has just begun.

Change does not happen without action, nor does it end with an election. Now is the time to act. some sort of change, and despite individual voter's opinions regarding the election results, change is still in the people's hands. The final bell hasn't sounded yet; the policies of the next four years have not been enacted. Policies are influenced by the voice of the American people and do not depend solely upon Congress or presidential appointees. It is time to take a stand and either support or criticize current national, state and local elected officials and their policies. Whether people join action groups or write letters to Congressmen, the result is still change. To do anything less than get involved is to surrender politics to the wind.

Financial aid crunch Minority students hit hardest

The all-too-familiar monster of rising tuition costs coupled with state budget cuts and a struggling financial aid system is raising its ugly head once again. This time, minority students appear to be the primary victims. In its annual report, the American Council on Education, consisting of 500 colleges and universities, warned Congress and the incoming administration that minority access to higher education is in grave danger. Unless America takes immediate action, the entire country will undoubtedly follow the lead of California and New York, where budget crunches and marked declines in minority enrollment have occurred simultaneously. Among President-elect Bill Clinton's many proposals is the creation of a National Service Trust whereby students will be allowed to borrow money for education costs and repay their debt either through public

service or payroll deduction when taxes are taken. This plan would replace the current federal aid program which has suffered greatly from surprisingly high numbers of students who default on their loans. It is time for that change, and who better to provide that than the man whose entire election campaign hinged on the promise of change? Clinton's ideas are innovative, and, properly instigated, the National Service Trust has the potential to be a very successful federal aid program. With current trends indicating that today's kindergarten students will have to cough up \$75,000 for a four year degree, all but a fortunate few students — minority or otherwise — face the growing threat that the cost of education will become insurmountable. We must enact and support new and better methods of slaying this dragon before it's too late.

Upjohn Co. pregnant with profit Birth control costs low-income women, taxpayers

Depo-Provera — Remember that name. It is a new contraceptive developed by the Upjohn Co. Of course, the pharmaceutical company originally released the drug for approval in the United States for treatment of kidney and uterine cancer, until they found out that the drug also prevents pregnancies — side effects can be so fun! Anyway, on Oct. 29, 1992, the Food and Drug Administration gave its approval for the drug to be sold as a contraceptive.

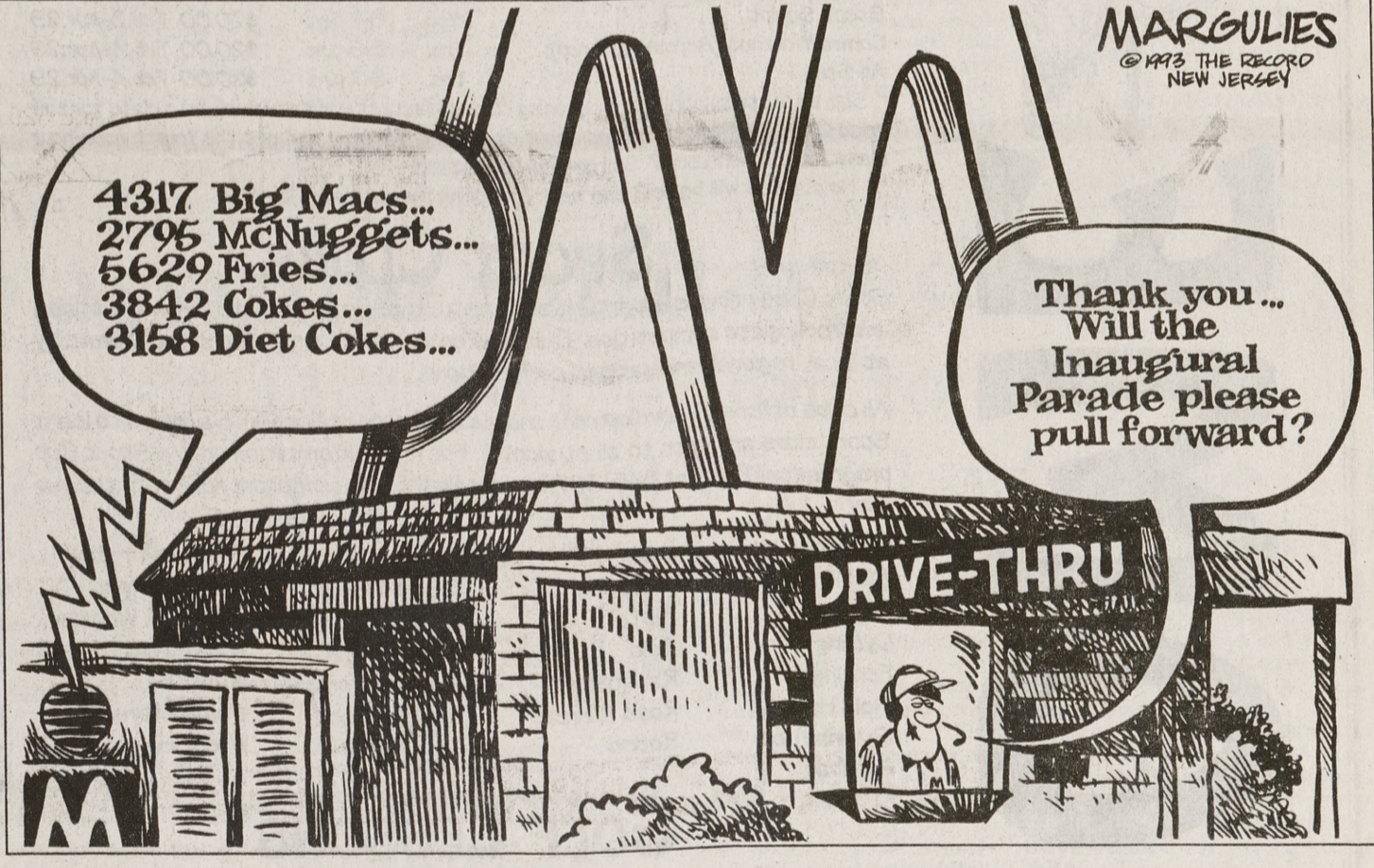


JOHN SCROGGS
Columnist

Depo-Provera is a synthetic copy of the female hormone progesterone. A 150 milligram dose injected into the arm or buttock of a woman every three months has proven to be more than 99 percent effective in preventing pregnancy. Of course, a needle is not the only thing Upjohn will be sticking women with! Upjohn is drastically increasing the price of Depo-Provera now that they have moved it into the birth-control market. Does the phrase "price-gouging" mean anything to this pharmaceutical giant? Jeri Rasmussen, executive director of the Midwest Health Center for Women, is quoted by the Associated Press as having said that Upjohn raised the price of the drug to cash in on women looking for a new method of birth control. She continued by saying that her clinic now has to pay \$34 a shot — the same shot that before FDA's second approval only cost \$12. After doing a little math, we discover a \$22 increase. Pure profit. Sounds like gouging to me. The official statement by the Upjohn Co. is, of course, that the increase was to help cover the cost of research and development for the product. Dr. Michael Policar, vice president of medical affairs for Planned Parenthood, said that Depo-Provera was researched decades ago. According to Dr. Policar, Upjohn could not justify such a remarkable increase. Numerous other members of the medical community expressed outrage at the gall of the Upjohn Co. Now consider one more thing — exclusive sales rights for three years. Yep, only Upjohn can use — or abuse — this new wonder drug for three full years.

The high success rate and the low maintenance method of taking the contraceptive make it ideal for many young, low-income women. The new price, however, makes it less than ideal. Yet, women using Depo-Provera won't be the only ones stung by this little bee. Taxpayers may also feel a sting. Minnesota, for example, reimburses the cost for women on medical assistance. The reimbursement rate skyrocketed from \$10.95 a dose to \$31 a dose when Upjohn became aware of the drug's potential. This will obviously come directly out of the Minnesota taxpayer's pocket. A little closer to home, or rather to your wallet, the federal government will also help pay for Depo-Provera through the Title X program, a federal grant designed to assist family planning agencies. The government has yet to set a reimbursement rate, but federal government means federal taxes. Looks like all of us are getting "injected in the buttock" by Upjohn's decision to make more money. The true pain, though, will be experienced by young women who are socio-economically disadvantaged but are still unable to qualify for federal or state assistance. They are the people who will have to come up with nearly a 200 percent increase. So, the facts are 1) Upjohn Co. is the only manufacturer of the only injectable contraceptive that is more than 99 percent effective, 2) Upjohn will be in total control of this market for at least three years, and 3) the president of the Upjohn Co. needs a little extra cash to remodel his office suite. I realize that this country was founded on a belief in capitalism and free market. I also understand that Upjohn has complete regulatory economic freedom. What is beyond my ability to comprehend is why Upjohn, a very powerful and affluent company, feels the need to do what is unnecessary for its survival and is so obviously unethical. Is there any reason beyond pure greed that Upjohn raised the price from an average of \$12 per injection to a steep \$34? Greed, although perfectly legal, seems to be such a petty emotion for a seemingly upstanding national leader in pharmaceutical needs. It's just a thought.

Scroggs is a senior English and philosophy major.



COLLEGE STATION, TX
JAN. 20
1993
MAIL CALL

Bad bowl coverage, open letter to NBC

I want to express my disappointment over your coverage of the 1993 Mobil Cotton Bowl. I was present at the game and witnessed the lack of sportsmanship demonstrated by members of the camera crew. During the halftime performance of the Texas Aggie Band, the on-field crew repeatedly disrupted the marching patterns of the band. The Aggie Band is a precision marching unit whose formations are close with no space available between members for one stationary person, much less for three camera crew members, a large television camera, and the associated camera cables. Close-up shots of the band members can be acquired from the edge of the formation rather than the middle of the

formation. This action was disruptive to the band as well as distracting to the audience in the stands. Nevertheless, although displeased, I gave the benefit of the doubt to the crew during the activity, assuming they were just using poor judgment to get a good shot of the band. Their motives were all too clear a few moments later. Your cameraman headed off the field directly over to the Notre Dame mascot and shared a triumphant "high five" salute in obvious celebration of the disruption of the halftime performance of the Aggie Band. The unprofessionalism of this display would be considered extreme at the local network level much less from the national crew. I also would like to point out that the Southwest Conference team is the host team of the Mobil Cotton Bowl — something your network seems to have

forgotten. Both teams — and bands — should be treated with respect and courtesy. Don't you agree? I have programmed NBC off both of my television sets at home and will encourage others to do the same.

Joyce Lynn Canion
Class of '81

Change involves socks, secretaries

It's time for change. And since Bill Clinton said this, I think we should expect him to begin this process. But I'm sure he'll come up with one of his signature lines, like the one that helped him through what has now gone down in the annals of history as "Bill the pothead in England" — where he claimed to have smoked marijuana but had done so after listening to a Judas Priest album for 16 hours straight. Thus he claimed we should never elect Judas Priest to the White House, though Clinton is still the right man. So I'm confident Clinton will come up with something like, "Well, I said, 'It's time for change,' but I was actually telling Al to change his socks. He

didn't want to because he wanted to conserve the water that would be used to wash his socks, that crazy earth lover." Then soon after, Ross Perot will go on "Larry King Live" and announce, "When I said 'It's time for change,' I meant change for everyone. Everyone should change his or her socks — not just Al Gore." Then we will hear from Dan Quayle: "I don't wear socks. Elect me back." If I am to believe that Clinton is really going to change things, he should start with the oath. I happen to know from private sources — Ross Perot — that one section of the oath specifically orders the harassment of weddings involving the families of presidential candidates who are running simply for the sake of publicity. Even with these few good qualities, I still believe the oath should be changed. One thing that I feel is necessary is that we remove Hillary Clinton from the stage when Bill Clinton is taking the oath. I don't want him mistakenly to think that this oath has to be followed with the same dedication as the oath taken during the marriage ceremony. And we all know how well that one has stood up. Next thing, let's make the oath more specific. I think we give presidents far too much credit for their intelligence. I

mean, former President Bush chose Dan Quayle as second in command — and Reagan chose Bush. I would also like Clinton to change the presidential parade. The parades have gotten very boring. Last time we had to watch Bush and Quayle, jumping in and out our their limousine in order to shake hands with the crowd. We don't want to see this again, Bill. Actually we want to see the secretaries with whom you'll be fooling around during the next four years. Even if those secretaries are male, put them out there! We want change.

John Prashant
Class of '94

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