

Friendship has gone to the dogs Daschund roommates teach lesson to canine-hater



ROBERT VASQUEZ
Columnist

I always considered myself a friendly sort — if not a sordid sort. But lately I've noticed a problem. I can't bring myself to say the three simple words: "I like you." Maybe it's a guy thing.

"If you want friends, you should show yourself friendly." I read that somewhere. Though I always thought I showed myself friendly, I've recently found myself trying to appear aloof, as though I didn't care about those around me.

I figured I was being friendly when I told my roommate that I would be happy to watch his three dogs while he visited his wife in Dallas.

He left me in charge. I hate dogs.

So, for the weekend my roommates were two Daschunds ("weinie-dogs") and a Weimaraner (a breed of dog which recently became popular when photographer, William Wegman, caught one of the species secretly trying on various articles of human clothing).

Now, these weinie-dogs and I were not on the best of terms to begin with. A few weeks ago, after a long, grueling 86-hour work shift, I staggered home, dinner in hand, ready to nourish my weary body, before collapsing into a very deep slumber.

The dinner: Shrimp Primavera. Six dollars it cost me, but it would be worth every penny. I LOVE Shrimp Primavera.

I placed the dinner on the dining room table, on which the dogs are not allowed — and they know that — and I went upstairs to change my clothes.

I HATE dogs... did I mention that?

Coming back down to eat my \$8 meal, I noticed the brown, furry culprits licking suspiciously close to a take-out box which was now on the floor. "Curses!" I thought (well, not the generic word, "curses" but very specific, appropriate curses)... my dinner! They almost ate my \$12 dinner! The box was still closed, so there was hope that the little devils had not devised a way to open the sealed container with their stinking, little, wet noses and get to my \$18 meal. I lunged for the box, fending for my dinner with gritted teeth — I could swear I actually barked. I opened

the box to find it was spotless, methodically licked clean by a cruel and very evil animal. Cujo.

Now, I was charged with Cujo's well-being. Yes, I was to make sure that the animals were alive when my roommate returned. But the shreds of life they would be clinging to was my decision entirely.

Yes, I fed them. And yes, I gave them water. But these dogs, I determined, would feel the hatred they spawned in me the day they ate my \$30 Shrimp Primavera.

I should have known that even my efforts to hate them would be thwarted by the beasts. For the rest of the weekend the dogs followed me around the apartment, as if each moment together might be our last. I'd yell. I'd shove. Couldn't the little dummies catch a clue? They never left my side.

Finally, Casey, the smallest of the weinie-dogs pushed me too far. Just as I was about to fall asleep, she barked. A loud, piercing "yap" of a bark which she released just as she found the hollow of my ear.

I jumped about 10 feet high. My apartment ceiling is only eight feet high. When I landed, I picked up the barking soprano and brought her face as close to mine as possible without actually sticking her nose in my mouth and I yelled, "Casey —!" I didn't know what to say, I was so angry. I paused only for a second, aching to fling the dog across my living room, to the wall where her blood stains might easily be covered by a framed poster or a new coat of paint. And in that moment of silence, the stupid dog began to lick my face. I was stunned.

Not only was this dog coating my face with doggy dribble, her tail was wagging as if I had finally begun to play her game. Her tail wagged so hard that her body began to wiggle, showing her excitement at my excitement. How pathetic. A wagging, wiggling weinie-dog. It was like a bad joke but I couldn't help laughing. This dog couldn't understand that she was overbearing. She just kept licking and wagging, happy to be there.

It seems that no matter what you do to a dog, it always comes back. It likes you and it's not afraid to show it. Like a good friend. No wonder they say a dog is a man's best friend. Thanks, Casey.

Vasquez is a senior journalism major

The Battalion Editorial Board

Jason Loughman, editor in chief

Mark Evans, managing editor

Stephanie Pattillo, city editor

Kyle Burnett, sports editor

Dave Thomas, night news editor

Anas Ben-Musa, AggiefLife editor

Mack Harrison, morning news editor

Billy Moran, photo editor

The Battalion



100 years at Texas A&M

EDITORIAL

Student loans

Senate revision improves NSI

President Clinton announced his National Service Initiative on May 6 and since that time it has been in committee. Last week the Senate Labor and Resources Committee headed by Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., approved a revised plan. Both Clinton's and the committee's plan have valid points but the answer to the financial aid question lies somewhere between the two.

As of now, the government's involvement in student loans is from a guarantor position — they insure the investments made by private financial institutions.

Under Clinton's plan the private sector would be phased out by the year 1997 and the government's role would drastically be redefined, moving them directly to the investor position. Given the government's history of mismanaging money, a full scale takeover may not be the best solution.

Under the committee's plan, however, there would be a cap placed on government involvement. This cap would be placed such that government's investment could not exceed 50 percent of the student loan volume.

Clinton's NSI consists of two pieces of legislation that would offer students several choices of loan repayment.

The first bill, the National Service Trust Act, would allow students to pay

back loans with one or two years of community service.

The second bill, the Student Loan Reform Act, would allow students to borrow money directly from their college.

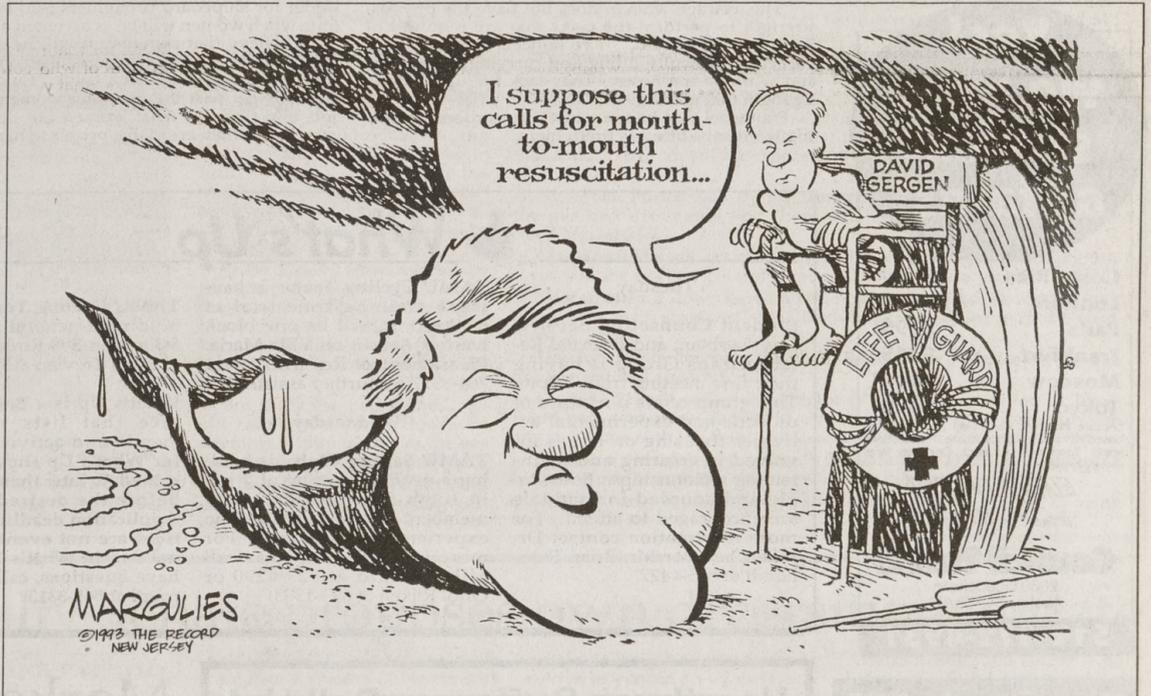
While these are solid ideas, the committee's plan expands on the first bill, making it easier for students to obtain these jobs.

The committee did not change the second bill, which as it stands would greatly benefit students, but did offer a unique plan that would allow students to repay loans through fixed income payments to the IRS.

Also, under the committee's plan, student's would benefit immediately from a 50 percent cut in first time fees. It is estimated that this alone will save students \$2.4 billion over five years.

While the existing student loan process is in need of an overhaul, a complete government takeover may not be the answer — especially when the majority of America would rather see spending cuts.

The best answer offered yet is the Senate Resources and Labor Committee's revised plan. Students would still be insured loans and the government would still be cutting expenses without completely taking over the loan process.



New multiculturalism requirement educationally unsound

Welcome to the culture war. It finally hit College Station, with quite a thud. On June 9 the University's Liberal Arts Council voted to force liberal arts majors to take six hours of courses in multiculturalism. At least three hours must deal with "racial, ethnic, or gender issues in the United States."

Despite the proponent's rhetoric about a world that is "increasingly globally connected," no student under the requirement must take any course in a non-American culture or region of the world. This makes the real agenda pretty clear: to force students to take the touchy-feely pish posh that is covered by the Golden Rule already.

One professor, speaking in favor of the mandate, asserted that A&M needs "A New Identity." I like that statement. It doesn't hide much, in sharp contrast to

the image of moderation and freedom of choice feigned by the Dean's Office. Other speakers agreed that the requirement would increase tensions on campus but claimed that they would be "positive tensions," a proposition worth recalling on down the road. I like that admission, too, because it is more truthful about what's afoot. A similar University-wide cultural re-education proposal is on the fall agenda of the A&M Faculty Senate.

Once upon a time, universities were about the best that had been thought and written, the open pursuit of the truth, the critical sifting out of error and non-political scholarship and teaching. While these traditions eroded badly at other universities, or collapsed altogether, A&M remained a little different, reluctant to follow every fashionable liberal agenda.

I hold three degrees in economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and survived the 1960s tumult of that star-crossed campus. I have been proud to have been in the economics department at A&M for 19 years. I have two sons who graduated from A&M. And it's excruciating watching A&M go down now.

If good Ags do nothing, A&M is about to become irrevocably captured by the

politicized activists on the faculty and the administration of the College of Liberal Arts.

Can feminist physics be far behind, the obvious answer to the white male-biased physics now taught at the university? Will A&M become better known across the state and nation for its institutionally-imposed social engineering instead of its mechanical, chemical and electrical engineering?

How can this intellectual fraud be stopped? And stopped it must be, because collectivist-minded faculty and administrators understand only one thing: insurmountable resistance.

Information is the number one weapon to stop the aggressors. Former students should express their distaste to university officials, including the Board of Regents, and hold up their financial support for A&M. Both student and faculty opponents of political correctness must organize opposition. At the faculty level, we must make the impending University mandate an issue for a faculty-wide referendum.

At UT-Austin a diversity requirement was defeated 2-1 in a faculty referendum after winning by nearly 4-1 in the Faculty Senate. Similarly, an A&M faculty-wide

vote on a cultural mandate would probably lose 3-1 or 4-1.

The authors of the liberal arts resolution claim that they spent two years researching programs elsewhere and came up with the best ideas. Yet only one program was mentioned as the model, namely Indiana University at Bloomington. Two hours in the library reveals that the IU-Bloomington Culture Studies requirement in Arts and Sciences resembles the proposal at A&M in only one dimension: two courses are required.

IU-Bloomington divides cultures into 20 groups (e.g., eight in West Europe, three in East Asia, two in the Middle East, etc.) and requires each student to take two courses in a single area like France, Japan or Latin America. The focus is clearly international. Only some of the courses in the last two categories — Indian Cultures of the Americas and North American Minority Cultures — may include the "racial, ethnic... issues in the United States" as their slant (but no hint of A&M's "gender issues").

Of course, the Dean of Liberal Arts says that the A&M courses were selected "hurriedly" as examples, a surprising admission after two years on the project.

A&M's liberal arts mandate is political

from start to finish, not motivated by scholarship nor sound pedagogy. We must remember that ultimately, Texas A&M's livelihood depends on the goodwill of the taxpayers of Texas. Are we entitled to this goodwill?

Thomas Jefferson wrote, "That to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves, is sinful and tyrannical." Shouldn't we focus on the business of sound analysis in mathematics, chemistry, economics and literature?

Reynolds is a professor of economics

Editorials appearing in The Battalion reflect the views of the editorial board. They do not necessarily reflect the opinions of other Battalion staff members, the Texas A&M student body, regents, administration, faculty or staff. Columns, guest columns, and Mail Call items express the opinions of the authors. The Battalion encourages letters to the editor and will print as many as space allows in the Mail Call section. Letters must be 300 words or less, and include the author's name, class, and phone number. Contact the editor or managing editor for information on submitting guest columns. We reserve the right to edit letters and guest columns for length, style, and accuracy. Letters should be addressed to: The Battalion - Mail Call 013 Reed McDonald / Mail stop 1111 Texas A&M University College Station, TX 77843