

Monday, November 8, 1993

THE BATTALION Editorial Board

CHRIS WHITLEY, editor in chief

LILI PHILLIPS, managing editor
 MARK EVANS, city editor
 DAVE THOMAS, night news editor
 ANAS BEN-MUSA, Aggie life editor
 MELINDA BLANCARTE, night news editor
 MICHAEL PLUMER, sports editor
 JACK HARRISON, opinion editor
 WILLIAM HARRISON, sports editor
 KYLE BURNETT, photo editor



EDITORIAL

Right to die

Kevorkian unjustly imprisoned

At this moment, Dr. Jack Kevorkian lies in a 10-by-10 jail cell while he continues to stage a hunger strike in support of doctor-assisted suicide. Americans should support Kevorkian's stand against the legal effort to deny people the right to die.

The right to die stands out as one of the most hotly debated topics in many years. Kevorkian supporters uphold the patient's choice to live or die as a necessary part of human dignity.

The important issue at stake here is choice. Kevorkian does not commit euthanasia, the "merciful" killing of a terminally ill victim. Patients choose to kill themselves while their dignity and self-respect remain intact from the ravages of disease.

Most patients choose to die because they want to spare themselves and their families the enormous, inevitable anguish of a long painful death. Kevorkian employs extensive research and intensive counseling to ensure the patient's soundness of mind in making the decision.

Kevorkian, a retired pathologist,

developed a so-called suicide machine consisting of a carbon monoxide breathing apparatus which the dying patient activates. Death results within minutes after the gas is released.

Nineteen people have committed suicide in Kevorkian's presence since 1990. Their conditions range from a 72-year-old cancer patient to a 30-year-old victim of Lou Gehrig's disease.

The controversy surrounding assisted suicide has intensified rapidly in recent years. An 8-month-old Michigan law banning assisted suicide resulted in the current charges against Kevorkian.

The doctor was free on personal bond while awaiting trial, but he went to jail Friday rather than pay a bail fee, which the courts increased because he continued to help patients commit suicide.

No one denies that everyone has a right to continue living. However, everyone also has the right to stop living. American law needs no power to trap helpless patients in a lengthy death when assisted suicide offers a peaceful, dignified release.

Facts, lies and the new health care plan

Government policies discourage personal responsibility

Like most of you, I am sick of hearing about Clinton's new health care plan. I know all about how great it's going to be under the new benevolent regime. I've heard all about the utopia where all of America's citizens are guaranteed their right to health care. We've read all about the brilliant job Hillary Clinton is doing designing the program.



ELIOT WILLIAMS
Columnist

What we haven't seen, however, are any facts. All we know is that somehow everybody will be covered; somehow everybody will receive better care, and somehow it won't cost us any more money. Right. And Beavis and Butt-head will soon receive the Nobel Prize for Physics.

The facts regarding this newest craze in American politics are much different than you may suspect. The hallowed rhetoric of "uninsured Americans" and "complicated insurance claims" hides the truth about health care — it's already a government controlled affair.

Let's analyze a few arguments made by Clinton supporters:

Fallacy one: health care is a right. Wrong. The undeclared premise here is that "government has the right to take the property of one person and give it to another to whom it does not belong, especially if it saves the other's life." Or, more appropriately, "government has the right to make you work for another man's sustenance."

Anyone who agrees with the fundamental truths established in the Emancipation Proclamation should understand the error in this premise — it is legalized slavery. There is no more a right to health care than a right to Taco Bell. Your need for food doesn't give you the right to force someone to farm it for you.

Fallacy two: an unacceptable number of Americans are uninsured. No.

The Wall Street Journal reported in April that some "83 percent of Americans have public or private health insurance or both, including the genuinely poor.... It turns out that half of the uninsured go without coverage for less than five months, and 70 percent for less than nine months."

If there is an uninsured class of Americans, they obviously don't stay that way for long.

The problem here is not the current system. Many of these people choose to stay uninsured. The Employee Benefit Research Institute has shown that "nearly half (of the uninsured) have household incomes above \$20,000 and 17 percent earn more than \$40,000."

Many of the uninsured are not too poor to afford health care; they simply don't care, or possibly, as Dr. Thomas Sowell, an economist for the Hoover Institute, wrote last June, these people "know that they are going to get taken care of anyway, one way or another."

Fallacy three: the private market has failed. Not at all.

"The explosion of health care costs is not the result of market failure, but is rather the direct result of major government-imposed distortions of basic market forces," says Dr. Henry Butler, professor of law and economics at the University of Kansas. "For years, government policies have subsidized demand through tax incentives and restricted

supply through licensing restrictions. The combined effect of these distortions is unambiguous — higher prices."

The government has banned medical advertising, which prevents consumers from comparing prices for medical procedures. It also enforces the American Medical Association's monopoly. In many states, midwifery is illegal. Citizens who are willing to sacrifice the luxuries of some health procedures are prevented from using this sometimes attractive and less expensive option.

Additionally, all state governments use the state Insurance Commissioner (IC) to enforce the insurance cartel. The IC ensures that all insurance policies sold in that state include coverage for the same type of care. A wide variety of potential choices in price and coverage with insurance policies have been outlawed.

Clinton's plan is clearly a step in the wrong direction, and I have touched on only a few of the half-truths, exaggerations and all-out lies that are consistently uncontested by the mainstream press.

We must reshape the system to allow more free-market solutions where every individual must take the responsibility for their own health. Government-run programs only displace that responsibility, causing unlimited demand for what appears to be free health care.

Americans today spend 14 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on health care while the government consumes more than 40 percent of the GDP. I ask you, which one is really out of control and in need of extensive reform — health care or the government?

Eliot Williams is a sophomore electrical engineering major



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, cartoons and letters express the opinions of the authors. The Battalion encourages letters to the editor and will print as many as space allows. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class, and phone number.

We reserve the right to edit letters and guest columns for length, style, and accuracy.

Contact the opinion editor for information on submitting guest columns.

Address letters to:
The Battalion - Mail Call
 013 Reed McDonald
 Mail stop 1111
 Texas A&M University
 College Station, TX 77843
 Fax: (409) 845-2647

Forget Fabio — life is a romance novel and you're the author

I've thought many times about writing a romance novel and making lots and lots of money fast. It seems like it would be so easy, because these books are all the same.



TRACEY JONES
Columnist

All of the men are rich, handsome, established, witty and a little dangerous — everything you want in a man. And they have all been playboys at one time — everything you probably don't want in a man.

Unlike in books, everything in real life does not always end happily. You don't find yourself stranded on some far away island or in some barren prairie land thinking forlornly that he doesn't love you, only to have him come rushing to save you — telling you over and over

again how much of a fool he has been to deny his love for you.

No. Instead, you find yourself sitting — bored out of your mind — at Hurricane Harry's and feeling just a tad bit bitter. (What can he see in her? Her hair is so big!)

Or worse: you see the person you used to go out with hitting on someone else, and you really liked this person. He made you laugh a lot and didn't demand too much from you. But either he left on his own, or you decided that it was best to separate yourself from him. Whatever the case, he's no longer with you.

This in itself would be such a good romance novel. You might not think of it this way, but it's true. I've come to the conclusion that we write our own romance novels quite frequently — every time we get our hearts broken or at the very least our pride stepped on.

Think about putting that down on paper: the number of bozos you've been through. I personally think that I've had an overabundance but ...

Consider the time I was stalked by a psychopath. This person would not take no for an answer. He would send little elementary school notes — cute if you were writing to a 13-year-old, but not a 21-year-old. Strike one.

He would also call at the oddest hours of the night asking if I wanted to go out

I still couldn't get rid of him. I even told him that I was illegitimate. He said that was all right; he couldn't read that well either.

some obscure club in one of the nearby towns. Strike two. And, finally, he wanted to take me to the dollar theater. Strike three.

I was rude; I was unresponsive, distracted, hateful — and I still could not get rid of him. I even told him I was illegitimate. He said that was all right; he

couldn't read that well either.

Needless to say, I was more than happy to get rid of this one.

A friend of mine had a young man that she'd met all of a few days earlier call to inform her that he was coming over to her apartment.

It was not "may I come over," but "I am coming over." So, at three in the morning, he started banging on her windows and doors until she went to the door and talked to him.

Another friend had the misfortune of dating one half of the real Beavis and Butt-head. She was thrilled to ax him also.

But what about those who are not happy to be independent of and the hurt that accompanies being set free?

Perhaps the heartache happens because we look at the situation too seriously. Is he the one? Is he going to be my husband?

Or for the many of us who attract sociopaths: Is he going to avoid the sanitarium long enough to marry me?

Why worry about it? There is a person who is perfect for you out there. It is

just a matter of choosing the right technique to find him. As a friend told me, for every nine no's, there is one yes. So, in theory you have to be turned down by nine people before you come across the one who says yes.

Try keeping a score card. Check off every rejection and be all right with it. Every rejection you take, you are putting yourself that much closer to finding the right one, and that will put your mind more at ease. You will be able to go out and meet people and learn to enjoy their company without worrying about being the right one for him so that he will be the right one for you.

There's no need to worry about rejection. Everyone experiences it; it's universal. And if you think about it, some of those rejections could make some pretty funny romance novels and make you very, very rich in the process. And if that happens, you can't say it was a total loss, can you?

Tracey Jones is a senior psychology major

COLLEGE STATION, TX
 NOV 8
 1993
MAIL CALL

Turnabout is fair play

I couldn't agree more with Tut Jones' Nov. 4 letter about sex, sports and capitalism. Sex sells, so that's why I'm proposing a new approach to daytime soap opera spots.

I can see it now. We see two normal-looking women eating lunch at an outdoor cafe. Suddenly, Jean-Claude — their sexy, muscle-bound Adonis of a waiter —

comes sauntering up to the table.

"Hello ladies," he says. "Would you care for some French Vanilla Cafe?" "Why yes!" the women chime.

He whips off his apron to reveal two packages of coffee tucked neatly in his G-string. Then the final shot... Jean-Claude holding a little single-serving envelope of instant coffee in his rather large, obvious package of manhood. "Try our tasty coffee," he says.

Wouldn't it be great?

There is a huge difference between a douche ad, which has nothing to do with and a beer ad that objectifies all women.

I'd watch jock itch ads all day long if it meant I never had to see another woman selling beer with her breasts.

Mr. Jones, until men are exploited by television advertisement the way women are now, you will never, ever understand

More Mail Call Page 8

Julie Chelkowsky's gripe. I'd rather that the advertisement industry divorce itself altogether from the practice of using sex to sell products, but until then, how about a little turnabout? It is, after all, fair play. By the way, women like sex and sports, too!

Julie Holden
 Graduate student

MSC wastes our fees

In reference to the Nov. 3 Battalion article about the MSC enforcing speaker rules, I must say this is one of the most ridiculous ideas the MSC has tried to pull off.

MSC Associate Director of Programs Kevin Jackson was quoted in the article as saying that in order to maintain a "certain environment" on campus, the MSC administration wants to control whether other student organizations can host a certain speaker or not.

The MSC already gets the lion's share of the student service fees that appear on our A&M bill, almost \$100 per Aggie per semester. I left the MSC Council in 1991 after it gave Caesar Chavez a \$2,000 speaker fee then immediately refused to allow another MSC committee to host a

famous "counter speaker," Rush Limbaugh. What a double standard.

I urge the MSC Council to concentrate on improving its own weak programs. When was the last time you went to a MSC meeting with over 20 students in the room? They need to get their act together before attacking big successes like the Oliver North program because they cannot take credit for it.

The MSC does not need another pointless program review system for outside organizations. And don't worry Ags, the College Republicans will bring Rush Limbaugh to G. Rollie White next year without the help of an outdated MSC bureaucracy and without wasting your student service fees.

Keith Kouba
 Class of '93