



# THE BATTALION

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## Court lets Mississippi keep abortion consent law

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Mississippi abortion law requiring unmarried girls to get both parents' consent or a judge's permission before ending their pregnancies survived a Supreme Court challenge Monday.

The court rejected a constitutional attack on the law, called by opponents "devastating" and "the most burdensome

of its kind."

Monday's action was not a ruling but an unexplained refusal to review the law. Nevertheless, both sides in the national debate over abortion were quick to react.

"The justices have denied young women their day in court," said Catherine Albisa of the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy. She called the Mississippi law "an onerous restriction" that is more burdensome than any other state's.

"Most young women can and do consult with their parents when they are facing an unwanted pregnancy," Albisa said. "But for those who legitimately fear the outcome of involving one or both parents, this law is devastating."

Burke Balch of National Right to Life Committee said Monday's action was "not surprising."

"What is surprising is how successful abortion advocates have been in tying up

these laws in court after the Supreme Court strongly indicated... that two-parent consent laws with (judicial) bypass would be constitutional," Balch said.

The Mississippi law was enacted in 1986 but had been tied up in court since a federal judge barred its enforcement that year.

The law requires doctors to obtain written permission from both parents before performing an abortion on a girl who is unmarried, under 18 and not support-

ing herself.

A judicial-bypass provision allows such a girl to avoid telling either parent if the girl gets a judge's permission. The law requires that the court proceedings be speedy and confidential.

The law also requires judges to grant permission if a girl shows she is mature enough to make the abortion decision on her own or proves an abortion is in her best interest.

## Look out for the mud!



Kyle Burnett/The Battalion

Brooks Booker, a junior biomedical science major, takes a slide through a large puddle of mud at the Marine Obstacle Course Monday morning. Booker completed the mud slide of the obstacle course as part of a venture dynamics class.

## Clinton presses for NAFTA votes

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Struggling for votes with time running out, President Clinton leaned on Democrats opposing a trade agreement with Mexico Monday and tried to hold Republican supporters. The White House tried to pick up farm-state votes with a wheat deal.

Two days before the showdown, the outcome rested with 42 House members who said they were still undecided. Both sides said they had the votes to win.

Clinton argued there was nothing to lose by giving the agreement a chance. "If all the nay sayers turn out to be (correct), the treaty gives us a right to withdraw in six months," he said.

"Why don't we just wait and see whether we're right or they're right?" Clinton said to small-business owners. "Ring the phones up," he implored, seeking to increase pressure on fence-sitting lawmakers.

The White House claimed to have picked up 15 votes over the weekend.

An Associated Press count found 206 lawmakers saying they would vote against the agreement or were likely to do so. On the other side, 186 lawmakers said they would vote for it; 42 were undecided. Clinton needs 218 votes to win.

Congressional sources said the administration struck a deal with congressmen from Oklahoma and Texas to impose quotas on durum wheat if Canada does not change its pricing policies within 60 days. Rep. Larry Combest, R-Texas, cited that agreement in announcing his support for Clinton Monday.

"They've done a deal with everybody but working people," charged House Whip David Bonior, D-Mich., a leader of the anti-NAFTA forces. But he added, "I think we're going to win."

On the Capitol's West Front, several hundred civil service union members, mostly from New York state, chanted "Dump this NAFTA," and carried placards depicting a monkey perched on the shoulders of a hardhat-wearing worker.

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## Genetic cloning will cause ethical dilemmas, professor says

By Geneen Pipher

The Battalion

Earlier this month, researchers at George Washington University announced that they were able to successfully split a human embryo sparking waves of controversy and debate within the scientific community over the cloning of human tissue.

Dr. Jim Wild, head of Texas A&M's genetics department, said scientists have long been aware of the possibility of splitting human

embryos.

"They've known for a long time that it is possible to take an egg and cut it in half in turn making two identical calves for example," Wild said. "The same thing happens naturally when you produce identical human twins."

"The reason this got so much publicity was that they did it with human embryos instead of a dog or a cat or some other animal."

The experiment essentially brought to light the possibility of making test tube twins although the embryos that were split were

genetically unbalanced and would not have survived longer than a few days, Wild said.

"If the two eggs would have been normal, which they were not, it would have been possible to transplant them into a female by normal techniques and expect to produce identical twins from one egg," he said. "I don't believe, however, that there are any plans to make identical twins or freezing one for an organ storehouse as has been suggested."

Don Self, professor of philosophy and head of the Department

of Humanities in the College of Medicine, said some scientists may use this new technology to create babies to order.

"The concept of babies to order is probably going to be the case down the line a little bit as the technology develops and as gene therapy improves," Self said. "We will probably get to the point where we're able to insert certain genes into a developing embryo to give it certain characteristics, essentially babies to order."

Self said many new ethical

dilemmas will come along with such concepts.

"A lot of people consider this to be dangerous and ethically problematic, thinking that it is the search for a super race," he said. "I'm not all that convinced that it is necessarily bad because all you're doing is replacing the randomness of nature with some thought and intention, we do that all the time in lots of different things."

The world is ready for new technology and can handle the problems that could arise, he said.

"The world is very capable of dealing with the ethical ramifications that have resulted from science and technology through the years," he said. "We have adapted to the splitting of the atom and development of nuclear power, which is sometimes used in war and is sometimes used to light up dark cities."

"I think the human spirit has the same capabilities of dealing with these kinds of evolutionary changes in much the same way as we have throughout recorded history."

## Tuberculosis may become incurable, health group says

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Tuberculosis, the "world's most neglected epidemic," could be killing 4 million people a year within a decade unless Western countries come up with \$100 million to fight it, the World Health Organization said Monday.

Drug-resistant strains are increasing so rapidly that without fast action, a once easily cured disease is on the verge of becoming incurable.

"The world procrastinated on AIDS. Don't let the same thing happen with tuberculosis," said Richard Bumgarner, deputy director of WHO's TB program.

Tuberculosis kills more people — 3 million a year — than all other infectious diseases combined. About a third of the world's population is infected with the TB germ and 8 million people get sick every year.

Yet just \$1 of every \$30 spent on infectious diseases goes to the deadly lung infection, WHO said.

The world gave developing countries \$16 million in aid to combat TB in 1990, a year that 1.9 million died from TB. But the world came up with \$77 million to fight leprosy, which killed 2,000 people that year, and \$185 million for AIDS, which killed 200,000.

"Something is seriously wrong," said Dr. Arata Kochi, WHO's TB chief.

Developing countries need \$100 million a year to fight TB successfully, WHO estimated. With that money, TB's toll would drop to 1.6 million deaths annually by the 21st century, Bumgarner said. Without it, the toll will rise to 4 million annually, he said.

Indeed, U.S. officials had virtually stopped funding TB work in the early 1980s because the disease had become so rare here. But it is rebounding, with 26,763 cases here last year, a 20 percent increase from 1985.

Tuberculosis cures start at just \$13 a patient in some developing countries, and \$100 typically buys 29 healthy years for TB patients, compared with 11 years for AIDS patients and two years for malaria victims.

But the costs skyrocket with the rapidly increasing drug-resistant strains of TB. When people don't finish their medicine, their TB mutates to become drug-resistant and the strains spread. In New York it costs \$180,000 to treat someone with drug-resistant TB.

## Police investigate deaths of psychic's followers

### Some victims' families say woman used mind control for financial gain

The Associated Press

DALLAS — Some current and former followers of Terri Hoffman say she's a psychic. Others contend she's a phony who used her "powers" for financial gain.

Ten associates of the self-proclaimed spiritual adviser, who went to federal court Monday on bankruptcy fraud charges, have died over a period spanning more than a decade. Victims include two of Hoffman's husbands.

Families of some former followers contend the 55-year-old woman used mind control to profit from and cause untimely deaths or suicides of the 10 associates.

Four of the victims committed suicide. Most left everything to Hoffman, a high school dropout who claims she can communicate with an assortment of spirits.

The Dallas County district attorney's office has been investigating the deaths, but no charges have yet been filed in any of them.

Wearing a black dress, Hoffman sat impassively and gazed downward while her defense attorney, Shirley Baccus-Lobel, and prosecutors questioned 47 prospective jurors in the bankruptcy fraud case.

Baccus-Lobel said jury selection was "about what I had expected," with more than a half-

dozen of the prospective panelists saying they were familiar with the psychic's legal battles.

Questions, including whether prospective jurors could render a fair and impartial verdict in the case, were "the same types typically asked in a case like this," she said.

But Baccus-Lobel, who had instructed Hoffman not to talk to reporters, said she was not familiar with her client's claim of psychic powers.

Hoffman declined questions later as she re-entered the courtroom.

Prosecutors had said the government's case stemming from Hoffman's 1991 bankruptcy would probably not involve any religious or mystical themes.

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## Bishops rally for colleague accused of sexual abuse

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. bishops rallied around embattled Chicago Cardinal Joseph Bernardin Monday, standing and cheering for their colleague accused of sexually abusing a teenager more than a decade ago.

While abuse victims stood outside asking the church to let the courts decide, some 300 prelates opened their fall meeting expressing their faith in Bernardin's innocence.

"To Cardinal Bernardin, we offer our support, our full support,"

declared Archbishop William Keeler, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In another development, a Chicago archdiocesan panel concluded after an initial inquiry that Bernardin does not pose a risk to children and should not be placed on leave pending further investigation.

At the bishops' meeting, a tired-looking Bernardin, 65, showed the turmoil of the last three days on his face as he again faced the media to profess his innocence.

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