

**THE BATTALION Editorial Board**

JULI PHILLIPS, Editor in chief

 MICHAEL PLUMER, Managing editor  
 BELINDA BLANCARTE, Night news editor  
 HEATHER WINCH, Night News editor  
 TONI GARRARD CLAY, Opinion editor

 KYLE BURNETT, Aggiefife editor  
 DENA DIZDAR, Aggiefife editor  
 SEAN FRERKING, Sports editor  
 WILLIAM HARRISON, Photo editor  
 JENNIFER SMITH, City editor

## Weathering a storm of embarrassment Numerous incidents diminish A&M's good reputation

As Aggies, we live under a code of honor — but apparently this code does not apply to those who are not students. The actions of the faculty and administration in the last several months attest to this.

Last semester A&M was rocked by the highly questionable activities of Dr. John Bockris, who accepted \$200,000 in donations for attempting to turn mercury into gold. Despite protests to the administration by Dr. Dawn Wakefield, former director of development for the College of Science, the University allowed Bockris to proceed with his dubious research. Wakefield later was fired, and the Securities and Exchange Commission is investigating the matter.

On Jan. 5, a paper titled "The Value of Reputation and Academic Integrity of the University" was circulated among administrators and faculty. In it Joan Kulm, a lecturer in the College of Education, and Gerald Kulm, a professor at the same college, write that an institution's reputation is vital to both its image and its financial well being. Reputation, according to the Kuls, is not only a concept but a measurable asset that is used by academic administrators and government officials to determine levels of funding for different departments and programs.

"A&M has its strengths, especially in engineering and science. A&M is up there in research funding received," said Gerald Kulm. "But its reputation is still trying to develop. It's

not quite there yet."

However, developing a reputation is only part of the picture. As in business, maintenance of that reputation is necessary. Joan Kulm said that if an institution is plagued with enough scandal, the strength of the school's integrity can evaporate.

"Your reputation can go down rapidly," she said.

The Bockris fiasco isn't the only one A&M has weathered. The Dallas Morning News reported Saturday that an A&M lobbyist, Timothy Shaunty, is being investigated for misappropriating about \$8,000.

Ethics is the key to attaining the respect this institution desires, but just as national recognition eludes A&M, so does the ability to avoid dubious conduct. The leadership in this area should fall on the shoulders of the administration. Apparently, many members are unwilling to take on the task, as the Bockris fiasco proves.

A&M's reputation has already suffered because of the administration's failure to make our library a priority. The Sterling C. Evans Library budget has been cut consistently, and the cuts have resulted in the cancellation of subscriptions to vital periodicals. Evans Library currently ranks 49th among national university libraries. A&M's main campus ranks fifth in the nation in student population. It is obvious to most students at A&M that Evans Library is woefully inadequate to supply the needs of its student body.

The University has endured yet another embarrassment with the closing of the Mosher Institute for International Policy Studies last August. The Mosher Institute was recognized across the nation for its studies and research in national security interests of the United States. Although its reputation added to the prestige of the school,

officials decided not to commit the funds necessary to keep the institute in business. Today, it is alive in name only until they find some other way to raise funding.

Perhaps one reason for this continuous string of embarrassments is the Board of Regents. As the governing body for Texas A&M University, the board has the responsibility of controlling the University's budget and most of the matters concerning its operation. It is an important job and should be carried out by people highly qualified in university management, right?

Wrong. A person need be little more than a qualified voter to be proffered to the governor for confirmation as a regent.

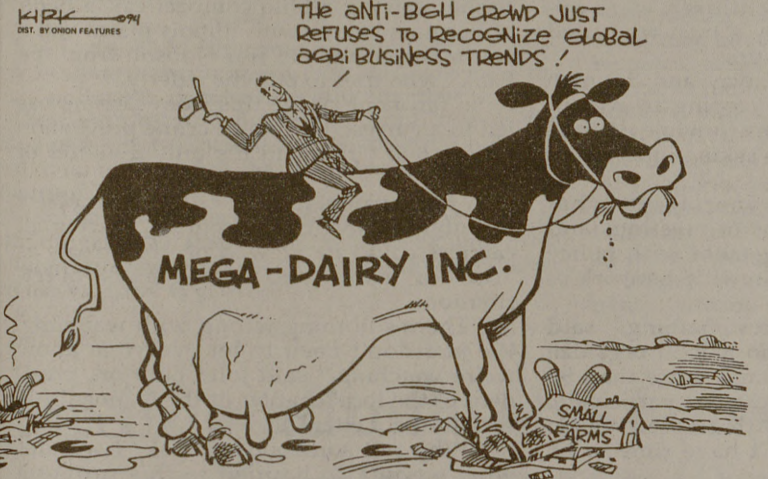
Yet there have been complaints of unnecessary regent interference in administration duties. Gerald Kulm said the regent's micro-management of the faculty is different than that of any school with which he has ever been affiliated.

"If potential faculty members knew how the regents handle their professors, no one would come here," he said.

Last Tuesday, officials announced the scheduling of a workshop to inform regents of tenure policies for professors — policies spelled out in A&M's policy and procedures manual. It seems that board members did not want to grant tenure because they want the ability to fire at will whomever they desire.

The reputation of this university and the value of the diploma one receives here have been jeopardized. Ideally, the student is the University, and our obligation is to let school officials know that such dubious activities are unacceptable. If we don't act, then the respectability of our education will continue to be devalued.

Roy L. Clay is a senior history major



## EDITORIAL

### Bad judgement

#### Court sets a dangerous precedent

Monday's Supreme Court ruling allowing anti-abortion protesters to be sued under federal racketeering laws may have a disastrous effect on free speech in this country — regardless of how one stands on the abortion issue.

The Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) was passed 24 years ago in order to control organized crime. The Court's decision now allows members of anti-abortion groups to be sued under RICO legislation as conspirators even when they are not physically present or even aware of a protest.

The scope of this ruling could reach well past anti-abortion groups. Greenpeace, labor unions or any organization which is considered to be on the fringe of today's society could be affected. Under RICO legislation, it only takes a few fanatical members of an otherwise peaceful, law-abiding organization to ruin it for all. This will almost certainly deter many activists, on a number of issues, from becoming involved for fear of being held responsible for the occasional uncontrollable factor.

In addition, any damages will have to be paid in triple. As almost any protest organization

is non-profit, one large monetary judgment could easily force a group into bankruptcy and out of existence. Many groups, the Catholic Church for example, could be named in lawsuits if they are affiliated with a group's activity.

Although this decision was intended to prevent law-breaking radicalism among activists, it sets a dangerous precedent. No one believes protesters should be allowed to harass, assault, murder or riot in the name of free speech, and this is exactly why we currently have laws governing individuals' actions. Any criminal actions which occur during a protest can be prosecuted effectively without invoking RICO.

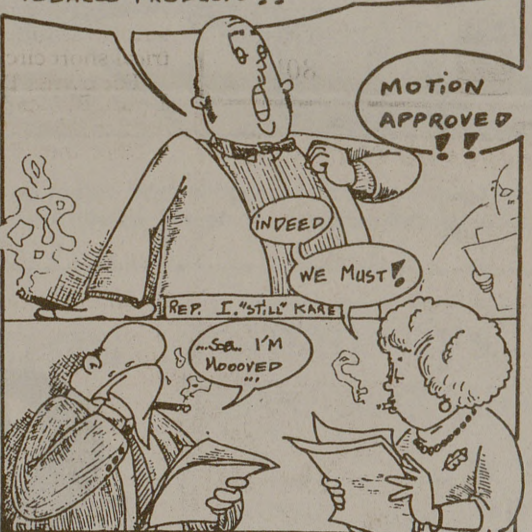
RICO no longer attacks just greed; it attacks ideas. If such a ruling had occurred prior to the turbulent 60s, imagine the smothering effect it would have had on events such as war protests and civil rights demonstrations, such as those led by Dr. Martin Luther King — which did indeed disrupt businesses from time to time.

No one will deny that some protesters have gone too far — which is why there are laws to punish them. But the Court should target criminal actions, not ideas.

IT IS THE DUTY OF THIS CONGRESS TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF OUR CHILDREN, THE FUTURE OF AMERICA! WE MUST ACT TO LEVY A "SIN" TAX ON TOBACCO PRODUCTS



IT IS THE DUTY OF THIS CONGRESS TO PROTECT THE LIVELIHOOD OF FARMERS, THE VERY FABRIC OF OUR NATION! YES! WE MUST SUBSIDIZE TOBACCO FARMERS WHO ARE BADLY HURT BY A RECENT DECREASE IN CIGARETTE SALES AND OTHER TOBACCO PRODUCTS!!



## And you think you've got problems with relationships

My friend Leigh (not her real name) has had some crazy experiences with men in her short life.

It all started with Mike in the ninth grade. They started dating after he called Leigh at 2 a.m. to tell her that his father just died, and he needed a friend. She felt sympathy for him, and they kissed, beginning a two-and-a-half year relationship and a pattern of falling for troubled men.

Leigh noticed Mike frequently was covered in bruises. At first he said they were football injuries, but later he confessed that his stepfather beat him. Eager to help, Leigh gave him pamphlets on child abuse which he passed on to his parents. Mike's

mother decided Leigh was the evil one.

Mike started running away from home, always to Leigh's house. He got caught repeatedly until finally she managed to hide him in her closet for two weeks. When the police found him, they took both Mike and Leigh to jail. Mike said he'd rather stay in jail than go home and eventually was sent to live with an aunt and uncle — on the stipulation that he and Leigh never see each other again.

Soon after, Leigh met Nick, a 21-year-old theater technician who was an alcoholic. He was tall and skinny, had hair that reached down to his waist and wore a straw hat with flowers and theater pins stuck in it.

She started spending every moment with him, and two-and-a-half weeks into their relationship, Nick told her about his wrist-slitting problem. He made her a prom dress so that she could go to the junior prom with Mike, who had sneaked into town for the occasion. Then Nick broke up with her because he was jealous.

A week later, Leigh started getting roses

every day at school, followed by love notes and a marriage proposal. She finally had to get a restraining order placed against Nick when he became violent.

Leigh met C.D., number three, at a pool hall, where he told her his parents had kicked him out of the house at age 14, and he had dropped out of high school to become a professional clog dancer. She was attracted immediately.

Everything seemed perfect at first — he sent roses, left poetry and cooked candlelight dinners. The fact that he was a devil worshiper didn't faze her.

Leigh soon became bored because all C.D. ever wanted to do was clog dance. She gave him an ultimatum: clogging or me. He chose clogging.

Next came Nathan, who came to her af-

ter breaking up with his girlfriend of two years. He confessed to Leigh that his older brother had molested him as a child. They started dating soon after. Everything seemed perfect at first — he sent roses, left poetry and flowers in her car and cooked candlelight dinners for her.

The fact that he was a devil worshiper didn't faze her since he seemed so ultra-conservative. The week of the senior prom, Leigh walked in on Nathan having sex with another young woman.

Nathan, who was voted "nicest guy" by his high school class, lied to everyone and made Leigh look horrible. Luckily for her, Leigh's friends rallied to support her and made hundreds of photocopies of the confessional notes Nathan had written to her, which they then distributed around the school. A friend took Leigh to the prom.

In college, Leigh decided to avoid men with emotional problems. She ended up with what she calls "the most immature man, relationship-wise, of my life."

She and James casually spent time together until the day they kissed. After that,

he didn't call her for a week. When she finally contacted him, James told her that he wasn't ready for a serious commitment or marriage.

Leigh was flabbergasted and told him, "It was just a kiss!" They started spending time together every night, while James continued to send conflicting messages. He told Leigh that if he had to say he loved someone, it would be her. Two days later he confessed that he had had sex with another woman the night before.

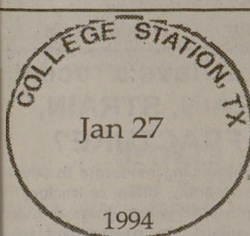
For Christmas, James sent her two dozen roses with a card attached that read, "Merry Christmas, friend." Now she wonders how to break up with a man she never dated in the first place.

After years of bad relationships, Leigh has come out of her experiences a strong-minded, witty, successful person. And for someone who's only 20, she has quite a life story.

Lynn Booher is a sophomore psychology and English major



LYNN BOOHER  
Columnist



## MAIL CALL

### Strong words for the working students

Seeing how many clubs and organizations are on campus, I would like to suggest the addition of one more.

I am a full time student who is working full time as well. I am not working because I want to, but because I have to. Doing this makes my goals a little more challenging to achieve and is hell on grades.

Being married for over four years and the addition of my 10-month-old daughter has not made things any less complex. My explaining this is not because I want anyone's pity or sympathy, but because it describes the basis of my club.

I am really peeved about hearing so many students crying about how difficult it is to get up early for class and how they never have time to do anything because of meetings and activities. There is nothing wrong with being a part of something, but give us all a break. Stop your belly-aching

and whining, and suck it up and deal with it. Time is a luxury that some of us are not fortunate enough to have. So, if you do have time, enjoy it while you can.

I would like to found the STRONG club. It is for the STUDENTS who work for a living and do not have time to be in a club. The only requirements are that you are a student and are supporting yourself. We probably will not be able to find a meeting time that doesn't conflict with some member's schedule, so we will not have meetings. Most members can not afford to pay membership fees and our treasurer does not have time to collect them anyway, so we will not have any fees. If you fill the requirements, and want to join, you are already a member!

Stay strong and keep on pressing on.

Steve Black  
Class of '92

### Breaking rules is not 'only being human'

Though I find it very honorable to defend the weak, I can not agree with you, Brent Watson. For the seventh time in the history of Texas A&M, the football program finds itself on probation.

Texas A&M is a school that prides itself on the honesty and integrity of its students. Do you actually expect the student body to support the actions of those involved? I cannot and will not, but you not only support them but also justify their actions. You feel they deserved the money; you say it was payment for "busting their butts" all year long. But, my friend, is it right? Remember, the ends do not justify the means. (Not even to win a precious football game.) You even include us all

into the scenario. You say that if we were in a similar situation, we would do the same thing. Brent, never assume that all of humanity would act as you would. There are still many people who are honest. There are still many people who play by the rules.

You justify their actions by using the old cliché, "After all, they are human; nobody's perfect." Good gracious! When is anyone going to take responsibility for their actions? What did they do wrong? By taking money for work not performed, they DISRESPECTED their school, their fans, and worse of all their own teammates. You even quote the "Spirit of Aggieland." Yes, Brent, we are Aggies, the Aggies are we; but while some players are Aggies, others just play football for A&M.

C. Brian Bass  
Class of '95