

# From sports to politics, egos inflate every problem

Everyone is quite familiar with the many statewide scandals Texans have had to deal with lately. People have been so bent on doing things their way around here that we often wonder if anybody in charge of anything has any brains at all or if they just allow their ego to run their life.

**JOSEF A. ELCHANAN**  
Columnist



are caught being promiscuous — not very heroic pursuits. Yet, sports stars really believe that making people pay higher prices for sports tickets and charging kids for autographs is all

going to do about everything from health care reform to international crisis, it seems that all either group wants to do is put down the other so that A) they will look like big shots and B) they will win more elections.

Now, let's say that somebody wanted to run for public office without having to appease a political party and simply do a good job, would they succeed? Probably not. Only people with bigger egos then

port my opposition in this subject."

It will never happen, because these people have to believe in themselves and their own infallibility in order to do their jobs. If they make a mistake, they have to justify it to protect themselves from external forces and from letting themselves admit that they can fail.

How far can this kind of thing go? How about religious leaders who go around telling people to give money to them for an inside line to heaven? Even further, what are all these ethnic wars, besides one side saying, "I am so much better than you, that you shouldn't be allowed to live here, or even live at all." What gall! It all starts when people stop thinking and start pushing everyone else around for their own benefit.

So much of business and government, throughout the ages, has been dominated by small people with inflated visions of themselves, that one often can wonder whether they will ever go away.

Maybe we are all lucky that sports exist, so more of these people will have something non-destructive to do.

*Josef A. Elchanan is a senior business management major*

Let's take this Dallas Cowboys thing for instance. Two grown men, who are supposed to be making money by running a football team, have a falling-out because they do not like each other. Jimmy Johnson, the coach who took the Dallas Cowboys to victory and brought in money and fame for Jerry Jones, is replaced not because he did not do his job, but because he didn't give Jones warm fuzzies. If Jimmy Johnson wanted to come in my house slobbering drunk every night and fall asleep on my couch, but kept winning football games and making money for me, I wouldn't care.

The baseball strike can be perceived in much the same way. Do players really believe that they deserve as much money as they get already? After all, we are talking about baseball (i.e., entertainment), not brain surgery.

I guess it would be different if our sports heroes would at least keep up the facade of being heroes. Instead, they are often sent to drug rehab clinics and

right, because they deserve it.

A little closer to home, many people will miss this year's Aggie football season because a few people believed that they deserved to get paid for work they did not do as a reward for playing college ball.

These people must really think that they are something special. They were allowed to ruin a whole year of college football for everyone, so they could get a new car or something. It is obviously not enough for them to be able to go to school on scholarship.

So what does the professional sports industry, which obviously abounds with inflated ideas of itself, have to do with daily life?

The battles between Republicans and Democrats represent the more dangerous form of this thinking. Instead of talking about what they are

**If Jimmy Johnson came into my house slobbering drunk every night and fell asleep on my couch, but kept winning football games and making money for me, I wouldn't care.**

brains run around sponsoring bills that they think can solve national problems all by themselves.

As for presidents, well there haven't been many of those who could get that far in politics without feeding an ego the size of Manhattan. In fact, it almost seems like a requirement. Can you ever see a president saying, "Well, I really do not know what we are going to do about this problem, but we will continue to look into it," or, "I have decided to sup-



## THE BATTALION Editorial Board

Belinda Blancarte, Editor in chief  
Mark Evans, Managing editor  
Jay Robbins, Opinion editor  
Jenny Magee, Assistant opinion editor

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.  
Contact the opinion editor for information on submitting guest columns.

## EDITORIAL

# CULTURAL QUANDARY

## Watered-down requirement loses purpose

Due to several incidents of insensitivity toward other cultures, a multicultural requirement is being built into the curriculum for liberal arts majors. Multiculturalism, often defined as the recognition, knowledge and understanding of other cultures is a term widely heard among the ears of the "politically correct" society including those of liberal arts students at A&M.

This requirement, which calls for students to take six hours in international or American cultures has good intentions, but has been basically watered-down due to compromises and amendments.

First and foremost, it should be clearly understood that this requirement is only for those students enrolled in the liberal arts college. Looking at the University catalog and degree plans, one will discover that most liberal arts students will basically fulfill some sort of international or cultural class before graduation.

For example, any student working on a Bachelor of Arts degree is required to take 14 hours of a foreign language — that requirement in itself exposes a student to a large amount of cultural awareness.

Clearly, there are two options regarding this issue. Either a program should be adopted which would require all majors to participate in some sort of

multiculturalism course, or do away with the requirement all together.

The first option would open new doors for students as far as learning, but it would also require more faculty, curriculum and resources that would simply add to the cost of attending the University in the first place. Tuition costs would rise and there would most likely be more complaints than compliments.

The second option, doing away with the requirement, however, would leave liberal arts students or any student with the option, not the requirement to take some of the available classes. This would allow for more decision-making on the part of the students — they would not be forced to take cultural classes.

Being culturally aware and educated about other races, religions and even sexual preferences is extremely important in today's world. The truth is that this campus is a melting pot and there must be a significant decrease in the intolerance and ignorance among others.

However, basically forcing students to take a class is not going to make them sensitive to other cultures. If anything, it may turn them off entirely to the whole idea. Individuals must find it within themselves to be tolerant, respectful and understanding — concepts not found in a book or a classroom.



# Kids need quality over quantity time

## Judge punishes mother for trying to get education, better home life

Jennifer Ireland was stunned when her pregnancy test turned up positive. She and her boyfriend were scared. They planned that Ireland would have an abortion. But when she visited the clinic she realized that she couldn't go through with the procedure, even though her boyfriend Steve Smith told her he didn't have time for a girlfriend, let alone a pregnant one. He explained that he needed to concentrate on football.

**ERIN HILL**  
Columnist



Throughout the duration of the pregnancy Smith avoided Ireland. So it was without any input from him that she decided not to give her daughter Maranda up for adoption.

"When I called Steve to tell him, he was so mad," Ireland said. "He said he didn't want her, and I shouldn't want her. He said I was doing the worst thing in the world."

When Maranda was a year old Smith asked for visitation rights, though he fought against giving any financial support. After Ireland formally requested child support, he fought to have his \$62 payments reduced to \$12.

With the help of her mother and younger sister, not Smith, Ireland completed high school, graduated third in her class with a 3.98 GPA and earned \$11,000 in scholarships to the University of Michigan.

So far, so good. Ireland didn't drop out of high school. She didn't take a dead-end, low paying job. She didn't go on welfare. She avoided the pitfalls that many young single mothers fall into. She decided to get an education, for herself and Maranda, so that they could enjoy a better life than it seemed they were destined to.

After enrolling at the University of Michigan, Ireland placed Maranda in a day care run by a woman with two small children of her own. Again, she made what many said was the right choice. She was making it possible to stay out of the cycle of poverty associated with unwed motherhood.

But, at this point Smith reentered her life. He filed a suit to have custody of Maranda turned over to him, so that his own mother could care for Maranda in their home. He planned that his mother would watch Maranda while he attended a nearby junior college or worked at his job cutting grass. They

considered this a better arrangement than the day care option that Ireland had arranged.

What is so surprising is that a county circuit judge agreed and granted custody of Maranda to the Smiths. Judge Raymond Casden said, "There is no way that a single parent attending an academic program at an institution as prestigious as the University of Michigan can do justice to their studies and the raising of an infant child."

Perhaps if Ireland attended the county junior college, as Maranda's father does, then she could handle school and the rearing of her child. But apparently she wasn't thinking along those lines. She is trying to take advantage of the opportunity she has been given to study at one of the finest universities in the nation.

What seems frightening to many people is the idea that a woman can't be a full time worker or student and an adequate mother.

"Women across the country are frightened by this ruling," says Kim Gandy, executive vice president of the National Organization for Women. "I have a two-year-old myself, and the idea that somebody could come and say that I'm a bad mother because she's in day care part-time is a scary thought."

Ireland will be limited to visiting her daughter on alternate weekends and a few holidays. It is no surprise that she worries about her daughter feeling abandoned. She was abandoned once already by a father who didn't want the responsibility of rearing her.

Though Smith's motives may be perfectly sincere, it is wrong for him to waltz into Maranda's life at this time and yank her away from a mother who has made the best of a very difficult situation, who has done much to insure a bright future for herself and her daughter and who has done it all without the help from him.

For a judge to rule that a full-time homemaker, any full-time homemaker, is always the best guardian for a child despite the recommendations of two state agencies saying the contrary; and for a judge to give a little girl over to a young man who basically abandoned his responsibilities earlier and in fact wanted to abort the baby he now welcomes; for a judge to do such a thing is a disappointment and an example of why so many Americans feel that justice is no longer served in our courts.

What Judge Casden seems to be encouraging is for Jennifer Ireland to quit college, quit any type of work, get on welfare and AFDC and live on the dole for the rest of her life. In that case, she would at least be home all the time to care for Maranda.

By trying to be the exception, Ireland has been punished. This legal precedent is indeed frightening and needs to be overturned.

*Erin Hill is a senior English major.*



"But we thought everyone was free to leave Cuba?..."



## MAIL CALL

### Co-op student finds out 'what blocks are for'

Today I found out that I was blocked from class for a parking ticket from the spring semester. The amount due was \$15. I asked the person I talked to on the phone to please unblock me so the Co-op Office could register me in ENGR 385

(the co-op class for my department); this is a one-hour class. I explained that I was unaware of the outstanding \$15 and would mail the check this afternoon, but could she please unblock my registration now. She said, "That's what blocks are for." She said she could not unblock my registration until she received the check. I explained to the clerk that I was in Virginia and couldn't just walk over to the Pavilion to pay \$15, an amount which I am good for since I make almost that much every hour. She was not very helpful or friendly.

I pay this University over \$1000 a semester and would have appreciated a \$15 credit for a few days. I have never bounced a payment to the University and feel that I have established a reasonable amount of credit. I felt insulted.

Well, this is my \$15 check. Please unblock my registration.

*Sid Boswell  
Class of '95*

### 'Beavis and Butthead' ban would punish cons

I would like to address a philosophical query — if we want to be tough on criminals, why don't we take away the right to watch "Beavis and Butthead" (the truly second greatest pleasure on Earth) once they are convicted. Let's show the convicts the real meaning of the phrase "to suffer for past sins." After a year without Beavis and Butthead, the criminals will

be repenting in hordes, and that is a guarantee (place the accent on "guar" otherwise you will be incorrect in pronouncing the word).

Well, actually this point is moot since MTV is only airing reruns of the show. However, after one viewing of the episodes entitled "The Vending Machine," if you are a sane and well-endowed man, you will become hooked — regardless of how many times you have seen the episode. In this particular episode the secluded Beavis is left to guard a vending machine which had trapped a bag of Sour Cream and Salsa Pork Rinds in its evil clutches, and Butthead is off to find 60 cents to retrieve the bag. I can still hear Beavis' lonely desperate voice crying out, "BUTTHEAD! BUTTHEAD. Wherefore art thou BUTTHEAD!" As Butthead sits

at home watching TV and eating nachos. Who can forget the scene where Beavis mocks Andy Rooney of "60 Minutes" fame by asking questions in a skewed voice and ending his questions with the punctuation of "Funk That!" OK, I must admit I live a repressed and down life, but Funk That!

*Claude E. Wilkinson  
Class of '95*

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 for length, style, and accuracy.  
Address letters to:  
The Battalion - Mail Call  
013 Reed McDonald  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, TX  
77843-1111  
Fax: (409) 845-2647  
E-mail: Batt@tamv1.tamu.edu