

THE BATTALION Editorial Board

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EDITORIAL

PARTY POLITICS

Straight-line voting skews elections

People who continuously choose leaders on the basis of a straight-line ticket, should reconsider the rationale behind their votes.

Some individuals are so drawn and tied into one particular political party that they vote for that party in every single election, regardless of the candidates and the issues at stake in the contest.

Voting according to a certain political party tend to overlook real ability and instead focus on a party label.

Candidates with no experience or an unsubstantial platform may receive votes just because they happen to be Democrats or Republicans.

Political parties remain important because they provide ideological identification, but voting strictly on the basis of a party can put inefficient, ineffective leaders in office.

Furthermore, some voters may not even know the duties of a particular office or the experience of the people running for it, but because they identify

with one party, they mark their ballots with only the party in mind. This action shows extreme irresponsibility on the part of the voter — people should not vote if they are not making educated, considered decisions.

Voters should understand office positions and read about candidates before marking their ballots.

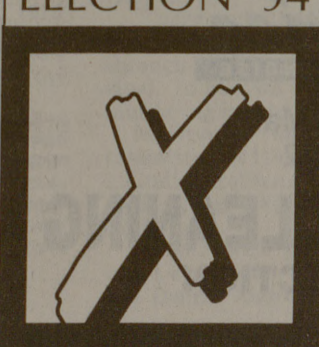
Most importantly, regardless of partisan sympathies, knowledge of the issues is imperative.

An election is not about a candidate's charisma or good looks; it's about real issues and ideas. A candidate with substantial ideas and experience should be elected to office. The public needs representatives and administrators who focus on the issues.

It's important for Texas A&M students to exercise their right to vote. Voting is a privilege and a unique characteristic of the democratic system.

However, students who choose to vote, need to consider how they vote and why.

ELECTION '94



Manhattan turns on Woody

Everybody and their sisters are too judgmental of Allen

Woody Allen tells of a man approaching him on the streets of New York. "So, you're the great Woody Allen?" "Well," Allen replied, "I used to be."

ERIN HILL Columnist



Allen fell from grace two years ago after his longtime companion and frequent leading lady Mia Farrow discovered Allen was romantically involved with her adopted daughter Soon-Yi Previn. Allen then vaulted to the top of the tabloid heap after Farrow accused him of molesting their adopted daughter, Dylan.

The Yale-New Haven Hospital Child Abuse Evaluation Clinic said those charges "were made up by an emotionally vulnerable child who was caught up in a disturbed family and who was responding to the stresses in the family."

It has been two long years now. Despite the above conclusions, Allen is still not allowed to see Dylan and her brother Moses, the two children he and Farrow adopted. His time with Satchel, the biological son he and Farrow had together, is limited to only six hours per week.

"It's all been absurd. I mean, one day I say goodbye to Dylan, Satchel and Moses. Dylan says to me, 'Daddy, don't forget, when you come back on Saturday bring this toy and this toy,' and I say, 'OK, see you Saturday,' and I go. And that was the last I ever saw of her," said Allen.

Allen said that after the birth of Satchel, Farrow and he "were friendly mutual parents of three children and nothing more." Most people don't realize this. They mistakenly believe that Allen and Farrow were married (they never were).

After they discontinued their romantic relationship they still worked together, both in films and parenting. He came to her home each morning to be with his children and often stopped in at night to put them to bed, but had little contact with any of Farrow's other 10 children.

Well ... except with Soon-Yi, his current love interest. Allen contends that in such a non-traditional family and because of the age difference Soon-Yi was not perceived by the other children as a sister figure, though such a claim seems to stretch the limits of believability.

"I'm not saying my selection of Soon-Yi was a brilliant selection ... I did make a mistake. But I think the response to it has been absolutely degrading and criminal," said Allen in court.

Allen believes he is innocent of any wrongdoing, except for errors in judgment. He is being punished for much more than that, for both what he did and did not do — something he finds unfair.

Apparently Allen believed the public would listen to more than one side of the story (namely his), a favor our society may never have been capable of granting and certainly no longer seems able to give.

One need only look at the huge industry that has grown out of the O.J. Simpson tragedy to see that misfortune sells and satisfies a deep hunger that Americans possess — a need to see other people suffer, squirm and be generally miserable.

We believe what we want to believe, grabbing hold of whatever myths suit our fancy. Substantiated facts are too hard to come by, the truth too complex to understand. What actually happens is rarely as delightful to gossip about.

"Woody Allen!?" people angrily exclaim. "He slept with his stepdaughter and molested his children."

Well, not exactly, although that makes for a great headline. He's actually just a selfish, immature man who broke the heart of a woman with whom he had once shared his life. Certainly nothing to commend but not illegal either. Morally, but not legally, wrong.

In Allen's new film "Bullets over Broadway," the following lines appear: "An artist creates his own moral universe. You gotta do what you gotta do."

He has certainly lived by those lines, though he is dead wrong about the notion of creating his own moral universe. Allen has to live in the same moral universe as the rest of us — the

Woody Allen has to make himself at home in reality because he will be living as a prisoner of both what he did wrong and what we think he did wrong — the collective myth we nurture.

real world — a place he has "never felt comfortable in."

Allen has to make himself at home in reality because that is where he will be living from now on, a prisoner of both what he did wrong and what we think he did wrong — the collective myth we nurture.

Yes, he did some very inappropriate things and stepped on people's feelings in pursuit of his heart's desire. He put his happiness above Farrow's and took little thought of the consequences; but he is not guilty of much of what America believes him to be.

Woody Allen should be allowed to be a father again to the children he loves, who bring him more happiness than anything else in the world. He did not forfeit his right to love, just because he hurt people.

Remember, there are always two sides to a story, and it's always more complex than it first appears.

Erin Hill is a senior English major

Democrats fail to govern, even with every advantage

Republicans show better record of spending American taxpayers' money, passing legislation

On Nov. 8, the voters of America will have a real opportunity to change the course of our nation for the better. The Democrats once again have proven their inability to govern. Despite controlling the White House, and both Houses of Congress the President has failed to deliver on his campaign promises from health care to the middle class tax cut.

Many political pundits are projecting the possibility that Republicans could actually take control of the U.S. Congress for the first time since 1954. The Democrats have seen the writing on the wall and are scrambling to save themselves, even if it means rewriting history.

It cannot be a coincidence that with Democrats in control, government has grown larger, taken more money from the private sector and spent more funds than it has.

Crime, poverty, poor education and other social problems are getting worse. It is not hard to see that most of the problems affecting our nation are the result of more than 30 years of government policy that has obliterated the middle class.

The American people are losing faith in their government for refusing to do what millions of American families do every day — pay their bills with the money they have earned.

For more than a generation the American family has seen its disposable income eroded by a government that takes more than it gives back. Less than 40 years ago the average American family had the means to enjoy an incredible standard of living.

Today, American families find themselves living from paycheck to paycheck expecting the government to provide what they can no longer afford.

Americans cannot be expected to meet the demands and challenges of everyday life if we are denied our rightfully earned income. We cannot expect the economy to grow if the consumers are denied their purchasing power. The American people are realizing that government is not the answer, but rather that economic freedom combined with political freedom is the key to success.

The time has come to remind the government that its first duty and obligation is to serve the people.

There is a clear difference between the Democrats and the Republicans. The Democrats want to take more mon-

ey from the American people so that the government can pay for our health care, education and retirement. Republicans believe the government should take less so that the American people can pay for their own health care, education and retirement. It is not the presumption of Republicans to know how to spend another person's money better.

President Clinton has chided the Republicans for wanting to return to supply-side economics, and has even sought to rewrite the Reagan legacy regardless of the truth. President Reagan cut taxes, which led to nearly doubling the government's revenues.

The Democrats would have you believe that the Reagan tax cuts led to the exploding deficit, when in fact it was the Democrat's inability to control spending. We have a national debt not because the American people are ungrateful but because the federal government spends too much money.

While the President was telling the American people that the Republicans were going to cut Social Security and Medicare, a White House memo was leaked to the press which outlined op-

It cannot be a coincidence that with Democrats in control, government has grown larger, taken more money from the private sector and spent more funds than it has.

tions including raising taxes and cutting social security. While these proposals would have never made it through Congress, the fact that the memo exists shows the pure hypocrisy of the Clinton administration.

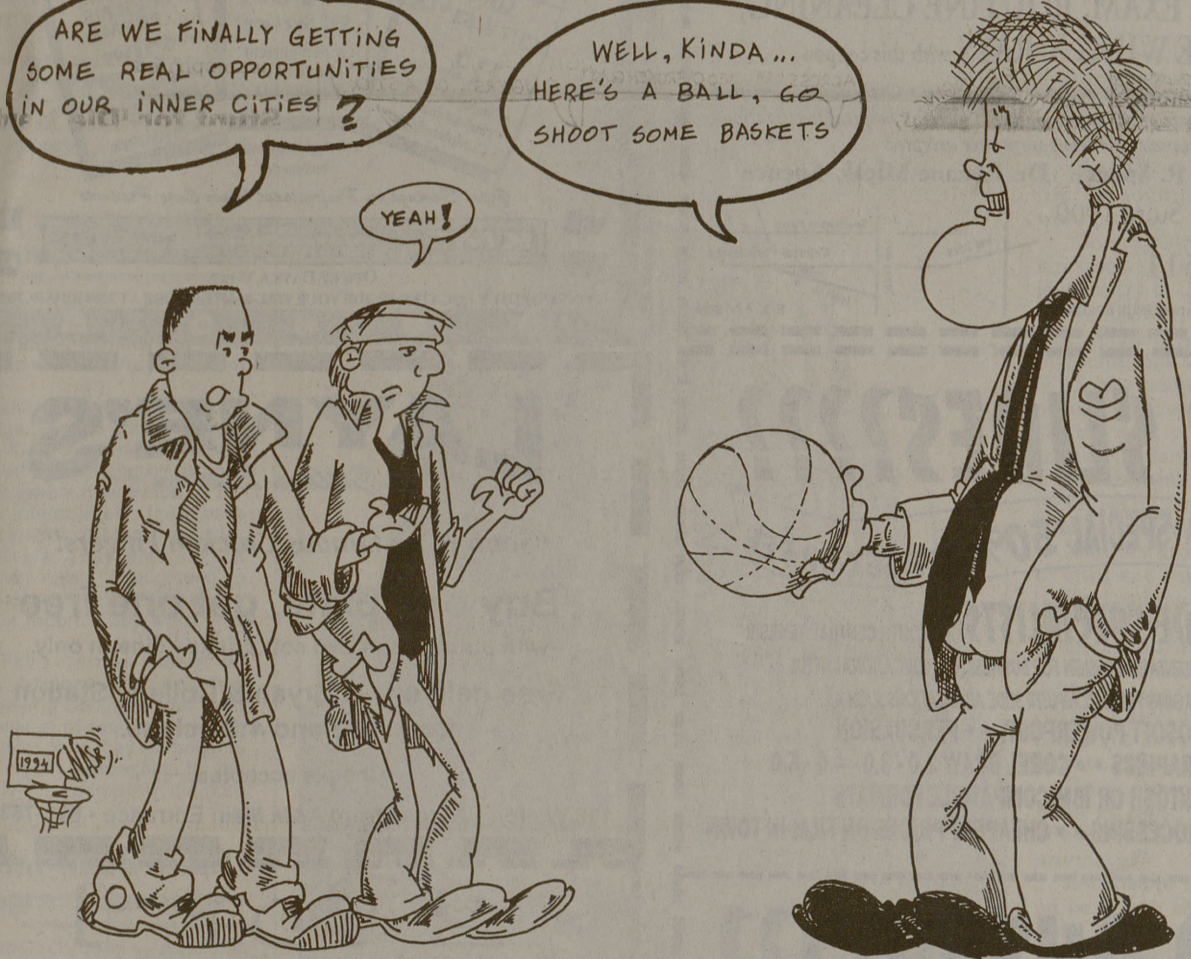
This constant hypocrisy, along with the President's lack of integrity and inconsistent decision-making, are merely the root of the President's problems with the American people. Problems that are affecting Democrats from coast to coast.

If Republicans gain control of Congress, the American people will see a Congress living under the same laws that it imposes — sensible approaches to health care reform, welfare reform, a balanced-budget amendment, a line-item veto, Congressional reform and the middle-class tax cut the President promised.

The time has come for our generation to send a message to the government that enough is enough.

We can no longer allow the government to mortgage our future.

Jody L. Withers is a senior political science major



Learn to think for self while knowing all facts

This letter is in response to J. Sterling Hayman's column on Oct. 24. Hayman encourages Aggies to "Think for yourself" while trying to bash any Republican in sight.

If Hayman wants us to think for ourselves, it would be preferable if he gave us all the facts.

It might be helpful if he told how Richards lied about what the lottery revenues would be used for. Maybe Hayman doesn't have a dad that owes him thousands of dollars in child support, but there are lots of hungry children in Texas who do.

It might also help everyone to know why the charges against Hutchinson were dropped. There was no case against her. After investigation, the

district attorney knew they were going to lose and be embarrassed if the case was continued, so it was dropped.

If Hayman is going to call Ollie North a liar, he might also want to tell everyone about Sen. Charles Robb's numerous extramarital activities. And as for "The Blocking Good Legislation technique" that Republicans in Congress have "perfected," I would expect Hayman, being a political science major, to know that the legislative system is designed for gridlock. If any one party got all of its legislation through, the system would go haywire.

So, while Hayman wants to encourage free thinking he might also disclose all the facts while doing so.

Alan V. Watson Class of '97

Challenges have become part of building Bonfire

Considering job training and expertise of those who build them, collapse of an Aggie bonfire ought not surprise all the casual bystanders.

Imagine piling logs on end yourself, with no guarantee of squarely-cut logs

ends, no guarantee of same length logs nor same diameter logs.

There's no guarantee of no rain during bonfire building or burning.

It probably shouldn't be called a Fightin' Texas Aggie Bonfire unless it receives a goodly baptism of precipitation, much less a flood.

As a point of fact, the first Aggie timber stack to sag out of shape before the appointed hour—in 1957—was built and rebuilt with only human muscle, a long, heavy hawser through a pulley near the top of the centerpole and some forked tree limbs to raise the position logs.

That's a percentage few human endeavors can match, a winning percentage worthy of admiration, respect and pride.

Gig 'em Aggies and rebuild bonfire.

John West Class of '57

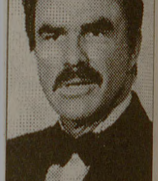
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PEOPLE

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