Thursday • March 2, 1995

PINION

THE BATTALION • Page 9

Louganis dives to depths of fame's demands, pain

Rame is worshiped in Ameri-can society. Every child can name at least 10 television, movie or sports stars.

Most adults have secret yearn-ings to be famous. At least everyone has the right to Andy Warhol's "15 minutes of fame."

But when someone crosses that

line into fame, all too often more is lost rather than

nine into fame, all too often more is lost rather than gained. The feeling that you could walk down a street in Anytown, U.S.A., and instantly be recogniz-able must be overwhelming. This public spotlight is fine if the person is strong and has a good support system of friends and family. But when the person is hiding a se-cret, fame can become deadly.

Greg Louganis was just such a man. He was the perfect American sports hero. He won two gold medals at the 1984 Olympics, and it looked like he was going to do it again in 1988. He was

young, good-looking and nice in interviews. "Melissa" remembers watching him at the '88 Olympics. The sportscasters had been hyping him for weeks, and everyone in her family was gathered around the television. The dive she remembers most is the tragic one.

It has replayed over and over again in her young mind. She sees Louganis climbing the seemingly



never-ending steps to the platform dive. The graceful poise he showed. And then, in a second, everything was wrong

Louganis' head smashed horribly against the concrete diving board. Instead of the expected graceful flips and twists and near silence of a perfect dive into the pool, there was only an endless free fall and a

loud splash.

Blood seemed to be everywhere. Cameras were rolling, and no one knew what had happened. But, the worst thing imagined by world-wide audiences was not as bad as the truth.

No one could have come close to guessing what was going on in Louganis' head. As his blood poured into the pool and onto the tiles, a dedicated doctor rushed out to stop the bleeding of our young hero's head - so quickly he even forgot to wear gloves.

The world held its breath to see if our hand-some athlete would be okay and if the wound would heal. Because of fast action and a strong spirit, Louganis did perform in the Olympics, and he won two more gold medals. It seemed a victory for all.

Until last week. Then, Louganis appeared in an interview with Barbara Walters on the television news show "20/20." His fame has lasted because of his All-American good looks, his seemingly charming per-sonality and our mental replay of that tragic dive. Who could forget that?

Last week Louganis told the world that he had known he was HIV positive that day.

In 1988, AIDS was even more of a puzzling disease than it is now. Doctors thought they knew what caused it, but it was still a new disease, and chlorine's effect on it was unknown.

Scientists had figured out that it was transmitted

Fame paralyzed Greg Louganis, but when he took others' lives into his own hands, his wants and needs were no longer as important.

through bodily fluids, especially blood. Louganis knew both of these facts. During the in-terview with Walters, Louganis said, "I just wanted to hold the blood in, or just not let anybody touch it.'

Nice sentiments, but they don't mean anything while you are watching other divers swim in an infected pool and allowing a ungloved doctor to sew up your skull with a needle and thread

Fame paralyzed him.

Louganis was understandably scared about being "out" in such a homophobic society. And he was devastated by the thought of having a deadly disease. Both of these feelings are very understandable, and - as long as the problem remained his - they were fine to live by.

But, when Louganis took others' lives into his own hands, his wants and needs were no longer as important.

It would have been scary and tough to tell the truth at that moment. It would have changed the way most people looked at him, and he would probably have suffered through discrimination and misplaced hatred.

But, when it all came down to it, fame won out. Louganis did not want to lose his fans and his place in our society.

So he kept his mouth shut while an innocent doctor risked his life, and while unknowing swimmers took chances with theirs.

Louganis should be pitied now. AIDS is a terrible, tragic disease that kills indiscriminately. There is no cure, and the medicines used right now don't do much but prolong the pain.

However, AIDS does not steal morals - people do that themselves.

Jay Robbins

ior Managing editor

Elizabeth Preston is a junior English major

Government's breathing down our necks

Powers are sometimes reserved to the states, and even the people

real problem exists on this campus. Last week I found myself forced to undergo a horrific exercise which may affect my future academic opportunities.

I bombed a finance exam. My poor grade had nothing to do with studying - I

didn't study, so that was never an issue.

The plain truth is simple: the person next to me had bad breath and I was unable to perform under these conditions. Only one solution exists for this problem, and we know

what that is: the government. I have given this some thought - instead of studying Fi-

nance – and I know exactly what we have to do. Thousands of productive hours are lost each week to the

effects of secondhand, unmitigated chronic bad breath. This has caused the lives of millions of American college students to become a living hell.

We cannot allow this pain and suffering on campus. If all college students were issued gum by the govern-ment, then the problem would basically resolve itself.

First, Congress needs to pass a resolution creating an agency to serve the needs of the poor-in-breath college stu-- this should be under the Department of Housing and Urban Development, since they are so good at creating bureaucrats

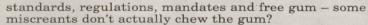
Next up, Congress should pass legislation setting some kind of breath standards. After all, what's the point of making an agency if it can't make any rules?

Of course, now that we have an agency with rules, we need to make some unfunded mandates for the states to follow.

Let's require that each state-supported institution of higher learning have at least one - no, that's too easy ... at least two outlets for gum distribution on each campus.

OK, now that we have regulations and unfunded mandates, I guess it's time to decide what kind of gum we want to distribute.

Studies show that people chew Extra brand gum longer than other types, and since we need to look like we are saving money – by not spending as much – our new agency with rules, regulations and mandates can distribute Plen-T-Paks of green or white Extra sugarless gum - after all,



Easy: random breath testing. For repeat offenders: three sticks and you're out.

It's just possible that some reactionary members of Congress may disagree with this outstanding new plan. That's where labels come in.

We just have to accuse these freaks of playing the "Poli-tics of Halitosis" with the innocent, unaware college students of America.

A few other minor roadblocks still stand in the way. Nothing major, though, just the 10th Amendment. You know – that archaic, meaningless and altogether annoying little phrase that declares, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to

the people." No Problem, Tom Foley, former speaker of the House, to the rescue!

Last year Foley filed suit against the ignorant voters of his home state of Washington. Foley argued that these pe-ons had no right to impose term limits on anyone as estimable as himself.

Foley's attorneys claim that no modern interpretations of "the 10th amendment lend even remote support to the proposition that a state or its people can control any aspect of the federal government.

It's a good thing we have Foley around or else we might have to worry about someone as inconsequential as James Madison.

Madison declared, in "Federalist Paper 46," that, in any attempt of the federal government to expand at the expense of the states, "truth no less than decency requires, that the event in every case, should be supposed to depend on the sentiments and sanction of their common constituents.

Unfortunately, Foley's constituents, in their blissful ignorance, saw fit to vote this dedicated public servant out of office.

With minor constitutional issues out of the way, now we have to pay for this program. Again, no problem. All we need to do is place a "value-

added surcharge" on all onions or garlic cloves sold within the United States.

While it may be true that, after all is said and done, the gum may cost the government \$10 a pack, isn't this a small price to pay for better oral hygiene? Of course, I suppose I could just save everyone the headache

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.

Sterling Hayman Erin Hill

Mark Smith

Heather Winch

for Business

Asst

EDITORIAL

LEAVE A LIGHT ON On-Campus housing should be available year round for TAMU students

proposal submitted by the on-campus housing department that calls for some

THE BATTALION Established in 1893

Such a change would alleviate prob-lems for students who have no other choice but to stay on campus during holidays and the summer.

International students make up one group that would greatly benefit from such legislation. During the holidays, and between summer and regular semesters, students who cannot afford the trip home are forced to find other accommodations. This temporary housing often proves hard to find and inconvenient.

If some dorms were open for all year, such inconvenience could be avoided.

Out-of-state students also deserve consideration. Their expenses from outof-state tuition and fees are high enough without the added cost of unnecessary travel expenses. If on-campus residents cannot afford to go home, they should have a place to live without moving to off-campus apartments or friends

The Student Senate should pass the would also be affected by this bill. While most students do go home, some must stay in town in order to keep their jobs.

Opponents may argue that students who need to stay in College Station should move off-campus. But, apart-ments in this area are far more expensive than dorm rooms, and come with other costly financial responsibilities.

Not all dorms should remain open for the entire year. Such a general move would prove costly and wasteful in the long run. Keeping one or two dorms open - such as the balcony dorms, which are small and require low main-tenance – would bring enough benefits to justify the extra effort and expense.

Texas A&M has always strived to furnish its students with the best possible services. Keeping some of the residence halls open year-round would help the University continue in achieving this goal.

The Student Senate should seriously consider this proposal. On-campus housing has often received a bad rap because of room shortages and hassles of living in them – like moving during holidays - but perhaps passing this bill would help restore its appeal.



we live in democracy and should give our comrades, er, I mean citizens choices

What if - despite the existence of our new agency with

and study for my next exam, but what fun would that be?

David Taylor is a senior management major

living room couches. Furthermore, those students who are

forced to work in between semesters



Corps members will be punished if found guilty

In response to Terry Cockerham's Feb. 27 let-ter: the idea that the Corps as a whole will not be punished is quite correct. That is because the Corps as a whole did nothing wrong. However, individuals responsible, if they are found guilty, will be punished. Despite popular opinion, cadets are punished for violating rules. Cadets have actually been dismissed from the university for hazing charges

To punish the entire Corps would be similar to punishing the entire Interfraternity Council because a few pledges in one fraternity broke into the wrong apartment.

When Matt Segrest said, "hazing is not condoned in the Corps," he was speaking truth. To condone means to forgive or overlook. I'm sure those cadets who have been suspended from the University do not agree that the Corps condones hazing.

> Daniel Goodner Class of '97

Moral distinction between homosexual orientation, acts

Many people feel that homosexuals and bisexual persons are sick. Others feel that they are ordinary people who live a different lifestyle than the majority. This is an extremely emotional topic.

As Catholic students and members of the Respect Life Commission at St. Mary's Church, we feel it's important to address the issue of homosexuality.

There is an important moral distinction be-

tween homosexual orientation and homosexual acts. While we do not condone homosexual activity, neither do we condone prejudice, contempt or hostility toward homosexual persons.

We believe that the homosexual act is disordered, however, not the homosexual person.

Homosexuals don't choose their condition; for most of them it is a trial. They must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity. All unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided.

We call everyone to understanding and love for homosexual persons and encourage homosexual persons to remain chaste just as we encourage heterosexuals to remain chaste.

Chastity means abstaining from sex if you are single and having sex only with your spouse when you are married.

> Tom Ashour Graduate Student

Accompanied by 10 signatures

Being 'an Aggie' requires more than tuition payment

In response to Kyle Littlefield's Feb. 28 column, "A&M tradition shouldn't divide," I have this to say: Soldier, Statesman and Knightly Gentleman.

This was stated by Lawrence Sullivan Ross whose statue stands in front of the Academic building as a symbol of Texas A&M. To my knowledge he was referring to Aggies.

I don't think "paid tuition" makes one an Aggie. Paying tuition entitles you to be a student, not an Aggie.

It bother's me that people still come to A&M to sit in class and pass tests. A&M supplies the resources for a full, well-rounded education, not just textbooks and lectures. Having pride in your school is what A&M is about.

I have considered myself an Aggie ever since I can remember. Finally coming to the University, I am saddened to see so many people who gripe and whine about the traditions.

Littlefield even said that he has heard, "If

they don't like it, they can go to t.u." That's not a bad solution. If he went there, he wouldn't have to put up with the evil Corps or any of those other traditions. I'll bet they'd never call him a twopercenter.

I have been called a two-percenter a few times at A&M but have never been "ostracized" because of it. Maybe if his friends are that mean, he needs

new friends. "Soldier, Statesman and Knightly Gentleman,"

that's what an Aggie is.

Michael Davis Class of '98

Dance team doesn't always go the second mile for A&M

All season the Dance Team has been ragged on, with good reason. In a Feb. 28 letter about the team, the dancers said how much they just want to promote men's basketball and be there for the guys.

Last night at the SMU game - a two-point game at that - the entire team left during the second half with about three minutes to go.

And they get a University excuse for the SWC tournament. If they're representing anybody, it sure isn't A&M or men's basketball team.

> MariClare Feeney Class of '90

College Republicans shame selves, A&M at Gramm rally

I am outraged by the behavior of the closedminded College Republicans who could not tolerate a dissenting view at the recent Phil Gramm rally.

I was one of the students holding a pro-choice sign. As a result of this, I was pushed, shoved and treated with complete disrespect as a few Republicans tried to hide my sign with their flags or signs.

If they were trying to portray Aggies as intolerant and rude in front of the national press, they succeeded. Their actions only drew attention to our own pro-choice signs

Although nobody had the courtesy to ask, the fact is that I support some of Gramm's ideas. But, I do not support his view on abortion.

Did my actions warrant such abuse? I don't think so. I was not vocal with my views nor did I interrupt the rally in any way. I peacefully held a sign at a public forum. If Gramm wants to represent the people as president, he must recognize that other views exist.

The College Republicans' conduct was an embarrassment to the unwritten Aggie code that demands respect for all individuals.

> Karen Manthe Class of '95

Campus attitudes may not represent real world diversity

This is to commend Zane Anderson's commentary on the state of liberalism at A&M. I mean, once we get out of college, everyone will be just as conservative as Anderson perceives this campus to be, right?

I think we should strike up a battle cry against people like Oliver Stone. Let's bring in wonderful speakers like Oliver North, who will teach us the wonderful art of lying and cheating!

Open your mind just a bit. Just because your perception of a college campus may be one of conservative people walking around thinking similar things, this is not the case.

> Tracey Raburn Class of '97

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor and will print as many a ows. 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, clarity and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald. A valid student I.D. is required. Letters may also be mailed to:

The Battalion - Mail CallFax: (409) 845-2647013 Reed McDonaldE-mail: Batt@tamvm E-mail: Batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu Texas A&M University College Station, TX 77843-1111