

OPINION

THE BATTALION Established in 1893

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EDITORIAL

AGGIE BLOOD DRIVE

The need for blood donation is greater than ever in light of the Oklahoma City tragedy.

This week Texas A&M and the University of Texas are facing off in the 1995 Spring Blood Drive Challenge. The race is on to see which university will be able to donate the most blood.

While a friendly rivalry with the teapigs in Austin is always welcome and motivating, yesterday's bombing in Oklahoma City places emphasis on the true purpose and importance of blood drives.

Officials at BloodCare, the second-largest blood center in Texas, have said that they are on emergency standby because of the hundreds of people injured in Wednesday's bombing in Oklahoma City.

This means that if the Oklahoma Blood Institute runs out of blood products, BloodCare will be called upon to export more blood to the institute.

Because of this greater cause, A&M students should not even have to think about giving blood — they should show to the world their blood truly is maroon.

With 80 percent of BloodCare's staff running the blood drive at

A&M, the blood bank expects to obtain most of its blood from A&M students and faculty.

Rivalry is not the main issue now, even though BloodCare's Texas A&M consultant projects 1,460 units of blood will be donated, while U.T.'s blood drive drew 3,000 units.

BloodCare officials say they are on code-red emergency alert for Type O-Negative blood, and code-yellow emergency alert for types O-Positive and A-Positive blood.

"Code-red" means the bank has less than a half-day's supply of blood.

Certainly Aggies should always put forth extra effort to defeat the Longhorns in any competition. But there are things more important than a rivalry.

The motivational force to give blood has changed back to original intent — to help others, and help immediately.

Aggies have always prided themselves in being selfless and willing to rise to a challenge.

The Spring 1995 Blood drive offers Aggies a chance to prove it, and a chance to help others tremendously.

THE HOUSTON POST

Newspaper should have been allowed dignity of printing a final edition.

After 115 years of service to the Houston area and the state of Texas, The Houston Post has been forced to stop their press. The Tuesday edition of the paper marked the end of an era. But the era was not ended properly. The Houston Post was never allowed to print a final issue and properly put the paper to rest.

The Post and its rival newspaper, the Houston Chronicle, had been in competition for nearly a century. Finally, a 30 percent increase in newsprint cost and a lower circulation rate forced Post owners to start searching for a buyer last October.

After a long search, the Hearst Corp., which owns the Chronicle, purchased The Post and all of its assets.

After The Post finished printing its Tuesday issue, owners announced the closing. Although many had realized that the end was near, Tuesday's news came as quite a shock.

In a matter of minutes, the heart and soul of a newspaper — and the livelihoods of more than 1,900 dedicated employees were taken away. No real warning. No consolation. No final issue.

It is not mandatory that a newspaper be allowed to print a final issue; it's not even really customary anymore. However, allowing for a final issue is proper.

The symbolic act of publishing just one more edition, telling the final story — when the paper itself makes the news — is appropriate.

It is a shame that the Houston area now has only one newspaper. Competition begets quality.

It is a shame that so much history ended so abruptly. It is an even greater shame that The Post was not allowed to go out in style and end its era with dignity.

Farewell, Houston Post. Houston and Texas will miss you.



BUCKLEY AMENDMENT

Congress must reconsider amendment which would make records available to journalists.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Education declared that college disciplinary records, including those related to off-campus activities, will be categorized under "education" or academic records which are protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts — otherwise known as the Buckley Amendment.

Under this amendment, college administrations no longer have to release information about students who have committed rapes, assaulted other students or have been involved in theft because this would threaten a student's privacy.

However, not releasing such records, could threaten the safety and lives of other students.

Academic records should not be subject to scrutiny by anyone, and such records should not include criminal doings. Students who commit a crime should not be protected by their universities, and this means protected from the student press.

student criminals. The student body has the right to know about dangerous activities on campus, and if information is not available for student reporters — and other media professionals for that matter — then the entire purpose is defeated.

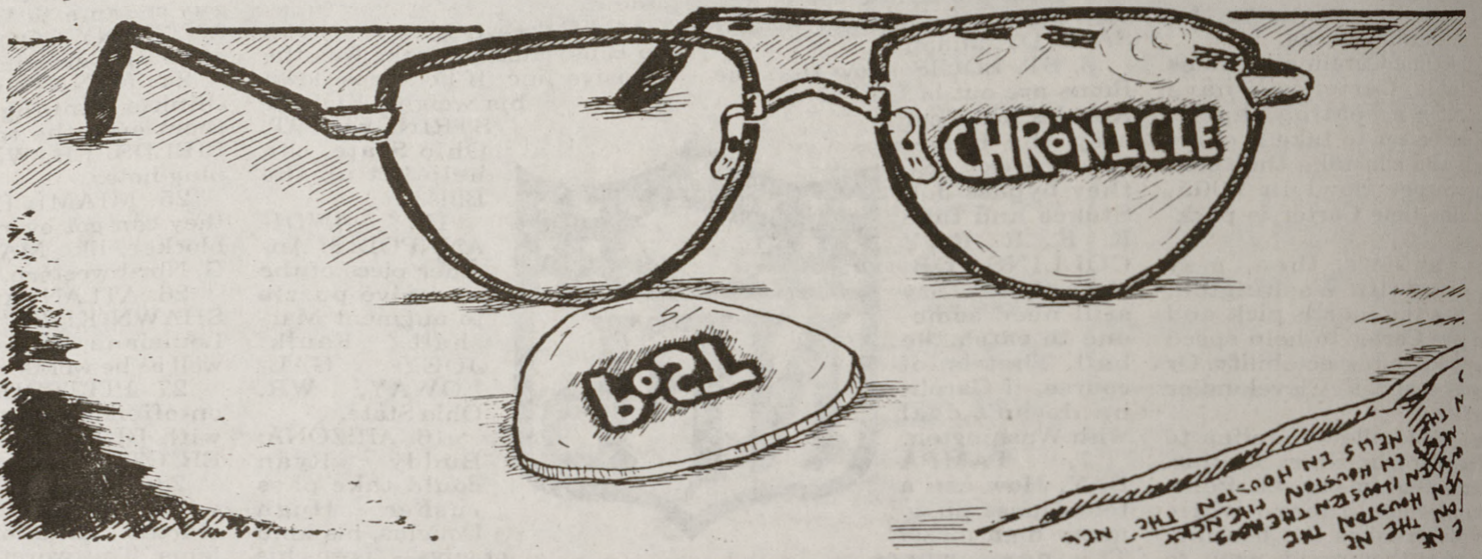
Congress should take another look at the Buckley amendment, and note the increase in the national crime rates on school campuses since the passage of the original law in 1974.

Schools are no longer havens of safety. The government should take this under consideration when dealing with college records.

Perhaps Congress will realize that a solution to curbing on-campus crime would not be the protection of disciplinary records, but rather the disclosure of them.

Until a reconsideration of this rule to the Buckley Amendment is made, journalists will have to continue their fight for access to information and campuses will continue to suppress records of activity that could threaten the community.

Congress should reevaluate this revision of the Buckley Amendment — by doing so, they would be investing in the future.



Vietnam Vets still deserve respect

Remember that Washington book craze? Well the latest entry comes from Robert McNamara. McNamara, as you may recall from History 106, was Secretary of Defense under Kennedy and Johnson.

McNamara earned the dubious distinction of being called "the architect of the Vietnam War." McNamara's book includes one startling revelation. He writes, "We were wrong. We made errors in judgment."

Put that one in the "dub" file. The disturbing revelation came when McNamara related that, as early as 1964, he knew that Vietnam was a mistake in progress. Needless to say, McNamara's statements brought great joy in certain quarters. When asked if he felt vindicated for his actions in the sixties, President Clinton replied, "Yes, I do. I know that sounds self-serving, but of course I do."

More great lessons in leadership around the bend. This story only gets better. On CNN this past Saturday, Donna Shalala, Clinton's Secretary of Health and Human Services, figure it all out for us. She said, "We sent not our best and the brightest sons to Vietnam." Then she explained, "We sent young men from small towns and rural areas ..."

Maybe Donna Shalala holds the wrong job. She needs to resign and become Secretary of deciding who are the best and the brightest. Then again, maybe not.

It's very clear what Shalala thinks of those who chose to heed their county's call. Obviously, she holds the opinion that the real "best and brightest" spent the Vietnam years in Canada.

Let's look at some of these "not best and brightest." We can start with Colin Powell. Clearly, according to Shalala's reasoning, anyone who worked his way through a biased system to earn a college degree and went on to become the highest ranking officer in the military must be far from "bright."

Next, we should look at General O.R. Simpson '36. General Simpson commanded the 1st Marine Division in Vietnam. His list of citations takes half a page to write. Simpson returned to the University to become assistant vice-president for Student Services and head of the School of Military Sciences. To Donna Shalala, however, none of this marks him as "the best." Simpson was not the only Aggie to be "not the best and

DAVID TAYLOR
COLUMNIST



brightest" in Vietnam. On a plaque in front of the Quad are the names of 121 young men who gave quite a bit more than Donna Shalala in the Vietnam era. I'm sure the families of these young men take great consolation from Clinton's vindication.

Let's look at the numerous Congressmen, both Democrat and Republican, who not only served, but suffered in Vietnam. Senator Bob Kerry from Nebraska and Representative Sam Johnson of Texas are only two examples. Both of these men spent years in P.O.W. camps in North Vietnam. The P.O.W.s kept sane with difficult mental exercises. Yet Shalala labels these men as "not the best and the brightest."

One more random example comes to mind.

In 1968, a young man graduated from t.u. — okay, not the brightest thing. He received a commission as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force. This man's father was a professor of economics. The man's mother was fluent in seven languages — yes, seven. The man's test scores were at the high end, to understate. In short, this man was just the type who Shalala claims would never have served in the military.

He is also my father. It occurs to me that I have related numerous family stories over this semester to demonstrate the errors in Clinton's policies. A simple conclusion can be drawn: the present administration just doesn't reflect the ideals and values that make this country what it is.

My father didn't serve because he had to, but because he was taught that freedom comes with a price.

Shalala is dead wrong: those young men from "small towns and rural America" represent what is best and brightest in this country. These people did not flee to Canada, they accepted their country's call. Instead of writing how they "loathed the military" to get out of the draft, they went, served and came back to an indifferent country.

It's about time the Party presently running the Executive Branch recognizes that they are the "different" ones. These pretenders claim to be "the best and brightest," while the real qualifiers fought to preserve their right to return from Canada. They claim to represent "mainstream" America, yet repeatedly demonstrate an amazing ignorance of what America is all about.

The true "best and brightest" of America should not be required to continually defend the values that they hold dear in the face of certain alternative ideas.

Next November cannot come quickly enough for me.

David Taylor is a senior management major



MAIL CALL

Skateboard provides recreation, not trouble

Although I have never been called a juvenile delinquent before, skateboarding has given me the opportunity to be harassed many times in the past.

Furthermore I am no dirtwashed, snothead, high school punk. I pay the same tuition and fees that everyone else does.

As for the high school and junior high students, they are not dirtwashed, snotheads either. They, like me, skateboard for the sense of accomplishment and to just have a good time.

Assuming these kids' parents are neglectful, I am sure that their parents would much rather their children be riding a skateboard rather than doing something that is illegal.

This kind of intolerance is what scares people away from A&M, but then again A&M never claimed to be tolerant to any one who happened to choose to be a little different than the rest of the clones on campus.

It seems to me that you don't need the police handing out fines to scare the skateboarders away — people like you are doing a fine job of that, scaring kids half your age with your dirty looks and snide comments.

I guess my main concern is that you don't run into me on campus and swing your 80 kg. bag full of engineering books at me. I bet you would show me.

Reagan Reed
Class of '97

Deceptive distribution disappoints film-goers

I would like to make a comment to the organization that brought "While You Were Sleeping" to Rudder Tuesday night. I would first like to say thank you for making it possible for students to see new movies for free.

My comment is about how the tickets were distributed. I went to pick up tickets at 10:00 a.m. but I was told they were out and more tickets would be given out at 7:00 p.m. So at about 6:45, I find my way to the end of a very long line.

When I was 10 people away, it is announced that they are out of tickets. There are no more.

It is only about 7:10 now and the line is still very long. So people started to leave because they are under the impression there are no more tickets.

A little after 7:30, though they suddenly find hundreds of tickets behind their booth and they start handing them out. What's up with this?

People went out of their way to get there early to get tickets to see a movie. What is the purpose of lying about how many tickets left and stashing them?

There are people who were disappointed about not being able to see this movie because you deceived them.

Victoria Nunez
Class of '96
Mercy Heinan
Lisa Qualley
Class of '97
Laurie Newman
Class of '95

Minorities do not take opportunities away

Scapegoating seems to be a pervading craze among many white males on our campus, and in our country. The

claim is that affirmative action is either taking potential jobs away, hindering promotions or excluding them from the college of their choice.

I don't doubt that this may happen, but I do feel that the extent of these occurrences are being ignorantly inflated.

In 1993, there were 35,779 undergraduate students enrolled, of which three percent were African American, 9.3 percent Hispanic and 81.9 percent Anglo.

If white males are worried about competition, they should take note of where it is coming from.

The statistics are even more disparate for graduate, medical and veterinary schools — which in 1993 had 0.6 percent African American, 4.1 percent Hispanics, and 94.2 percent Anglo.

In Zach Hall's April 18 column, he stated that he wouldn't be surprised if the Board of Regents wanted an "equal amount of minorities as non-minorities."

Even if this were possible, it would take decades. From 1980 to 1993 there was an average 1.9 increase of African Americans each year and average 2 percent increase in Hispanics.

The numbers are so insignificant they don't support the claim that minorities, specifically African Americans and Hispanics, are taking Anglo males' opportunities away.

People need to pay more attention to facts than to campaign rhetoric.

Angela Hinojosa
Class of '94

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, clarity and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald. A valid student I.D. is required.

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