

THE BATTALION
Established in 1893

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EDITORIAL

DOUBLE STANDARD

Dole's attacks on music lyrics and violent films are not consistent.

Trying to win conservative support for his presidential bid, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole attacked the entertainment industry last week. In a speech given in Hollywood, he blasted gangsta rap performers and many movies because they "revel in mindless violence and loveless sex."

Although current popular culture is an acceptable topic for public officials to debate, Sen. Dole has made a poor contribution to the discussion, displaying ignorance of the issue and setting double standards.

Dole singled out Time Warner for the rap music it produces. However, of the 1,250 albums Warner produced last year, only 28 are rap, and only 15 of those require special labeling to warn parents of the lyrics.

Warner Music does not even control the largest market share of rap music.

In addition, the Republican senator singled out the movies "True Romance" and "Natural Born Killers" for their excessive violence. In an apparent contradiction, he cited "True Lies," a violent movie starring Republican supporter Arnold Schwarzenegger, as "family friendly."

Dole also avoided criticizing Sylvester Stallone and Bruce Willis, two other Republican contributors who regularly appear in extreme-

ly violent or sexually-explicit movies.

Furthermore, an aide to Dole acknowledged that the senator had neither seen the movies nor heard the songs he criticized, but rather had read the lyrics of the songs and the movie reviews.

Movie director Oliver Stone questioned Dole's credibility, saying, "It's at the height of hypocrisy for Sen. Dole, who wants to repeal the assault weapons ban, to blame Hollywood for the violence in our society."

Stone is right; if Dole wants to play the morality hand, he should be consistent.

Another example of Dole's hypocrisy is his support for Sen. Packwood for a committee chairmanship, despite the fact that Packwood is an admitted philanderer and is under investigation for the Senate Ethics Committee for sexual misconduct charges.

Sen. Dole has a right to question the direction of American culture, but he should use more caution. Sparing Republican supporters from criticism, inadequately familiarizing himself with the subject and attacking identical behavior in some but not in others hardly make him a persuasive authority on the subject.

His recent remarks do not make him a moral leader, but rather just another politician.

Gramm begins to show true colors

Texas senator places priorities on presidential politicking rather than his job

Running for President is turning out to be a full-time job for former A&M economics professor, Sen. Phil Gramm. So much a full-time job, in fact, that Gramm has forgotten the duties required of his other job - that of representing the citizens of Texas.

It seems that Gramm has gotten so wrapped up in his quest to be dictator ... uh, President ... that he has skipped out on 25 votes so far this year, allowing him to capture the second worst voting record in the Senate.

The missed votes of all the other senators running for president combined does not even amount to a third of Gramm's total.

Ain't ya proud? Gramm spokesman Larry Neal noted that Gramm hasn't



STERLING HAYMAN
OPINION EDITOR

missed any close, crucial votes and that his constituency doesn't really care about his missed votes. I would beg to differ.

I seem to recall that we, the taxpayers, shell out quite a few hard-earned bucks each year so that Gramm can sit back in his seat and yell, "yee" or "nea" a few times each day.

Do we ask too much? However, there is a good point to all of this. Perhaps if Gramm missed more votes, some of the ridiculous legislation that has been ramrodded down the Senate's hatch would stand less of a chance for passage.

Sad thing is, even if he doesn't win the presidential race (cross your fingers), he may still have a good chance of retaining his Senate seat in '96.

However, that chance is entirely speculative, for Gramm has yet to publicly announce whether or not he will seek both offices simultaneously.

A new Texas law, to take effect in 1996, would allow Republicans to replace Gramm on the ballot if he were to capture the party's presidential nomination and withdraw from the Senate race.

Gramm's campaign has been asked numerous times whether he will abide by this new law, but Gramm keeps refusing to give a definite answer.

A simple "yes" or "no" would do. However, Gramm finds himself in a self-initiated game of hardball politics. It seems there is more involved in the decision than one would think.

Surely Gramm would like to hold his post as senator if his presidential bid falls apart. But, unfortunately for Gramm, he burned his bridges on the issue a few years back.

In 1976, Gramm ran against Lloyd Bensten for the U.S. Senate. That year, Bensten was also running for President. Gramm criticized Bensten's decision to run for both offices simultaneously, saying that an incumbent seeking a higher office who does not give up his seat was being unfair to his constituents.

Now Gramm finds himself caught between a rock and a hard place. Should he run for both offices and hope the citizens of Texas are too dense to notice his hypocrisy?

Or should he give up his Senate seat in hopes of capturing a higher office - knowing that if he loses his presidential bid, he'll become just another average citizen?

Perhaps he should drop out of both races - we would all benefit.

Sterling Hayman is a senior political science major



BANG.



U.S. has strong Christian roots

This letter is in response to the June 6 article in prayer in school.

A brief review of history shows that our Founding Fathers believed in Christianity, prayer and prayer in school.

Our nation's first schools began in churches and for more than three centuries, public schools not only promoted prayer, they relied on the Bible as the primary instrument to teach reading, character and morals.

Benjamin Franklin warned the nation that the exclusion of God would result in internal disputes, the decay of the nation's prestige and a diminished national success.

George Washington warned that if religious principles were excluded, the nation's morality and political prosperity would suffer.

Clearly, Franklin's and Washington's predictions are reality today.

"The separation of church and state" is one of the most

MAIL CALL

misunderstood concepts in American history.

The "separation" was to ensure that a national religious denomination would not be established.

This understanding of "separation of church and state" was applied not only during the time of the Founders, but for 170 years afterwards.

When the British blockade stopped Bibles arriving from Britain, the Continental Congress printed its own.

Congress considered Bibles important enough to have them printed using public money.

A more recent example of the distribution of Bibles by the American government was during World War II.

President Roosevelt had Bibles distributed to American troops.

America was founded on Christianity.

This fact is supported by historical evidence.

If the Founding Fathers were alive today, they might ask why freedom of religion is now freedom against religion.

Heidi W. Voges
Class of '95

Reliance on technology dehumanizes society

MISSING: Remote control with large, gray buttons.

Goes by the names: "the control," "the remote," "the changer" and "the clicker." Last seen somewhere in the living room.

Reward. If found, please call ...

I've lost the television remote before, but I've always found it within a day or two.

It's been weeks now, and I've almost lost all hope. I'm ashamed that I can feel this kind of sorrow over an inanimate object.

Maybe "sorrow" should be replaced with "inconvenience." After all, the loss would not be a problem if I didn't think it such a chore to get up and change the channel manually. Ah, there's that word again. Nobody wants to do anything manually anymore.

We are so set in our ways that we don't see what is happening to us.

We have moving sidewalks in airports, subnotebook computers with built-in fax/modems, video games that are so realistic, you feel tired after playing them and remote controls for every device.

The progression of society is a strange thing. Basically, humans are collectively working toward something non-human, all in the name of bettering society.

The AT&T commercial that shows different situations and how new technology will be able to facilitate life, ending with the motto, "You will," is a perfect example.

Everything is done in the comfort of our homes and involves as little effort as possible. Remote controls, the home-shopping club, the Internet - all of these things offer users the comfort of not physically moving much.

In this sense, the futuristic "Jetson's" cartoon was about as on the mark as Orwell's



KYLE LITTLEFIELD
ASST. OPINION EDITOR

"1984." Technology exists to build machines to perform such domestic chores as the ones on the cartoon; this technology just isn't cheap enough to mass-market. But I'm sure if it was, every household would not be without something that would make life easier.

But life isn't easier than when the primitive hunting and gathering societies roamed the earth. It is a common fact that we work harder today than they ever did. And there's the contradiction: We work harder in the name of doing less.

Are we a society that shies away from "living" life?

The whole concept of virtual reality seems to testify that we are.

Virtual reality systems provide an escape for the user in his or her own home. It all comes down to "doing" things without actually doing them.

The person participating in the business meeting while relaxing on the beach in the AT&T commercial is in reality, only interacting with a piece of intricately-wired composite. He does not "feel" the tension in the meeting or the temperature of the room; nor does he smell the coffee being served. Technology can only mimic the human senses.

We've all heard the cliché metaphor of the Internet as the "information super-highway." A typical session on the "Net" can take you from Germany to Australia in seconds, right in the comfort of your own home. As long as you can type or point and click a mouse, you can navigate to just about anywhere in the world.

While the ease of cross-cultural idea exchange is certainly a plus, whatever happened to the Hemingway/Faulkner ideals of rugged exploration that would take us to these foreign places for ourselves? These ideals have been reduced to 0s and 1s coursing through

fiber-optic cable. Something as simple as home delivery of food says a lot about our society. When once we would talk to the fruit and vegetable store owner about the freshness of the produce before we made our purchase, we now just call McDonald's and have them deliver the Garden Salad.

Supporters of technology will tell you that it is a good thing you can do all of these things from your own home. They do not realize that the goal of technology - realized in its ultimate potential - finds us lying in bed all day, having no need to leave the house because everything we need to survive comfortably is there at our disposal.

Once we are used to the amenities that technology provides, it is tiresome and regressive to go back to the old ways of doing things.

It's funny when we see cartoon characters like the "Jetson's" tucked out from the labor of button-pushing, but the irony is that our society is not that far removed from that world.

And the sad thing is that there really isn't any going back to a more personal, manual society. Once we are used to the "amenities" that technology provides, we find it tiresome and regressive to go back to the old ways of doing things. Just like losing the remote control - it is an inconvenience to return to the days when you had to manually turn the channel.

Once technology is in place, we take it for granted, and we never stop to think that we are making our world a little less personal and a little less "human."

Kyle Littlefield is a senior journalism major

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The Battalion (USPS 045-360) is published daily, Monday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters and Monday through Thursday during the summer sessions (except University holidays and exam periods) at Texas A&M University. Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77840.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, 230 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.