

OPINION

THE BATTALION
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EDITORIAL

ADVERSE EFFECT

The greed of the players and owners has hurt baseball.

What would happen if an All-Star game was held and no one cared?

Well this year, as the major league baseball players gear up for the usually exciting All-Star Game, the still-angry fans are sitting at home. Although the game is sold out, the ticket sales are sluggish and the ticket brokers are left trying to get rid of empty seats.



Barry Lifecowitz, head of the National Association of Ticket Brokers, said in a recent Associated Press story that the All-Star game has been a "total flop."

"Without any question," he said, "the strike has had a dramatic impact on interest in the All-Star game. Or should I say lack of interest." Ever since the baseball strike, which lasted for more than eight months and included a cancellation of the World Series, game attendance has been down in ballparks across the country.

According to a recent Sports Illustrated article, attendance at baseball games is down 20 percent compared to 1994.

Apparently, the fans are

staying at home to punish the players and the owners for their greed.

The strike was a long dry spell in baseball, and to the average American it did not seem to make much sense. Many fans had trouble understanding why people earning millions of dollars a year to participate in the great American pastime wanted anything more, it seemed not only ludicrous, but unbelievable.

Now that the strike is over, the public is somewhat reluctant to forgive and forget the seemingly greedy actions of the players and owners.

In the Sports Illustrated article, San Francisco Giants President Peter Magowan said, "I think the fans are trying to teach us all a lesson. They won't come back until they feel that we are properly spanked - and that could be after a whole season goes by."

The players and coaches hope that exciting pennant races will bring the fans back to the All-American pastime.

Evidently, their present efforts have not been enough.

Hard times hit Democratic party

Judging by the results of the midterm elections last November, many American voters are looking to the Republican party for leadership.

Many political positions in the House and Senate, governorships and other state and national offices previously controlled by Democrats now are held by Republicans.

Whether this is a change for the better is for history to determine.

To add insult to injury to the Democrats, a number of Democratic office holders recently have defected to the GOP.

One of the most recent defections occurred in the U.S. Congress, with U.S. Rep. Greg Laughlin becoming the newest edition to the Republican party.

Is such a change fair? Many Texas voters elected Laughlin because they believed he embraced the values and ideals of the Democratic party.

He thanked these voters by abandoning them. It is unfair that Rep. Laughlin, as well as the other elected officials who have changed parties, accepted campaign contributions, support and guidance from the Democratic party and then left it behind.

If Laughlin was so unsatisfied with the Democrats, he either should have worked to improve the party or run for office as a Republican. Perhaps he feared he would lose as a Republican.

Change is certain to happen to the Democratic party as the 1996 elections approach.

According to an article in the Houston Chronicle on July 2, Bill White, Texas' chief fund raiser for President Clinton, stated that the Texas Democrats have suffered from the national party's image.

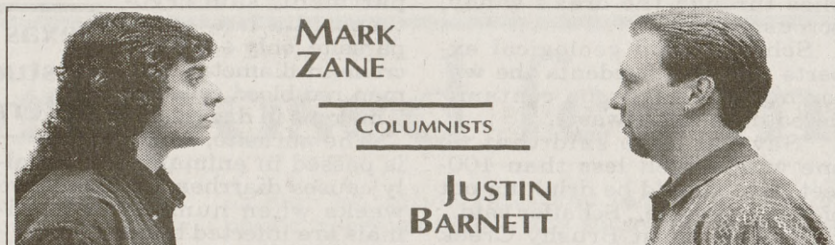
Because Texas Democrats cannot change the Democratic Party's national image, White seems to suggest that the Texas Democratic party should put more distance between itself and its national counterpart.

Robin Rorapaugh, a consultant for the Democratic Campaign Committee, said the Texas Democrats will emphasize the conservative tone of the recent Democratic-led Texas Legislature.

This is an obvious ploy to gain voters who might otherwise side with the Republicans.

What kind of image does all this present?

If the Democrats want to



MARK ZANE

COLUMNISTS

JUSTIN BARNETT

show that the party is strong and can rebound, they must stick together during any sign of trouble.

The party should also avoid imitating the Republicans.

Nowhere in the Constitution does it state that America should have a bipartisan political system.

Unfortunately, this is a reality.

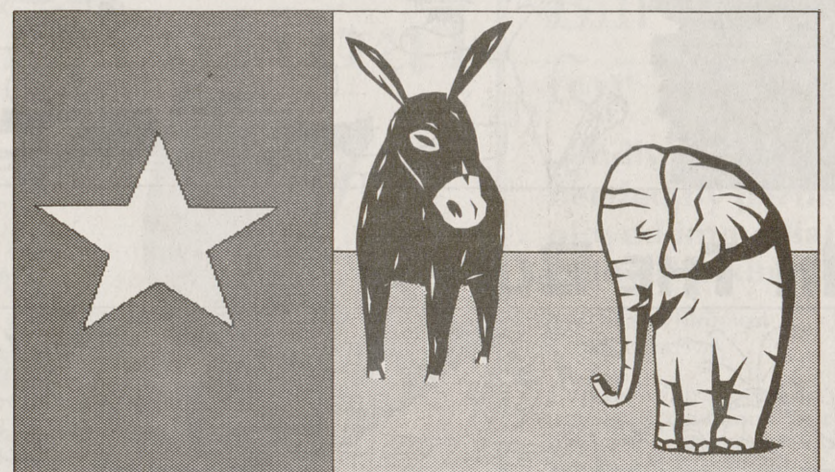
Sure, third party candidates exist, but such persons rarely receive enough funding and support to be elected.

Perhaps if more voters would vocalize their dissatisfaction with the current political system, a change

Why are members of the Democratic party, especially those in positions of leadership, deserting the party? Without being presumptuous, perhaps it is because the party has become associated with antiquated concepts in general and bloated, ineffective government in particular. Throw in a dash of liberalism, and you have a guaranteed recipe for failure.

Failure is what the Democrats are coping with at this point.

Since the elections of last November, a surprising number of Democratic office-holders have walked across the aisle to join the Republican party. This exodus has included federal as well as state and local politicians.



can occur. It has become sickening to watch the two parties bicker back and forth, mudslinging and call each other names.

With competition from additional parties, such occurrences could be minimized.

It is upsetting when parties change their positions on issues only to please the public.

This gives the impression the party is only interested in accumulating votes, not improving society.

Americans have become accustomed to choice.

We have a variety of flavors of ice cream, many sneaker companies, a ton of colleges and universities and even various choices for contraception.

More than two political parties would be a welcome addition to our freedom of choice.

Mark Zane is a graduate sociology student

Toward the end of last month in Texas, a total of 23 Democrats fled their party in one day.

The most notable was U.S. Rep. Greg Laughlin.

The state of Texas is a good example of how the Democrat's once iron grip on important offices is slowly and relentlessly slipping away. Somehow they have managed to squander the U.S. Senate seat they held for more than a century, lost the governorship and witnessed the purging of several long-time representatives.

The party defections are mere salt in their wounds.

It would be an understatement to say this collapse is of titanic proportions. Apocalyptic seems more fitting. These people have really blown it.

The Democrats have forgotten the people who kept them in power and instead have turned to the liberal wing of the party for guidance and leadership.

The Democratic party of the past was the party of the work-

ing person. It supported fairness, integrity, thrift and a strong work ethic. It was the party of the common person who wanted life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

As time progressed and it became increasingly evident that the liberal influence had become preeminent, the power that the Democrats enjoyed for so long slowly waned. No matter how strenuously the Democrats objected, the majority of the people in the United States have conservative principles.

Now that the Democrats are shackled with the liberal label, they are truly painted in a corner. With all of the shrill interests groups vying for power, the message of the party steadily is becoming lost in a torrent of rhetoric.

Texas Land Commissioner Gary Mauro, as reported in the Houston Chronicle, believes the party has failed to arouse interest from its core constituents. He said he wants the party once again to convince voters it can govern effectively and efficiently.

In his estimation, the party needs a whole new image.

A new image and life-support is closer to reality. What he and many other politicians are not able to see is the big picture.

The Democrats, upon losing their majority in the House, promptly assigned leadership positions to the same people who led them down the proverbial primrose path.

Minority Leader Richard Gephardt and Minority Whip David Bonior still are rehashing the same old charges that the Republican Party is the party of the rich, the poor are in danger, children will be systematically starved and the '80's are to blame.

During a press conference, Gephardt was asked his feelings on elected officials switching parties. He had the audacity to speak on behalf of the American people, stating that "the American people do not want their members of Congress to switch parties for political purposes."

I would guess the American people would much prefer Gephardt keep his mouth shut for political purposes.

I am not defending the Democrats or trying to explain away their failures.

The Democrats should be led by people of their own choosing, no matter how disastrous the consequences.

Let them continue to espouse a liberal agenda, even in the face of total rejection. Let Gephardt and his merry band of liberals keep providing material for comedians.

As long as they want to drive their Edsel, no one should try to sell them a Mercedes.

Justin Barnett is a senior English major



I DIDN'T THINK THEY WERE SERIOUS ABOUT THIS SCHOOL DRESS-CODE THING

Students should define 'success' by their own standards

When my senior seminar professor turned to the class and asked us why we were there, nervous giggles filled the room. As your typical lazy college students, we were there simply because a course of this level is required for graduation, and this one titled "Nature and Man" happened to fit our schedules.



ELIZABETH PRESTON
COLUMNIST

A few students attempted to answer nobly and impress the professor by declaring they were there to learn about literature or to further their knowledge of nature. Finally, a brave soul raised her hand and mumbled that she was in the class as a means to an end - that end being that she needed this class to graduate in August. The rest of the class murmured in agreement.

My professor immediately began questioning what the student had meant. If this class was a means to an end, then when and where would we reach that end?

Most college students will describe all of their classes - even the ones in their majors - as a means to an end. Thus college becomes a means to an end, as was high school and all of the little jobs students have to earn money.

But when do we reach our end?

Though it is possible that your end is to graduate from college and then you will begin living your dreams, it usually does not happen that way.

Students tend to get in debt immediately after graduation, buying cars and equipment they can't really afford and charging up credit cards like mad - if their credit cards aren't already maxed out upon graduation. Then the newly-graduated students are forced to accept the first job offered to them and spends the rest of their lives just trying to keep up.

In "Walden," Henry D. Thoreau says, "I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

A man in my class said he wanted to ride horses all day, but seeing as how he obviously couldn't do that, he came to college to get a degree in history and to find a way to support himself in a way society approves of.

Thoreau would ask: Why can't he live on a horse for the rest of his life? If that is his dream, he should become a cowboy or a mounted police officer or a park ranger.

Pursuing lesser dreams because of fear that your true dream will not support you is a popular cop-out.

In modern American society, attending college has become a prerequisite for the middle class. Successful or mediocre students attend college almost as a reflex. Technical jobs, blue-collar jobs and other skilled labors are invariably looked down on.

Today, far too many people succumb to society's expectations and accept the standard definition of "success," rather than living up to their own.

The problem with all of this snobbery is that many people desire the jobs that require less formal education more than being accountants, teachers or lawyers. But in deference to pressure from parents, societal expectations and other outside influences, some continue to slog through their classes, their jobs and their degrees until they have fulfilled everyone's dreams ... except their own.

Earning a college education is not, and should not be, the desire of everyone.

College is a choice, not a requirement.

Great figures throughout history lacked a formal education, yet many of these same people have left extraordinary marks on society.

Ironically, many of these marks are taught as a part of higher education.

Today, far too many people succumb to society's expectations and accept the standard definition of "success," rather than living up to their own. And trying to live up to these expectations of parents, teachers and friends often can drive a person crazy. Hence the term "mid-life crisis."

Thoreau also writes that "To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake." If people began to live their lives the way they wanted and fulfilled their fantasies, they would not have to look up at the age of 40, or 50 or whenever, and realize that they have never truly been "awake."

School is not the be-all and end-all of modern existence, and a degree is not always a prerequisite to a life - believe it or not.

The longer society's expectations control us and the more we live trying to reach an end that is not our own, the less control we have of our destinies.

Elizabeth Preston is a senior English major

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