

Revising the curriculum to appease everyone

Man, this multiculturalism proposal just won't go away. Who would have thought that a proposal calling for six hours of classes from such an extensive list of options would be creating such a hubbub?

I've heard people loudly bemoaning the "liberal agenda" as they vow to guard with their lives their version of American history against any sort of unwanted revisions or additions.

The problem here is pretty simple. Our conservative white people want to learn mostly about other white people. It doesn't matter if they are in a class on politics, history, literature or geography.

Our liberal white people and our people of other races think that maybe six hours of classes in which the conservative white people at least made an attempt to learn about something other than white people is a good idea.

Now, I don't claim to be smart enough to know who's right. If people want to learn about George Washington and forget about George Washington Carver, maybe that is their prerogative.

Maybe ignorance truly is bliss, and the less people know about people who are different from themselves, the better off they will be.

I do know that it's likely that this issue isn't ever going to die, and I haven't heard any solutions to this dilemma being tossed around. I think I might have one.

Maybe we ought to broaden the list of classes that might count for this multicultural requirement. Throw in a little more fluff, so to speak. That way, everybody can be happy once again.



CHRIS STIDVENT
 COLUMNIST

So, I tentatively put forward some possible alternatives to add some breadth to the list.

Music 499 — *Sammy Davis Jr. and Liberace; The Trials and Tribulations of Las Vegas Lounge Singers*. This is really three for the price of one.

Not only do we have a black guy and a homosexual, the black guy also happens to be Jewish. Since we'll be taking an in-depth look at three minority groups, let's go ahead and give ourselves nine hours of multicultural credit for this class.

History 499 — *The History of the Ku Klux Klan: Civil War to Present*. When the evil white Reconstructionists and the dastardly black freedmen sought to radically alter the fabric of our very own society after the Civil War, these "white American patriots" fought back in true Southern gentleman style.

We'll be taking a closer look at this quirky resistance organization.

Religious Studies 499 — *Tom Cruise, John Travolta and the Church of Scientology*. "You can tell by the way we use our words" that we'll be studying this funky new religion as we get to know two of its more famous members on a more intimate level. Some of our visual aids will be *Stayin' Alive*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *Risky Business* and *Cocktail*.

Linguistics 499 — *Gangsta' Rap Lyrics: De-gramming and Deconstruction*. As we look at works by such artists as Snoop Doggy Dogg and Ice Cube, we will be pondering the eternal question of what it truly means to "F— the Police."

There will also be a special field trip to a real live ghetto, where we will approach some inhabitants (but not too closely) and ask them to describe

some of their own experiences with this art form.

Woman's Studies 499 — *Two Proponents of Merciless Exploitation and Subjugation of Women: Bob Barker and Pat Sajak*. After viewing numerous episodes of "Wheel of Fortune" and "The Price is Right," we will consider the plight of Vanna White and the girls who wear bikinis and point to new cars on Bob Barker's show.

Hopefully, a better understanding of relationships between the sexes and an increased ability to spot sexual harassment and discrimination in all of its ugly forms will be our reward.

Literature 499 — *Survey of the Writings of the Ancestors of Modern Day Greek-Americans*. Although Plato, Aristotle and Socrates are considered to be the founding fathers of modern-day Western thought, some people have overlooked the fact that they can be put into their very own minority group.

While we slide this one under the multicultural committee's nose, we'll line up Michael Dukakis as our guest speaker and make falafel for everybody.

Sociology 499 — *Dead and Doomed Student Groups*. This class takes a look at some student organizations that have either dissolved or are on

their last legs.

We'll be asking the question, "Why did they even try?" Lest the multicultural hounds fret, we can definitely guarantee that these student groups are an oppressed minority.

Some guest speakers include former members of Aggies for Ann Richards, Aggies Against Bonfire, the Aggie Football Club and Aggies for Free and Independent Thought.

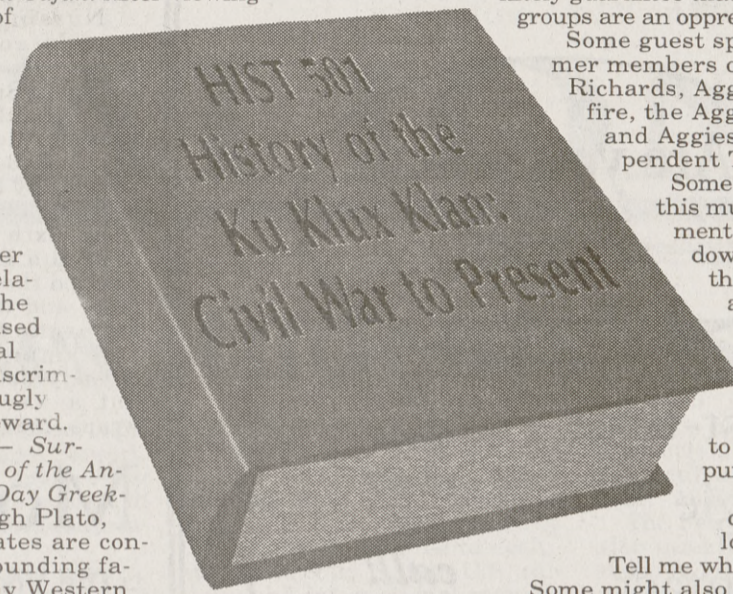
Some might argue that this multicultural requirement has been watered down so much through the addition of frivolous and questionable classes like Sociohorticulture and The Geography of Great Britain that it isn't possible to dilute its original purpose any further.

I ask these silly individuals to take a look at the above list. Tell me what you see.

Some might also argue that only on a close-minded and largely misinformed campus could such a weak proposal meet with such strong opposition.

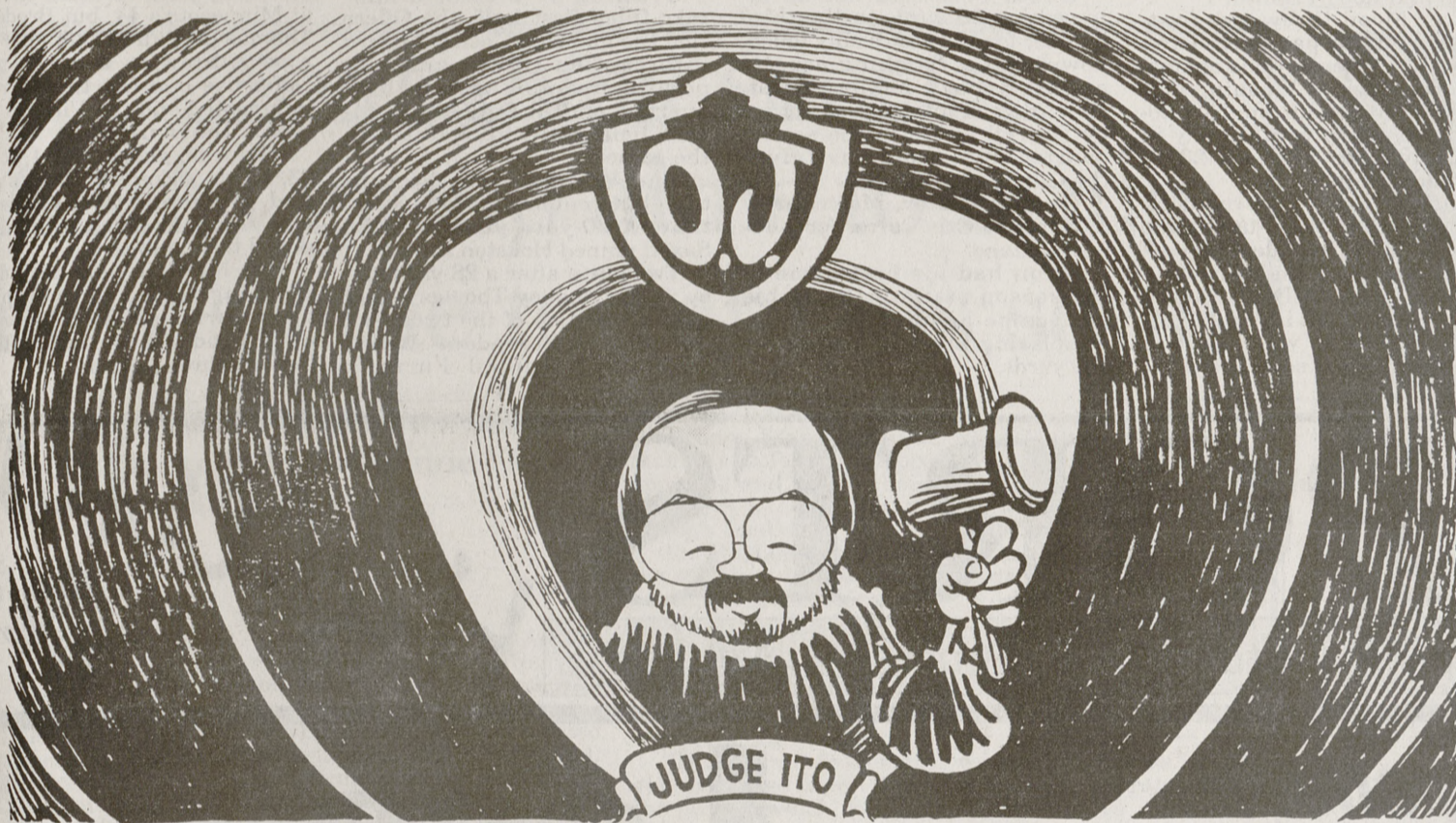
I ask these other silly individuals to take another look around. Now tell me what you see.

Chris Stidvent is a senior English and philosophy major



MARGULIES

©1995 THE SECOND NEW JERSEY JIMMORRY@aol.com



"That's all, folks!"

Don't believe the Democrats' hype

Keep the truth in mind when listening to Clinton's budget-balancing rhetoric

President Clinton is making a trek to t.u. on October 16.

As the president tours the country in his latest "spread lies to the college students and get them whining about their student aid" tour, we must keep one thing in mind: the truth.

No matter how many times President Clinton says it — no matter how many times the press repeats it, a lie does not become the truth. The Republicans in Congress are not slashing student aid and no amount of liberal whining can change that fact.

After two and a half years of the Clinton administration, you'd think that the public would be used to his lies. But this time, the president is insulting our intelligence by asking us to believe something so blatantly false.

The truth is that under the Republican's plan, the number of student loans will increase from \$6.6 million this year to \$7.1 million next year, and the volume of student loans will increase from \$24 billion this year to \$36 billion in the year 2002 according to the Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee. And the Clinton claims the Republicans are making cuts in student aid? Yeah, I know, he didn't inhale either.

Another thing that Democrats do not understand in this debate over loans is the concept of saving money, but give them credit, they sure know how to spend money that's not theirs.

The Republicans have made a commitment to balance the budget (a radical concept for the Democrats, who made a career out of racking up debt). Out of the \$1.3 trillion in proposed savings over seven years, a modest \$10 billion will come out of higher education spending according to the House committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities.



LYDIA PERCIVAL
 COLUMNIST

The Republicans don't want to balance the budget by hurting the taxpayers, they just want to balance the budget.

The Republicans advocate slashing one thing: bureaucracy. The President's direct student loan program would cost the taxpayers more than 1.5 billion dollars over seven years according to the Congressional Budget Office.

This is not a solution, but simply another obstacle to a balanced budget. History has shown us that large government-managed programs are both costly and ineffective.

The Democrats naturally oppose this. We're well aware of their fondness for creating wasteful and inefficient bureaucracies.

What many fail to comprehend is that the Republican higher education reforms will accomplish many savings without affecting key sectors of student aid programs. Under house appropriations, the Pell grant will increase to \$2,440, the highest it has ever been.

The House of Representatives, in an effort to expand the number and volume of student loans, will continue its support of many programs. Supplemental education opportunity grants (\$583 million), the college work study program (\$617 million), minority programs (\$463 million) and historically black colleges programs (\$130 million) will retain their full funding.

As always, many private sector grants and loans are available to students and the economic benefits of a balanced budget will stimulate business and encourage the private sector to invest in America's future — the education of its young people.

Democrats claim, as they often do, that the Republican's sole motivation is to provide "tax cuts for the rich."

This much-cliche'd phrase is often used as a rebuttal to anything Republicans seek to implement (when rational, factual arguments are exhausted). It's true that the Republicans want tax cuts for the rich, along with tax cuts for the middle-class, the poor

and all the other taxpayers. Student loans have nothing at all to do with "tax cuts for the rich."

Republicans are simply keeping their word (another radical concept for an administration that does more flip-flopping than the Olympic gymnastic team) and are taking action on their commitment to eliminate the budget deficit and create an economy where the American people can prosper and thrive.

The Republicans don't want to balance the budget by hurting the taxpayers, they just want to balance the budget.

Savings in the current program will come from several sources, none unilaterally stripped of funding. By letting the interest accrue during the six month grace period, there will be \$3.5 million in savings.

Students have the option of paying this interest off immediately or letting it accrue over the balance of the loan (the Economic and Educational Opportunities Committee estimates that the average loan will have its monthly payments increased by \$4 a month because of this measure). An increase in the interest on parent loans (from 3.1 percent to 4 percent will save an additional \$450 million.

In an attempt to protect his wasteful social spending and perpetuate the cycle of overspending and debt, President Clinton will try to convince you that the big bad Republicans want to take away your money.

By balancing the budget and providing for a prosperous economic future, the Republicans plan will hold far more benefits than Clinton's spiral of debt. As usual with our current chief executive, don't believe him — believe the facts.

Lydia Percival is a senior political science major



MAIL CALL

Women accepted by all at Bonfire

As a woman who has been active in Bonfire since 1993, I feel compelled to comment on the accusations that Jason Brown leveled at this tradition on Sept. 29.

Brown suggests that only white males are welcome at Bonfire. This is patently false. Women are not only allowed to work on Bonfire, they are actively recruited to help.

They go out to cut and stack with their dorms if they live on-campus, or with Off-Campus Aggies if they live off-campus; there are also organizations such as Women's Bonfire Committee and Bonfire Reload Crew that provide opportunities for women to participate.

In addition to cutting, loading, unloading, swamping and stacking, women also help keep those working on Bonfire from dehydrating or starving.

Women are an essential part of Bonfire. To suggest that they are not welcome is not only false, but demeaning.

Neither I nor my friends have ever been told that we could not help. We have heard comments like "women at Bonfire are extremely motivational," "you cut/wire as good as any guy I've seen" and "thank you."

As for the woman who was called a "bitch," the incident, as coarse as it may seem, could have occurred at other events such as Yell Practice or a game, had she showed the same lack of Aggie Spirit there.

I believe Bonfire is "a long standing tradition that stands for unity and spirit."

*Christina Weston
 Class of '97
 Accompanied by 45 signatures*

Relationships hard to find at A&M

As much as I love this school, I can't help but feel that its size and the individual anonymity of the students is overwhelming.

I have met the girl(s) of my dreams numerous times on the street, on the bus or just in line getting football tickets. Too bad the chances of seeing any of them again are a million to one.

Most women aren't handing out phone numbers on request no matter how breathtaking the bus ride was. I'll close by sending a word out to a woman named Kiesha I met last Tuesday in a laundromat on College Main.

All I know is her name and

she lives on Southside. Thanks for making washing clothes more bearable, Kiesha — peace.

*Jason Kearns
 Class of '97*

End of Medicare not too near

With chagrin I read David Taylor's apology for the Republican's efforts to demolish another part of the social safety net.

I find it odd that Taylor accepted without question the premise that the Medicare fund will go bankrupt in seven years without the drastic measures the Republicans advocate.

I wonder if he realizes that seven times since 1975 Medicare has been pronounced on the verge of bankruptcy.

Seven times before now, Congress has shown the political will to simply increase the fund without cutting benefits.

Suddenly, the Republicans and their media mouthpieces are trumpeting the "End of Medicare As We Know It" if their alleged reforms are not enacted.

This tactic is called a bait and switch in management classes, and it's an unethical and illegal business practice.

Then again, politics is vastly different than the marketplace.

*James B. Seymour, Jr.
 Class of '93*

Suggestions for cartoon caption

Regarding the recent political cartoon which was run in your paper displaying Christ holding a sign saying, "Where did I go wrong?"

Perhaps the others there would more appropriately have been holding signs saying things like: "No prayer in school," "Save the whales, trees, anything except babies," "If it feels good do it" or "the Founding Fathers were not Christians."

*Michael W. Newman
 Class of '96*

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 and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald. A valid student ID is required. Letters may also be mailed to:

The Battalion - Mail Call
 013 Reed McDonald Fax: (409) 845-2647
 Texas A&M University E-mail: Batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu
 College Station, TX 77843-1111