

THE BATTALION

Established in 1893

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**EDITORIAL
OPENING LINES**

The new telephone registration changes are steps in the right direction.

Texas A&M students will find registering for Spring 1996 classes a little easier, thanks to changes implemented by the administration. These changes should be the first in many implementations to come to facilitate the process of registration.

Students will be able to check for registration blocks and account information over the phone before they register to eliminate further frustration.

Also, the University has added 30 telephone lines for registration, and has extended registration to 24-hour blocks of time.

These changes will make it easier for students to register on time, and will decrease the number of times students will have to dial 260-3212 only to hear "Sorry, all telephone registration lines are busy," before being allowed to register.

These welcome changes will noticeably benefit students, but the University could do more to simplify registration.

For example, operators

willing to help students with registration problems would make a clarification of the problems easier.

With this, students might be able to avoid running around campus, from their adviser to the Pavilion, trying to find out why they are blocked and what to do about it.

An alternative to registering over the telephone would be registration via computer terminals at various locations on campus.

With the number of computer terminals on campus, a system could be established to allow students to register through them, eliminating the hassles encountered with the telephone.

Still, the measures the administration has taken so far will be useful.

The positive effects of easier registration should encourage the administration to do even more to make this often-frustrating and confusing process less of a hassle.



10 reasons to join College Republicans

That's it, the bell has rung, and the gloves are coming off.

I feel it is my obligation to speak on the behalf of all those individual organizations and local bands competing for flier space with the College Republican propaganda machine.

I am not saying the College Republicans have less of a right to post fliers around campus. However, it always seems that other organizations' fliers are continuously being covered by layers of brightly colored College Republican propaganda.

In an effort to curtail this endless barrage, I have decided to provide the College Republicans with some free publicity.

Here are 10 reasons why an individual might want to affiliate themselves with the "best party on campus."

1. Because I feel like being an insensitive little hate monger. The College Republicans have the ability to be quite offensive. For example, last year the College Republicans placed fliers on campus which said something to the effect of, "less-qualified minorities would get jobs before a qualified white person."

2. Also a member of the pathological liars anonymous society. The College Republicans have recently come under scrutiny due to "allegations of violating University fundraising guidelines." In other words, it told some tiny white lies.

3. So I don't have the time to think for myself. Continuously, the College Republicans follow some national figure's opinions without actually thinking through the issues themselves. Ditto Rush!

4. Because I'm somewhat shallow and insecure. There is a tendency by the College Republicans to bash differing ideologies and then label them as some hostile liberal agenda. For example, affirmative action is portrayed as

some giant monster designed to maintain a liberal agenda.

5. I suffer from a rare psychological disorder — Change-phobia. College Republicans, it seems, are afraid that the implementation of multiculturalism will destroy the conservative fabric of A&M and produce a Cal-Berkeley. Yeah, and

Mick Jagger has small lips.

6. Two words: "Christian Coalition." Needless to say, that's a whole other column. However, this might be the second organization you might think about joining.

7. Because you believe Ronald Reagan was the greatest president ever. Yeah and Ross Perot has tiny ears. I am sure former President Reagan has his good side. However, let's not forget that small incident having to do with the Contras and some arms deal.

8. You opened a fortune cookie which read "end world hunger, feed them the poor." The College Republicans strongly side with proposed Republican social reform issues, such as significantly reducing Medicare benefits for the elderly as well as reducing financial aid for our poor college students.

9. Because you are so arrogant, you are never wrong. Albert Einstein once said something to the effect of "today's problems cannot be solved with yesterday's solutions."

Unfortunately, College Republicans believe past ideas which made A&M great will promise the same for the future.

10. Because you feel it is the only way to fit in at A&M. Although A&M is largely a Republican school, make some friends, drink a few beers, loosen up and relax. Try to view the whole scope — there is bound to be something for you out there.

Let's hope these 10 reasons offered will help any interested individuals make a responsible decision regarding their affiliation with the "best party on campus."

But on a more serious note, College Republicans should begin to take responsibility for the offenses it has committed. Such as the fliers which pressed racial issues last year as well as the recent incident regarding the fund raising letter which apparently broke university guidelines.

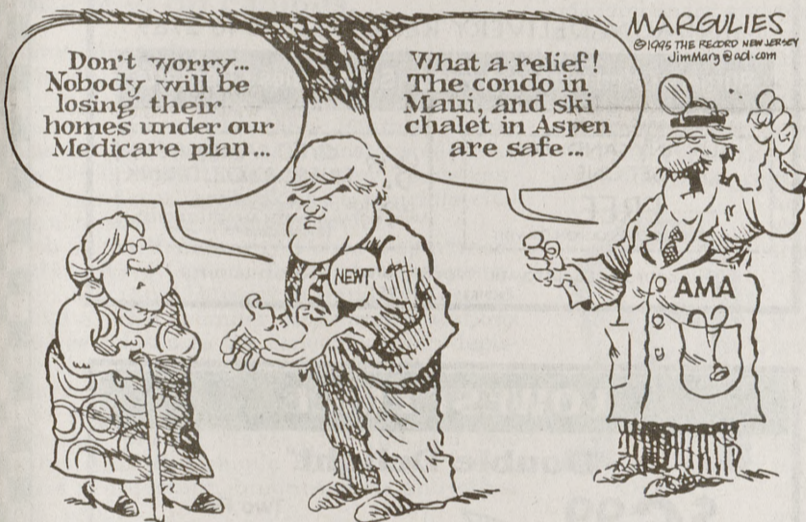
Instead it insists on hiding behind the defense of being misunderstood.

However, the more troubling reality is it seems that the financial and political support the College Republicans obtain from alumni provides it with immunity from University guidelines.

When is this organization going to be held accountable by the University as well as by the student body for its actions? Let's hope sometime soon.

Juan Hernandez is a senior psychology major

JUAN HERNANDEZ
COLUMNIST



MAIL CALL

Student Senate has Aggies in mind

I am a first-year senator replying to Lydia Percival's column bashing the Student Senate.

It is not the Senate's duty to recognize minorities at Texas A&M, but to act in the interests of the student body.

We encourage any student to voice their opinion through the proper channels and speak to their representatives.

The authors of the "Truth in Representation" bill set out to obtain opinions of the student body on the original Cultures bill.

They forgot to mention to the 15 or so students at A&M that cared that a new bill would follow the old one if it was repealed.

They had a bright idea, but went about it the wrong way.

The authors of the bill should have held forums and talked to constituents first, then written a bill to express these gathered opinions. Then we could have held a meeting to decide if we should table it.

It was the sequence of events that confused everyone and compelled them to act "purely in the interest of uselessness." This is the most controversial issue facing modern society, and not even the United States Senate has been able to resolve it.

President Bowen is the ultimate authority on what cultures classes will be required of the Class of 2000. He might take our

bill into consideration. He might also come up with his own plan or follow advice from the Regents.

Mike Reining
Class of '95

Stidvent's cynicism overwhelms reader

Chris Stidvent usually writes about matters of significance. Also, he usually writes with conviction so I can respect him even if I disagree. But the column about which products should bear the A&M seal went too far.

Why is he concerned if Aggies wish to be buried in caskets with the symbol of their school? No one is asking him to buy one, and his money does not go toward their production.

Also, it was disrespectful to trivialize death. His cynical outlook on our University and life in general is sad.

Kristen Lawrence
Class of '98

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
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'You have the right to remain silent'

U.S. citizens, students too trusting of people in authority positions

I was just standing there helplessly.

The front of my car was in pieces all over Villa Maria, and my nerves were shot.

My first instinct, after rear ending this large car, was to hand the passengers a deposit slip from my checkbook, so they could contact me. They smiled politely, then asked for my insurance information.

"Oh, yes, right. Sure, right." I took the card out of my wallet with a shaky hand. I didn't really know the accident ropes, having never hit anyone before.

I was crying and must have been quite a sight when the police officer pulled up. He was businesslike and matter of fact, taking no time to explain to me what I needed to do.

I asked him about the citation he had just handed me, and he pled the fifth. I asked for approximate amounts of the fines, and he pretended like he had never heard of the city of Bryan, or its municipal court system.

"I really have no idea, ma'am."

"Oh yeah? Then why are you working for the city?" I wanted to say.

It was in that instant that I realized how easy it would be for these people to take advantage of me, or to treat me unfairly, or do the same to anyone, for that matter.

You hear bad things about the Los Angeles Police Department. You hear deservedly bad things about the LAPD. Their history of racial discrimination has led to a total breakdown of the trust held by that city's minorities.

However, such trust-breaking occurrences

ERIN HILL
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also take place in Texas and the police departments in Anytown, U.S.A.

Take the recent occurrence in my hometown. "Eileen" was hit while going through a green light by a car who had run a red light. After telling the officer what had happened, he walked away muttering, "You're probably lying."

Did he say this because he was in a bad mood, or because she was a woman, or because he likes to intimidate people?

All three reasons are possible. No matter what the reason, his snide comments and attempts at intimidation were inappropriate. But inappropriate or not, such an incident could easily happen.

And anyone could imagine the helplessness of being stopped by an officer whose intentions are less than honorable or treatment less than fair.

Of course, police are only human. They are no better or no worse than any of the rest of this nation's citizens. Since they are a subgroup of the larger pool, they possess the same flaws and imperfections of the society as a whole.

Still, we tend to trust people in power. And when we trust too much, dangerous situations can arise.

It would be easy for instances of discrimination to occur in situations where one of the people involved is in a position of power, whether it be corporate power, government power or power stemming from knowledge.

I experienced the same fear of authority when I started thinking about filing an insurance claim. This, too, was a world with which I was not familiar.

Now perhaps I was a bit frightened about

the whole idea of insurance claims because of reading John Grisham's *The Rainmaker*, a novel about a corrupt insurance company who bulldoze over the little people and grab for their money in the wreckage.

Because of this novel, I saw greedy, opportunistic thieves behind every Prudential rock. I didn't want those big All-State hands touching me nor State Farm to be there.

As an ignorant college student, mooching off of her parent's insurance policy, I had no idea of my rights, hence my concern. I wouldn't know if something wrong was going on. Would you?

Too many citizens, especially students, have no working knowledge of their rights. We don't read, or don't understand the 'fine' print, you might say.

A police force is not one of our constitutional guarantees, nor is easy-to-understand insurance. Individuals are ultimately responsible for their own personal safety and well-being.

Police protection must be recognized for what it is: only an auxiliary general deterrent, says Peter Kasler, in his essay "Police Have No Duty to Protect Individuals." And in that same vein, we must think of powerful people in other institutions as mere human beings.

If we trust too much in other people, instead of carefully monitoring our own lives, then we set ourselves up to be taken advantage of and ultimately hurt.

It all became painfully clear when I was told to have a man with me when I talk to the mechanic who fixes my car to make sure I get a fair price.

Erin Hill is a graduate pursuing a teaching certificate