

## For Gramm, it was never too soon

We all know how dogs mark their territory. They piss on it and then move on. But a quick pause and a lifted leg do not make a fire hydrant home.



**MICHAEL LANDAUER**  
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with his, "Aw shucks, look at me" attitude. "I'm just a good conservative fella from Texas A&M who gets all his political advice from a hard-

his message and join the ranks. His style, which includes saying one thing and then doing another, has become known as Grammstanding — the one thing all Americans do know about the squealy voiced Texan.

All the while he kept shuffling his feet and telling us what a sincere guy he was. But don't get him wrong, he had convictions, too. No new ideas or anything, but solid conservative beliefs.

Well, reality showed up at the polls in Iowa and showed Gramm how popular he's not. Gramm and his Grammstanding spoils will stand by their assertion that he just never got his ideas presented to the American people. It is more likely that the American people saw right through him. Many Aggies sure did.

In O' Army days, Gramm and his wife Wendy (definitely the better half) could be seen

eating at Luby's and soaking up that College Station lifestyle. But when Gramm started campaigning for president in 1984 (officially for Reagan, unofficially for Gramm), the country was sucked right out of that country boy.

With the Corps of Cadets creating the backdrop, Gramm came "home" to announce his candidacy for president. It was one of six such photo opportunities, uh ... I mean announcements. But he'd still have us believe that A&M is home. He'd like to have us believe a lot of things, but he'll be creating his image from the Senate for a little while longer.

Perhaps now he will act like a senator again. After all, that job demands Gramm's full attention and hasn't received it for the past few years.

And hopefully he will learn a few things.

First of all, he should realize that popularity is determined by others. It is not a self-proclaimed state of existence.

Second, money alone does not win elections. Other Republican campaigns were worried that Gramm would be in for the long haul because he could afford it. Fortunately, he was beaten so badly so early that the American people can give themselves a big pat on the back in the name of educated voting.

Also, maybe Gramm will learn to be sincere. It is unlikely, but we can hope. If you call a place home, visit for more than infrequent photo opportunities. And try to only have one hometown — that makes it more believable.

Republicans have dodged a bullet — a dud, but still a bullet. Had Gramm's money bought him the nomination, it would not have taken long for the Democrats to expose the insincerity of Gramm's quest for power.

A&M may be his marked territory, but that doesn't mean we want him to be our president. Ultimately there's only one reaction we should have to the end of Gramm's campaign: Sit boy. Stay. Good dog!

Michael Landauer is a junior journalism major

## Marriage ceremony is losing significance

A typical student at A&M will, at some point during his or her tenure, have a girlfriend or boyfriend appear on the scene. If he or she passes the many tests people put their loved ones through, a more permanent situation might be attempted.

This may mean marriage, or as is more frequently the case, opting to live with each other for a period of time before tying the knot. This, however, tends to anger parents, who are horrified to learn that their precious child is "living in sin" with another person.

But society should not put so much value upon a ceremony that lasts less than an hour and can hardly be said to truly intensify the love of a couple. If two people love each other, why should they have



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voice rate today is over 50 percent. With half of today's marriages failing, living together is a good idea. It gives people the time to really get to know

each other.

They can go through the trials and tribulations that might derail a hasty marriage that was only arranged to give the couple the freedom they deserve.

As far as the dilemma of sleeping together, celibacy before marriage is no longer a credible option. With birth control and today's motivations, there is nothing wrong with a couple getting together before deciding whether or not a permanent solution is for them.

Marriage was invented when the only law governing a couple and their children was religious law. What extra protection does a ceremony

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to get married to prove it? Surely the fact that by living with each other for an extended period of time, and still managing to be on speaking terms, their love and commitment has been proven.

I recently attended a wedding of two people who had been living together before getting married. Why did they have to go through a ceremony when it was plain for everyone to see that they were happy together the way things were? My ire was further intensified when the pastor led the congregation in a prayer for anyone who was not married. The idea was that anyone who is single is incomplete, and needs help.

According to a study conducted by Yale University that followed the marriages of over 50,000 couples, the di-

give now? None. Children parented by two people who are married enjoy no special rights. Delinquent mothers or fathers are not chided down by the church.

What keeps people from living together and being happy with that is the stigma that society places upon unmarried couples. This is an egregious insult to a couple. Our society has determined that an unmarried couple with a family is not doing the right thing for themselves, their children or society. This is completely bogus.

The only value a religious ceremony such as marriage has is to satisfy a longing for a big ceremony and a white wedding.

Kieran Watson is a sophomore finance major



## Peace in Bosnia can work

On Saturday, Feb. 3, Donald Dugan, a U.S. serviceman manning a checkpoint near Tuzla, became the first — and so far, only — American to be killed in Bosnia. Eight people had died already in the U.N. peacekeeping mission, and 40 had been wounded, but the 38-year-old Belle Center, Ohio, resident was the first from America to die.



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success rather than failure, and if things continue to go well, Bosnia could easily become the kind of pre-election foreign policy victory that Bush wished the Gulf War had been.

Though it's not known exactly how Dugan died, he was probably killed by a land mine or some other explosive device — he was definitely not killed by gunfire. This is also significant for Clinton. If Dugan had been killed by something more active and immediate, such as a sniper, the mission would instantly look more dangerous. We could interpret a sniper shot against an American soldier as a personal insult, straining Clinton's credibility. But Dugan was killed by some kind of explosive — the most passive of killers — planted a long time ago for someone else. His death can be seen as a tragic accident rather than murder.

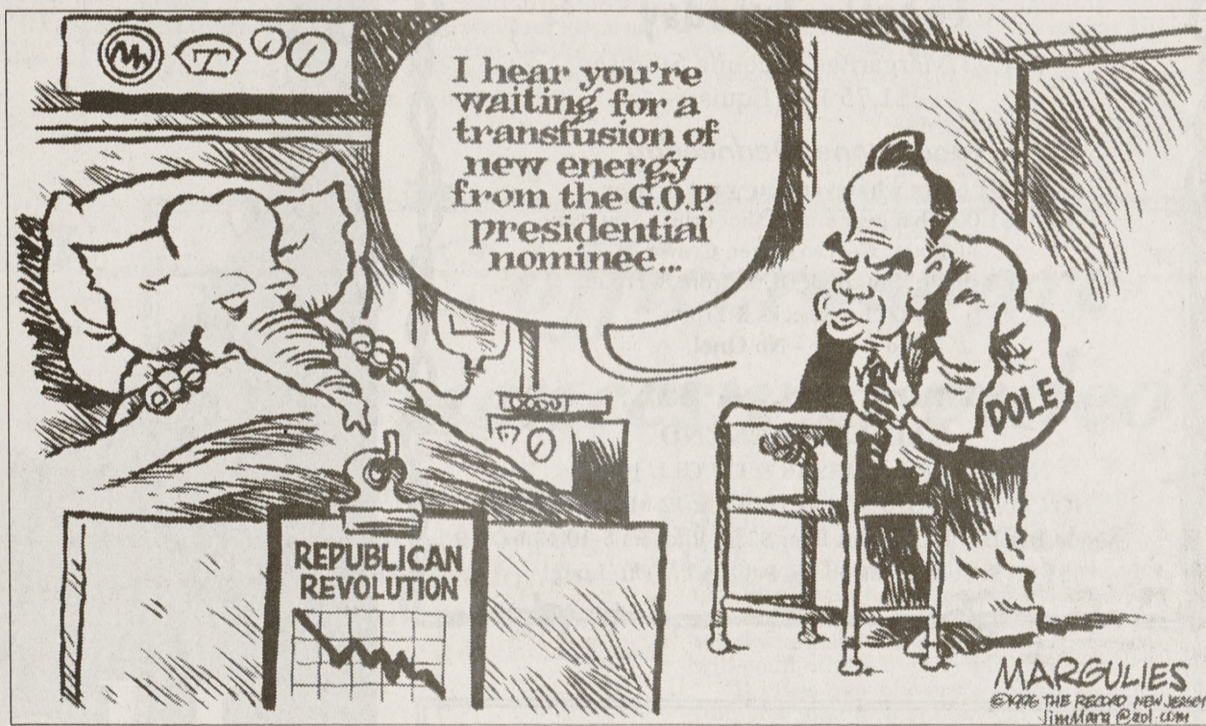
In fact, it's estimated there are over three million mines strewn all over Bosnia. These, combined with the broken bridges, collapsing buildings and confused snipers, show how incredible it actually is that Dugan has been the only American killed.

## Sometimes, bringing the possibility of peace to a historical hotspot is worth the lives it may cost, and Bosnia is one of those occasions.

Predictably, President Clinton's political opponents made statements condemning his policy in Bosnia following Dugan's death. Dole said, "Had I been president they wouldn't have been there. I wouldn't have sent American troops." Gramm said Dugan's death was a "tragedy for America ... sending troops to Bosnia was a mistake." And Dugan's death also gave Steve Forbes a chance to sound off on the Bosnia issue. Forbes, displaying his strong commitment to family values, suggested that America should have armed the Muslims and initiated air strikes against the Serbs.

All these statements, though, are going to look ridiculous when the Bosnia mission succeeds. And even if civilian peace in Bosnia ends up being more difficult to achieve, the world, the U.N. and America will have done all they can. And Clinton will be able to say — where American soldiers were involved — the goals were achieved with a bare minimum loss of life.

Shannon Halbrook is a sophomore English major



## MAIL CALL

### Research helps to understand Bible

I am writing in response to Kieran Watson's column, "Religion can't fix modern problems." It saddens me that The Battalion would run a column that was not researched. The amount of falsities and hearsay is ridiculous. An example is where he wrote, "As an alternative to the Bible, 'American Psycho' is brutally honest and doesn't mislead everyone into thinking that the world will be fine if we can all just get along." I don't know what Bible he is reading; apparently he didn't read it; he just took a stereotype. If he had actually studied

before writing, he would see that the Bible says, "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me [Christ] first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you" (John 15:18-19). The Bible speaks of hate and violence and does not paint a pretty picture of the world that we live in. In response to the line, "The Bible was written over a thousand years ago. Quite simply, it is out of date," that was written by a person who is very comfortable in American life. I wish he would go overseas and see that Christians are being treated just like they were "over a

thousand years ago." In fact, all of the disciples were put to death except one. The Bible is not all love and peace. If you think so, you need to read it, not just believe every stereotype that comes along.

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