

OPINION

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U.S. needs a president, not husband of the year

In 1992, Bill Clinton lost many votes because he was an adulterer, a draft-dodger, and a "non-smoker" of marijuana.



JENNI HOWARD
COLUMNIST

Americans? Some would respond that what society needs is more values and morals, and that a vote for a man of honor is a step toward this goal. Maybe so — but is it the first step we should take?

Ralph Reed, executive director of the Christian Coalition and author of the upcoming book *Active Faith* said, "Some of the opposition has been personal (to Bill Clinton), attacking his character rather than his policies, and in so doing it risks permanent damage to the office he occupies. If Clinton is a sinner, he is no worse than you or me."

If values and morals are eroding in our society, neither Clinton nor any other candidate can restore them. It is a national problem that can only be cured by individual action.

Character on a personal level is best left alone, but Americans do deserve to know what type of values a president holds when it comes to governing. In the Whitewater situation, there is a question as to what role Clinton played in the scandal, but no significant evidence has yet been found to implicate him. If there is any doubt of Clinton's integrity, this would be the issue to focus on.

It would be wonderful to have a president who is morally upright, but other issues also need to be addressed. If that individual lacks a solid grasp of domestic and foreign policy or a vision for our nation in the 21st century, then his morals will have to work overtime to compensate for the potential problems. Furthermore, if he is a saint in the home but favors abortion and gay rights, he wouldn't have my vote, because those aren't stances I support.

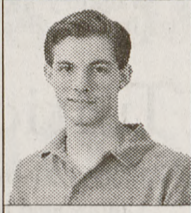
A candidate whose personal values are called into question may not make a good husband, but this doesn't necessarily imply that he can't be a good president. We should also consider his ability to govern our nation, and where he stands on issues that are important to us individually.

The question of a candidate's character should only be considered when it overlaps the role he was intended to fulfill as president. If his character fails in this aspect, then I'll have reason to doubt his ability.

Jenni Howard is a Class of '96 economics and international studies major

Drought emphasizes water problems

Last week's tiny amount of rain was not enough.



MARCUS GOODYEAR
COLUMNIST

We are still in a drought, and it still sucks.

Edgewood, Texas, needs to build a 10-mile pipeline in 30 days, or its 1,284 residents will be out of water. Farmers everywhere are struggling to save crops and feed livestock. Gov. Bush is even making speeches about water conservation — complete with bad puns and vague "Save the Water" rallying cries.

Where does B-CS stand in the middle of this dry mess? How many days until Mayor McIlhenny begins constructing a pipeline to Lake Somerville? And where in the world do we get our water from, anyway?

Actually, two confined aquifers — the Sparta Sand, which is about 150 feet thick, and the Simmsboro and Wilcox Sands, which are about 200 feet thick — supply water to Bryan-College Station. The rapid growth in recent years has placed a strain on these aquifers, consistently reducing their water levels.

And quantity is not the only problem. The quality of water here leaves something to be desired. Anyone who drinks B-CS tap water can tell it isn't Evian. In fact, the local water supply has an alarming amount of salt — so much that it has been a factor in deterring some businesses from relocating to the community.

Brazos 2020 Vision, a group dedicated to improving B-CS over the next 25 years, is striv-

ing to raise the quality of water to meet business standards. It proposes collecting surface water to reduce the overall amount of salt in the water supply. (Lake Bryan is not a source of water; it is used only to cool the electrical plant.) A new source of surface water would also help reduce the strain on the aquifers.

Ironically, this is not a new idea. In the early 1980s, appropriations were set aside to build a dam on the Navasota River. The new lake would have provided surface water for the B-CS community, but environmentalists raised a cry against

the project. They didn't want to take any wildlife area away from local deer.

So our water supply is threatened, businesses won't come here and the tap water tastes like brine because some people didn't want to deny deer some land.

Dr. Karl Koenig, a former A&M associate dept. head of geology and advocate for a Navasota River Dam, explains, "Anytime you build a lake, you take away some wildlife area, sure, but the question is are you going to deny 100,000 people water so that a few deer can have more land?"

According to Koenig, Bryan-College Station uses approximately 27 million gallons of water per day. (It would take a person a little over 10 years to pump that many gallons of gas.) That is 170 gallons of water per person per day. Of course, the figure includes water used by industries, but nevertheless it is a lot of water.

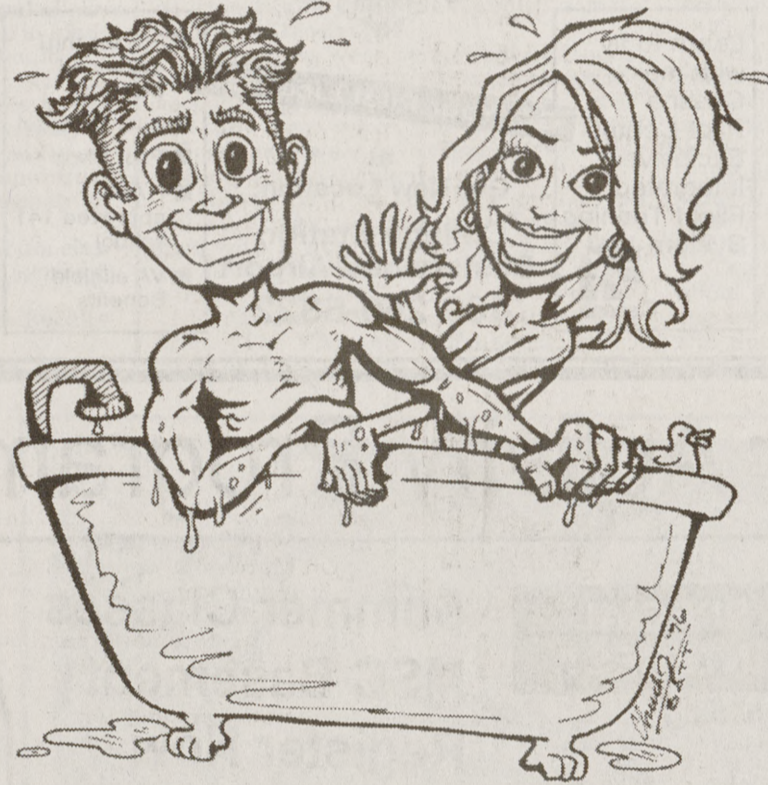
A new source of surface water is the most obvious and complete solution to the community's growing needs. Damming the Navasota River has become a real need.

Unfortunately, the dam isn't going to spring up overnight and solve our current drought problem. All Bryan and College Station can do right now is try to conserve what water we have left. Until we get more rain, we need to use less water.

Here are some simple things everyone can do to help save water:

- 1) Turn off the faucet while brushing your teeth. This alone can save gallons of water.
- 2) Take showers instead of baths and use low-flow shower heads. If you absolutely must bathe, do it with a friend!
- 3) Keep your drinking water in the refrigerator rather than waiting for the tap to run cold.
- 4) Wash only full loads of clothes and dishes.
- 5) Use mulch when gardening to retain moisture.
- 6) Only water lawns and gardens during the morning and evening to avoid evaporation. Plant as much local flora as possible. It will require less water.
- 7) Just remember the pithy slogan of Bush's Water Development Board: "Every little drop counts."

Marcus Goodyear is a Class of '97 English major



Diplomas do not always bring big bucks

Shortly after planning my sure-to-be immature and obnoxious antics at my graduation, I began to ponder life after this wonderful bubble called Aggieland. It frightened me. And the more I researched, the more frightened I became.



CHRIS LESCHBER
COLUMNIST

College graduates around the country are finding that their degrees don't mean much when it comes to finding a job related to their field of study, and the degrees don't go very far in securing a livable salary. To make matters worse, Aggies aren't immune to the problems recent college grads have been facing.

According to statistics gathered by our fine U.S. government, more than 65 percent of all college graduates in the nation do not obtain a job related to their field of study.

But, as my father would argue, who cares about the rest of the world? What about good old Texas A&M graduates?

Well, according to a 1995 survey by the Career Center, of 1,064 job offers to the graduates of that year, 45 percent were of-

fered a job "not related" to their major. Only 65 percent of graduates were offered jobs "very related" to their major.

Upon receiving these hard-earned jobs, the average recipient of an undergraduate degree from Texas A&M of almost every college except engineering can look forward to earning about \$28,000 per year, according to the Career Center's survey. Engineering graduates averaged about \$30,000, except for chemical engineers, who rake in about \$40,000 on average.

As for us Ag boys, we can look forward to an average salary of \$24,000. Education busted the seams at about \$23,277, just above a bachelor's degree in veterinary medicine, which was the lowest-paying degree at \$20,031.

David Small, who runs the Career Center at the University of Houston, said, "Hiring has been on the flat side overall at the university. Salaries and recruiting are up modestly, but it's nothing to celebrate over."

Specifically, he added, "Finance majors are having a tough time lately. Banks have become so automated that they're not hiring finance majors like they used to. And some graduates always have a tough time. There's probably never been a year that employers have come knocking down the doors to hire

liberal arts graduates."

On May 17, L. M. Sixel of the *Houston Chronicle* wrote, "If you have big college bills to pay off, don't start a career as a journalist. They receive the lowest starting offers of any college-going professional."

Well, it's comforting to know that with my agricultural development degree I can look forward to a life just above poverty level, and as a journalist I would be living below poverty level. I guess the sentiment that it always pays to get a higher education might not hold as true today as it did for Mom and Dad.

Even A&M grads, whom we would like to think an employer would sacrifice his first-born for, have trouble getting high-paying jobs in their fields. I have started my own business, because I am a big believer in self-employment. I've given up on the idea that four or five years at A&M will get me a dream job, because the chances are not good on some bum completely supporting me and my future family.

It's becoming increasingly apparent that a college diploma isn't worth much more than the paper it's written on.

Chris Leschber is a Class of '97 agricultural development major



MAIL CALL

Diving accidents happen all too often

Over my years in medicine, I have repeatedly attended patients with neck fractures. Most are teens or young adults; all were from diving into shallow water. One haunting six-week period brought in three young men who died in less than a week. The third lived ... with complete paralysis. What a sudden end to promising lives. The recent published injury to former Student Body President) Boenig will have an unusual outcome — he will recover. Don't do this to yourself. And you could pass this on to a couple of your friends ... maybe you could save a life.

W. D. Bailey Jr., M.D.
Beutel Health Center

Thoughtfulness shows sensitivity to drought

There is a drought occurring in Texas, but you would not know it while on the Texas A&M campus. Sprinklers water the lawns, plants, trees, sidewalks and streets every night. If it

rains in the morning, the sprinklers still come on at night. This does not seem like an economical use of my fees. The ground by my dorm is saturated with standing water. When I walk home from work, the streets and sidewalks are flooded.

Let us not forget the people — members of our families, friends, fellow Texans and fellow Aggies — who are undergoing countless hardships because of the scarcity of water. I would encourage Texas A&M and Physical Plant to end the wasteful use of such a precious resource that so many in Texas have to do without.

Patrick Troy
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, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111.

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