

Truth and Consequences

Journalism is quickly becoming obsessed with being politically correct



Perfectly politically correct: The asinine and destructive goal of the 21st century. American society is slowly bending over for those who clothe themselves with the robes of victimization, and it is crushing the national spirit.

Journalists must face the pressure more than most. Each group of hyphenated Americans has one "correct" title and any number of "hurtful" ones. Journalists are forced to memorize these "correct" titles or face the wrath of amalgamated groups of self-appointed victims whose only goal is revenge.

As the wave of the national guilt trip crests, the profession of news writing is becoming porous and brittle.

Journalists can no longer report the news. Now they must color and taint daily events to reduce the risk of offending the masses.

Well, wake up. News is not always sunshine and lollipops.

If a black man goes berserk on a New York subway and kills 17 people, it is news. Regardless of the perpetrator's race, it is news. It would still be news if an affluent white male committed the same crime.

Susan Smith and Darlie Routier, both white women, were convicted of murdering their sons. Their reputations are ruined, not because of a media bias, but because American society doesn't respect those who kill in cold blood.

Opinion Editor



Alex Walters
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O.J. Simpson, a black man, was found liable for the deaths of his wife and her male friend. His reputation is ruined because he made an ass of himself by playing golf after his original acquittal instead of earnestly searching for the "real" murderer as he vowed he would.

If Smith and Routier were black, Hispanic or Asian, their stories would still be news.

If Simpson were white, it would still be news. The Simpson case was prevalent because he was a Heisman Trophy-winning sports hero, not because he was a black man.

The job of a journalist is to report the news completely, accurately and without bias. A journalist is not an elected guardian of the personal feelings of the masses, nor is he a scapegoat for the problems of society.

This special treatment "oppressed groups" expect is absolutely absurd.

A black man cannot be called a black man — he is African-American. Homosexuals are not homosexuals — they are gay or lesbian. (It is especially odd to consider the accepted terms for gays and lesbians are sex-specific.) Women are women — not ladies. Mexican-born residents of this country are Hispanic-Americans, Latinos or Chicano-Americans — not Mexican (despite the fact Mexican is exactly what they are.)

Human nature dictates what people find interesting and therefore newsworthy. Unfortunately, those things are often grotesque and appalling in an out-of-the-ordinary way.

When a minister is found to be an adulterer, it is news because society has the notion ministers are infallible.

But instead of clinging to the Biblical principle he is devoted to — such as "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," Romans 3:23 — the fallen

minister will seek to regain his image in the eyes of man, rather than in the eyes of God.

This happens more often than one would think — just read the newspaper.

Even Martin Luther King Jr. was accused of being (however, not proven to be) an adulterer.

Yet when these accusations made the papers, it was just another case of white men in power trying to oppress black men in the midst of struggle. In 1964, that may well have been the case, but it would not have been responsible journalism to ignore the accusations.

The journalism department at this university, offers a "Women and Minorities in the Mass Media" course.

Unfortunately, the class is not about women and minorities, but how the media has consistently perpetrated a nationwide scheme to portray black men and women as criminals in the eyes of the public.

The textbook for another journalism course, "Editing for the Mass Media," includes a list of the correct words for various "victim" groups.

In class Tuesday, the news coverage of Shannon Lucid's four-month stay in the Mir space station was discussed.

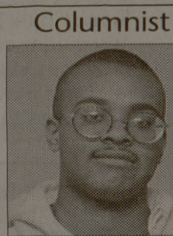
The class debated whether the media was biased because each story had some degree of focus on Lucid's motherhood and how her family dealt with her absence, not on her role as an astronaut. The instructor dismissed the issue by saying that Lucid didn't care if the media focused on her family because her family was of great value to her.

Bottom line — Lucid approved of what the media found to be newsworthy, "and that's what is really important, isn't it?" the instructor said.

What is important is honest coverage of real events, no matter how gruesome, grotesque or disheartening. Welcome to the real world.

College curriculum enhances education

College is a time to hone skills suitable for a career, but a closer look reveals the importance of overall educational development as influenced by University curriculum.



General Franklin
Sophomore
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ence, logic and social sciences to digest the complex concepts which follow. Basically, you must have a foundation from which to expand your insight and comprehension of a particular discipline.

Students must realize the intense scrutiny and evaluation the curriculum undergoes at the hands of the administration, faculty, and some students. In all cases of curriculum, the University has the essential role of balancing students' interests with those of accreditation and professional agencies, which establish standards. Furthermore, this process needs to enhance vocational skills while shaping and challenging the minds of young adults.

Additionally, it is important students take advantage now to develop skills of analysis and reasoning in the breadth of the curriculum. The tools of independent thinking and cooperative interaction will greatly enhance development in major studies as well as in auxiliary courses. University curriculum shifts to maintain the precarious balance between vocation and independent development.

Beyond these elements,

however, many students enjoy the freedom of tailoring a course load to fit their future interests. Claude Gibson, head of the Undergraduate Division of the English Department, said students with liberal arts majors are given great leeway in organizing a core of courses to suit their needs. Combined with the bare essentials mandated by the University, the student should be able to fulfill the dual purpose of developing career and intellectual skills.

Since curriculum is not constant, remedies exist to allow students, faculty and administrators to adapt curriculum to changing needs or demands. Standards for curriculum are set by state and national accreditation associations before the curriculum reaches the University level. The virtue of their seal of approval makes a degree a powerful document at interview time.

Also, there are curriculum committees within each college to assess course descriptions as well as the legitimacy of material. A committee within the College of Liberal Arts inspects curricular demands and delivers proper justification to amend course material. Since student input is essential, student representatives on these undergraduate and graduate committees provide the adequate flexibility necessary for knowledge in constant flux.

Again, student involvement deserves emphasis as administration sometimes loses contact with students, whose interests are paramount to the task of enhancing or improving curriculum. Because of these advisory roles, as well as seats on the committees, students must make their feedback clear and candid to administration and faculty so curricula changes can be adaptive to their needs.

Another method of improving the viability of curriculum to career is faculty research. Amid the din of grumbles about seldom-seen professors, it is imperative to understand how important research is to the dissemination of more relevant techniques, methods and principles. By allowing emphasis on research, curriculum can become more compatible to the field of study, since new knowledge can be integrated into the course.

It is essential for students to recognize the importance curriculum plays in the specific and general development of an individual. Unfortunately, as one peer counselor revealed, most students are obsessed with the consequences of college, such as financial success and job, rather than obtaining knowledge through course work. Furthermore, it is important to realize that the difference between ITT Tech and Texas A&M is the former provides vocational training, while the latter provides whole-

University renovates ill-treated classrooms

For a world class university, Texas A&M is plagued with shoddy classrooms. However, the rooms will be completely renovated within the next four years.

Over 200 of nearly 350 classrooms on the A&M campus will get a well-deserved facelift.

The administration has rightfully allotted nearly \$3 million to fund the project. The money will be drawn from General Use Fee (GUF) income and the Permanent University Fund (PUF).

This is a good example of why the GUF is constantly on the rise. A constantly growing and changing university consumes a lot of money.

At the request of the Faculty Senate and other campus organizations, the A&M administration first considered the massive classroom renovation project. After an evaluation of the classrooms on campus, the Classroom Renovation Committee was formed to oversee the project. At least 50 classrooms will be refurbished each year until all classrooms are brought up to the "minimum standards" defined by the committee.

New flooring and seating will be installed making classrooms more comfortable. Better sound systems will be added where needed and acoustics will be improved by adding such features as acoustical ceiling tiles.

In response to complaints from students and faculty, dimmers will be added to the lighting systems in classrooms to enhance visual instruction. The death of out-of-focus overhead transparencies will occur once the installations of new screens and other visual instruction tools are completed.

All classrooms will be wired for telephone and cable TV, and will be connected to the Ethernet, taking instruction into the 21st century.

Classrooms in newer buildings on campus and those improved within the last ten years will be exempt from the project.

One of the reasons the classrooms need repair is their constant abuse by students. Tobacco stains, spilled food and drinks, and disturbing graffiti are commonplace in classrooms. Cloth seats and carpeted floors are torn, stained and ripped to shreds.

If the University plans to spend millions of dollars to improve our classrooms, then students need to learn to respect their surroundings.

It should not be difficult for adults to keep their pens from documenting on desks who they love or what football team they worship. Nobody really cares. This kind of information is worthless.

The committee will work with the Registrar's office to determine when classrooms will be vacant and available for renovation. During spring break teams of workers will tackle several classrooms. The work will be done in only one or two buildings at a time, so progress should be rapid. The renovations in Blocker are near completion.

The committee has done a fantastic job planning the project working with A&M President Ray Bowen, Dan Parker, Assistant Provost and committee chair, and Glen Dowling, Executive Director of Planning, Evaluation and Institution Research, along with several other university officials, have coordinated this project which is vitally important to enhancing instruction at A&M.

Students need to respect and be grateful for the commitment these officials have made to improving their learning environments at A&M and they need to take care of the new equipment so future Aggies can benefit as well.

Columnist



Brandon Hausenfluck
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journalism major



MAIL CALL

acting as such. It is time everyone grows out of the high school pranks and let our fellow Aggies do the job they volunteered to do.

So please, be an Aggie and help other Aggies do their job successfully.

Mark Leddy
Class of '92

Sean Lambert
Class of '98

Student Government works for students

The Student Government is not guilty in any sense of deceiving their electorate. Since I have been at this University, the SGA has worked hard to insure proper representation.

The SGA did not flat decide to disregard the students and ignore the run-off bill. There were circumstances concerning run-off turn

out and majority winners which made the bill hard to justify, even with student support.

The Senate was representing the students in their best interest with better analysis of the results of such a bill. Also, if someone came into your voting booth while you were voting for president, he could influence your vote and cause a bias in the voting turnout. This is what Jason Jaynes was trying to prevent by having rules against campaigning in the MSC. The election commission was working to insure the voting procedure was fair to both sides. The SGA did not deceive the student body by working in the students best interest.

Bradley Angell
Class of '98

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or fewer and include the author's name, class, and phone number.

The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to:

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Diamond Darlings mistreated by fans

My apologies to Helen Curbello and her friends who were annoyed by a heckler at a recent baseball game.

I am a fixture at Aggie baseball games and also am routinely annoyed by comments.

However, I am more annoyed by an act that is common at games — the unwillingness to return foul balls to the Diamond Darlings.

The Diamond Darlings have several functions at Aggie baseball games, one of which is to retrieve foul balls from the stands.

This task becomes difficult and sometimes even upsetting for the Diamond Darlings when "fans" attempt to keep the balls. As college students, we all need to start

