

A prudent education

Bush school opens doors of opportunity for A&M

This year, Texas A&M will witness one of the greatest moments in College Station history since the double-strap/single-strap controversy. The Bush Presidential Library Complex will open in September of this year, occupying 90 of the 5,200 acres of the A&M campus. Along with the library comes the George Bush School of Government and Public Service.

Columnist



Stephen Llano
Senior
history major

A&M will stand apart from other presidential libraries which do not have these programs, such as the Carter, Reagan, and Ford libraries.

Such a unique combination of resources also will improve the academic environment for everyone at A&M.

The school is in the process of selecting the first class of Bush School students from 75 applicants.

"Some of these students will be from Texas A&M," Deere said. "Others will have a wide variety of backgrounds with fresh perspectives."

As far as the undergraduate population of A&M is concerned, there are numerous reasons why students should be interested in visiting the Bush Complex.

"Eventually, it's not going to be just for graduates," Deere said. "There will be a constant influx of exciting ideas and important perspectives. Undergraduates will be exposed to things they would not otherwise get."

The Bush Library exemplifies this. When the library is completed, it will place A&M on the map because of its national archives. Any student could jump on the shuttle bus and visit a collection of important artifacts and docu-

ments from Bush's four years as the leader of our country.

The Bush school also will host conferences and help students build relationships with potential employers. The presence and relationship with these employers will be an advantage to undergraduates who may have the chance to capitalize on many new job opportunities because of the Bush school.

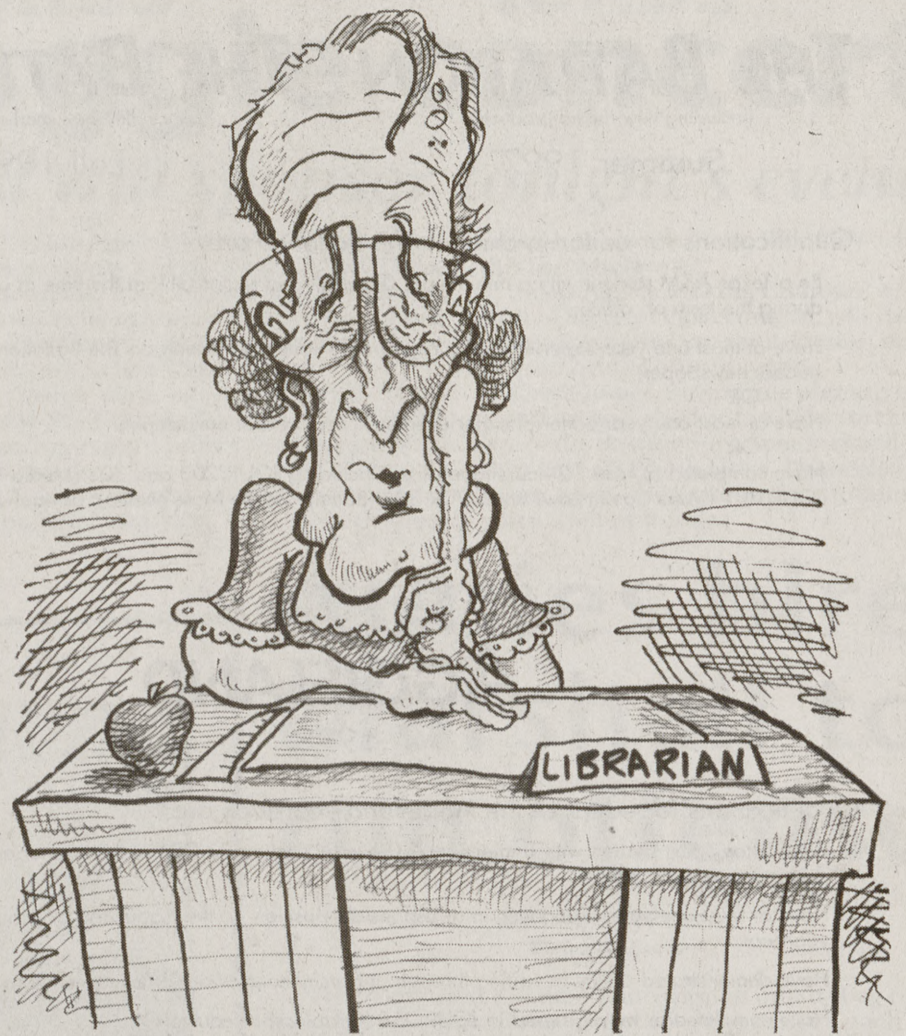
Having a presidential library on campus also will improve the national perception of A&M.

"There will be an unprecedented amount of visitors (to the Bush Library)," Deere said. "At the opening in September, Presidents Clinton, Carter, Ford and Bush will be here along with other international and national leaders."

With the current president, as well as his predecessors coming to campus, A&M will receive a high volume of media attention that will improve the reputation of A&M graduates.

"We know that we (A&M) are doing a good job and in the state many employers know," Deere said. "This will ensure that the rest of the world will know too."

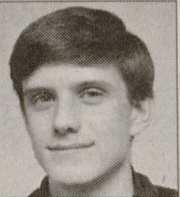
The Bush School provides a thorough and challenging program for graduate students. But undergraduates should not ignore or be complacent about this event which might catapult A&M, along with its students, to a new level of national prestige and recognition.



Selling foreign-made products cheapens honor of MSC

The Memorial Student Center is devoted to the memories of brave men who gave their lives in defense of liberty. But it's hard to believe that, considering the products sold inside.

Columnist



Donny Ferguson
Sophomore
political science major

such as Mexico, Taiwan, India, Jamaica, Oman, Indonesia, Costa Rica, Malaysia, Singapore and El Salvador.

Although some of these countries have relatively clean industrial and human rights records, many of them are guilty of an entire laundry list of sins against humanity.

Several articles of apparel and many school supply items in the bookstore are made in China, a communist nation with a long, bloody history of human rights crackdowns. Red China is infamous for its sterilization of women, forced abortions, torture and execution of pro-democracy dissidents. It is simply disgusting and disappointing when an institution such as the

MSC, created to preserve and celebrate champions of freedom, sells products manufactured under a regime which despises and attempts to destroy such principles. When Americans purchase Chinese-made products, they are subsidizing despotism.

Other nations such as Indonesia and India are notorious for exploitations of child labor in the production of clothing.

Many of the children working in Asian clothing factories suffer deformities and poisoning from grueling labor and toxic chemicals. According to the Department of Labor, nations such as Bangladesh lock children in warehouses supervised by armed guards who force them to work long hours for six to seven days a week.

Sadly, students who purchase foreign-manufactured clothing are

perpetuating this cruel practice.

Not to mention that imported products cost American workers their jobs, robbing them of livelihood. The Clinton administration estimates for every \$1 billion in imports sold, 19,000 American workers lose their jobs.

Leslie Fays Company, a Pennsylvania dressmaking factory, was forced to close four of its plants because of foreign competition — 1,050 workers lost their jobs. Lamenting over the closure, Leslie Fays' president said, "We'll just begin to make all our goods offshore."

Here in Texas, Brookshire Knitting Mills of Dallas buckled under the pressure of imported textiles, laying off 125 workers in 1995 and terminating one-third of its remaining workers this year. Since then, the company has moved to Mexico.

The MSC should do everything it can to ensure the integrity of the products it sells. One option would be for the University Bookstore to sell only American-made products. It may cost a few pennies more, but children and workers would win in the end.

A total boycott of imported apparel is an important first step in ending tragic human rights abuses like those seen in child labor camps.

An admittedly more unique idea is to place large fluorescent orange stickers on foreign products. The jumbo-sized eye-catching label could read "WARNING - This product was not made in America," followed by a pictograph of a crossed-out American flag. It may sound far-fetched and comical at first, but considering the gravity of the issues of human rights and child labor, it is the

least that could be done.

The simplest thing, however, would be for students to refuse to buy products made in foreign countries. Check out the labels on clothing before you buy an item. A T-shirt made in El Salvador likely was sewn with tiny, unwilling hands. Purchasing a sweatshirt made in China amounts to an endorsement of communist brutality. In the end, hard-working Americans suffer when their jobs are sacrificed.

Clothes shopping should not become an exercise in morality. However, in an institution created to honor men dedicated to preserving the principles of freedom, there is a moral obligation to do the right thing. Stand up to human rights abuses and stand up for American workers by refusing to buy foreign-made apparel.

Encryption laws protect private interests of students, corporations

Most students check their e-mail daily, if not every couple of minutes, hoping a fellow Internet-addict has sent a new message or forwarded a "When I'm an Evil Overlord" checklist. Finding an unoccupied terminal in the campus computer lab is nearly impossible because students who live for electronic communication. Face it, e-mail is a part of life.

Columnist



Jenne Hamlin
Senior
journalism major

and education, it disagrees with the measures.

Congress should pass the "Promotion of Commerce Online in the Digital Era Act" to protect privacy in the Information Age.

Encryption used to be the stuff of spy novels and James Bond movies. Products which scrambled information until it reached its intended receiver were vital during military conflicts and periods of diplomatic tension, like the Cold War.

With the advent of the Information Age, encryption has moved into the public sector. Companies now conduct business over the bandwidth, needing encryption to protect credit card accounts and other financial information. Students use e-mail more than the U.S. Postal Service. They need to se-

crete their messages from a third party. Strong encryption technology would solve both of these issues.

Businesses transfer billions of dollars electronically and store their corporate plans and company secrets on computers. Information such as medical and employment records also are kept on computer networks. While providing convenience, networks are susceptible to hacker attacks because of insufficient security measures.

Current U.S. encryption policies forbid the export of products with key-lengths over 40 bits long. As a result, few companies incur the expense of producing both domestic and exportable versions of software. But as several college students with computers and spare time have proven, exportable technology is practically worthless.

Last month, a University of California graduate student broke the strongest encryption

code currently exportable in three and one half hours, using a campus computer network.

What it takes one graduate student a few hours to accomplish is possible in a fraction of a second with the technology possessed by large corporations and most countries' intelligence agencies. Using 40-bit encryption is like defending nuclear attacks with a water gun.

The administration increased the limit to 56-bit key-lengths, but with a catch — software companies had to give the government a key to the code. Only three companies agreed to this restriction.

The government has decided, in its infinite wisdom, to protect citizens from computer crimes by keeping a key to their codes. While other key recovery measures were turned down by Congress, the White House tacked one onto the marginal increase in code strength.

A group of 17 Senators, including Kay Bai-

ley Hutchinson, introduced Pro-CODE to protect privacy and help U.S. companies compete in the global encryption market.

The bill would protect the unsuspecting masses from hacker threats, both foreign and domestic, prohibiting the government from imposing key recovery policies on the domestic market and limiting the secretary of commerce's standard-setting authority for encryption products.

Few people realize the danger involved with leaving personal information virtually unprotected by available technologies. While one might assume it's safer to keep everything on computer, it's easy for someone else to crack into an electronically preserved life.

Congress has only one serious option. They should pass Pro-CODE or buckle under a White House only interested in establishing a master computer key system, not in more relevant business of protecting public interests.



MAIL CALL

Abortion sacrifices child's right to live

In response to Katy McIntosh's letter to Mail Call on Feb. 25:

McIntosh writes about freedom of speech, insisting that "there are limits to this freedom." She asserts that the Supreme Court ruling allowing anti-abortion activists to exercise their constitutional right "brings us one step closer to having no real choice at all." McIntosh is suggesting that the rights of some should be limited in order to protect the rights of others.

Perhaps her suggestion merits some consideration. Perhaps some rights are more important than others. There is no right more important than the right to exist?

American women have refused to protect unborn children's right to live because they are somehow less "human," just as some people once felt women and African Americans were less human. Life is generally believed to begin at one of two points: conception or birth. Determining life anywhere in between is completely arbitrary. Thus, termination of a pregnancy immediately after conception and one day before birth are

equivalent. It is not justifiable to deny life to a child who is perfectly formed and capable of sustaining life only one day later, upon birth?

Some insist this is a moral issue that cannot be determined by the state. But who would argue now with the moral decision of the state that slavery is wrong and should not be tolerated? Was the state out of line then?

A woman should have the right to choose what happens to her own body. An unborn child should have the right to live. In some instances, such as whether a woman chooses to engage in sexual intercourse or to use birth control, there is no conflict.

However, when rights do conflict with one another, as McIntosh points out, someone's rights must take precedence.

And I, for one, believe that the right to live should come first.

Angela Johnson
Class of '98

