

Editorial Roundup

(AP) The following is a sampling of editorial comment from Texas newspapers:

Waco Tribune-Herald on involving physicians in abortion solution: Congress should make no law that would punish an ethical physician who makes an ethical decision to save a woman's life or protect her health. The U.S. House of Representatives, by approving a bill identical to one vetoed by President Clinton last year, has voted to do just that. Clinton should veto this bill. Then he should seek a compromise that would put this issue to rest once and for all.

The whole partial-birth abortion controversy is an attempt by anti-abortion laypeople to elbow aside the physician who must make a judgment call about what's best for his or her patient. The extent to which the surgical procedure known as dilation and extraction is used on healthy, viable fetuses is not really the issue here, despite attempts to make it so. The issue is physicians' ability to do their job when a woman's health is jeopardized.

Third-trimester abortions are banned in most states including Texas. States have that authority under the *Roe vs. Wade* decision, but not to the extent that physicians are handcuffed in preventing complications from pregnancy or childbirth. Obstetricians only have probabilities to deal with when they decide a late-term abortion is necessary. There are no certainties. The House-passed bill seemingly would consist on certainty — that this was a life-or-death situation for the mother. That is far too high a standard to apply when all a doctor can do is make an educated guess about the health effects childbirth would have on a patient.

Seemingly this issue could be resolved satisfactorily if the matter of defining terms and potential health contingencies were laid out by the physicians who must make the judgment calls. For instance, an obstetrician's decision to conduct a late-term abortion could be made contingent on consulting another certified obstetrician.

Congress cannot write reasonable legislation on this matter if politics drive the debate. Underlying this whole effort, we must remember, is hard-ball politics: a bid to

ban abortion entirely. Some advocates seem to say: Physicians be damned.

Abortion is not a practice society should encourage, but it shouldn't be foreclosed by law. Back-alley practitioners would beckon in that case. Women by the thousands would put their health at risk.

The legislation approved by the House puts more than women's health at risk. It also puts at risk the jobs and reputations of the men and women who deliver America's babies and sometimes have to make excruciating medical choices.

The Dallas Morning News on campaign money:

Sick of hearing about all these money-and-politics scandals? Want a road map to a new kingdom, where the money game is less prevalent?

Here are some suggestions. These elements should be part of any effort to reform campaign finance:

—Control soft money. "Soft money" is the ample loot political parties raise from corporations, labor unions and wealthy individuals ostensibly for "party-building activities." Instead, the money is used surreptitiously to bolster partisan campaigns, as many 1996 races revealed. ...

—Full, regular disclosure of gifts. Members of Congress should have to file regular reports on campaign donations, perhaps every month. ...

—Limit fund raising to when Congress is not in session. This could likewise help control the constant Washington fund-raising game. Legislators could focus on their work, and not worry about "dialing for dollars" throughout the week. Some state legislators already play by this rule.

Another frequently mentioned reform requires broadcasters give qualified candidates free air time. ...

Several broadcast organizations, including this newspaper's parent company, volunteered free air time to help qualified candidates gain access to the airwaves in the 1996 election. This trend toward volunteering air time should widen within the industry because it is good business practice and a public service.

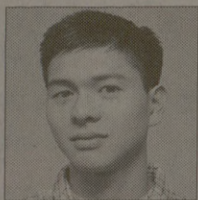
At the moment, voters are like airline passengers in the middle of a thunderstorm. Things are getting rocky with campaign finance stories dominating the headlines. But there's a way out of the storm. These reforms could help show the way home.

\$6,000,000 Aggies

Today's student needs super powers to stay afloat

Wouldn't it be great to be bionic? In the '90s, living as a do-it-all wokaholic machine is more than just a fantasy. It has become a motto.

Columnist



Travis Chow
 computer science graduate student

With neither mechanical limbs nor microchip brains, the bionic persons of the '90s excel through determination and hard work.

Students react in two different directions: they either embrace the jack-of-all-trades philosophy or reject the pressure. The strive for perfection demands both commitment and hardship, but the confidence and fulfillment gained far outweigh the pain.

Students should not hesitate to join the bionic movement of the '90s.

To begin with, the movement is alive and will only grow stronger with global competition. Today's role models are the first indications of the bionic spirit.

Just look at the president of the United States, Bill Clinton. Despite reservations one may have about him, his accomplishments are incredible. During college, he played for the Georgetown basketball team and, at the same time, won the Rhodes Scholarship.

Above all, his wide range of success, in spite of his modest family background, exemplifies the '90s self-start attitude.

Even role models with much less stature, like television characters, are becoming paragons of perfection.

Take, for example, George Clooney, who plays a physician on the popular hit *E.R.* The heartthrob saves lives daily, rakes in six digits a year and has time to manicure his dark, shiny hair.

Just a decade ago, doctors were played by balding men with taciturn personalities, not these extrovert super models. Today's television characters, with their perfect mind/body package, epitomize society's fascination with perfection.

The supply of bionic role models is certainly ample at Texas A&M. Their accomplishments demand many long

nights and forsaken leisure time, but the rewards of self-fulfillment and success leave them with no regrets.

Students who seem to walk on water share their motivations.

Steve Foster, the Corp commander and soon-to-be t.u. law school student, is driven by his undaunted Aggie Spirit.

"[Aggie Spirit] is what we are known for, and I am proud to have it for the rest of my life," he said.

Jill Jackson, active in student government and an avid runner, encourages all students to stretch their limits.

"It builds adversity of character, and it's very rewarding," she said.

Jill is now anticipating the Normandy study abroad program in Europe and her ca-

reer with Andersen Consulting. Of course, jumping onto the '90s bionic bandwagon is not an easy ride. If it were, anyone could watch 30-minute infomercials and have an immaculate physique in three weeks.

Balancing a hectic schedule, sticking to the routine and dealing with peers' criticisms are only a few of the challenges. But after overcoming these initial obstacles, the rewards on the other side are golden. Jesse Czelusta, the Residence Hall Association president and a Rhodes Scholar

nominee, shares his viewpoint. "No great thing was ever accomplished that did not involve risk and hard work," he said.

Life is unfair. Some are just born with a hefty inheritance. This reality, however, has never stopped Steve or Jesse.

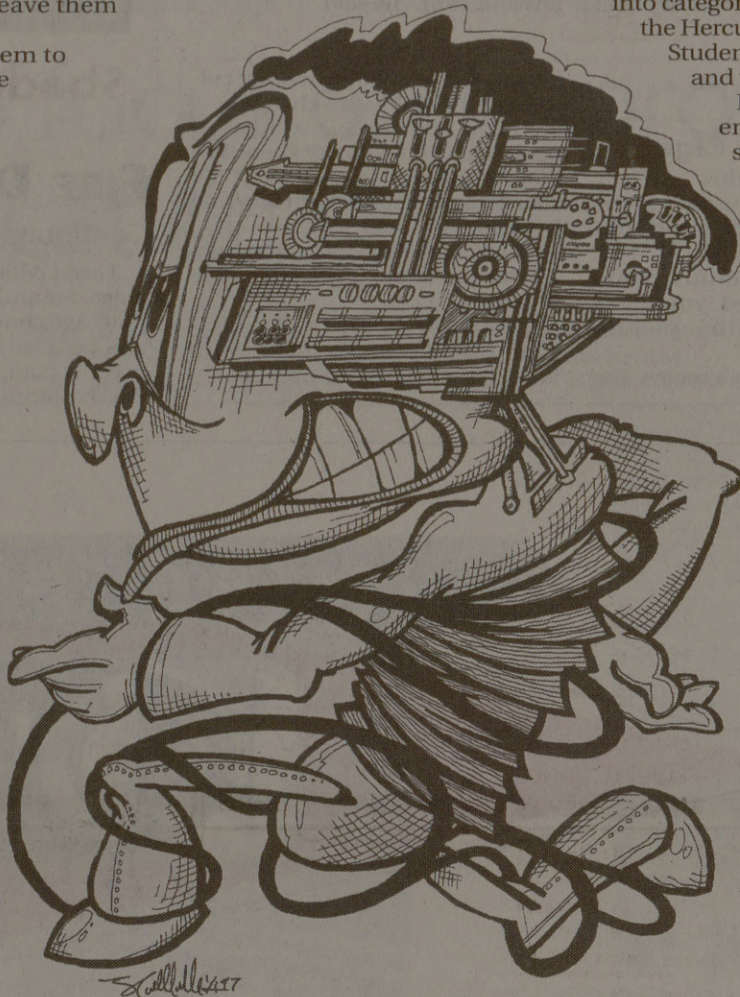
The invincible attitude is thriving in today's groundbreaking diversity. Doors open wide across stereotypical lines and are providing opportunities for those willing to seize them.

Neither the macho attitude of the early '80s nor the apathy of Generation X are binding people into categories. Anyone craving the Herculean body can hit the Student Recreation Center and the local GNC.

For those with an entrepreneurial drive, striking it rich over the Internet is just footsteps from the full shelves of computer books at the MSC bookstore. The only requirement is a bionic attitude.

Cindy Ericson, the deputy Corp commander, captures the spirit of the times with one of Theodore Roosevelt's famous quotes.

"Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much, because they lie in the great twilight that knows not victory nor defeat," Roosevelt said.



Students need to overcome lack of originality, creativity

Not too long ago, my fingers brought forth upon this keyboard a new column, conceived in boredom and dedicated to the proposition that too many ideas are completely unoriginal.

Millions of American moviegoers are once again paying tribute to the creative genius of George Lucas by watching the re-released *Star Wars* trilogy. The series is a classic and fun for

people of all ages, but the reissuing of the enhanced trilogy comes at a time when we desperately need new ideas. American consumers are being subjected to an endless sea of the same old stuff, and too many of our creative outlets have decided to emulate rather than innovate.

The entertainment industry's reliance on already used, formulaic ideas

Columnist



Jeremy Valdez
 Senior engineering major

is an obvious symptom of this lack of originality.

Lately, network television isn't so much a wasteland as it is a widget factory. Executives at NBC found a way to resuscitate the old hospital show and call it *E.R.* Encouraged by the success of a "new" show, CBS rolled out their own medical masterpiece, *Chicago Hope*.

The popular Fox show *The X-Files* is turning viewers into paranoid conspiracy nuts with one hand on the remote and the other on the ray gun. Not to be outdone, NBC countered with its own short-lived series about aliens and government coverups, *Dark Skies*.

And a bigger screen doesn't necessarily mean a grander vision. It's not uncommon to find new movies being advertised as brighter, sexier versions

of old films. Print ads and posters for last December's blockbuster *The Long Kiss Goodnight* promised that it "out-femmes *La Femme Nikita*. Similarly, the film *Two Days in the Valley* also pipped itself by claiming to have "out-pulped" *Pulp Fiction*.

Perhaps the re-release of the *Star Wars* trilogy is justified when viewed in the light of last year's movie fare.

If I were George Lucas, I'd be pretty hacked if studio executives took *Star Wars* and traded Obi-Wan for a fighter jock and a computer nerd, flattened the Death Star into a floating saucer and substituted a middle-aged crop-dusting booze-hound for Luke Skywalker and called it *Independence Day*.

Even the University campus, which is supposed to be a living, breathing biome of new ideas, is showing symptoms of this creative inertia.

It's an unwritten rule (and a curious sacrifice of our First Amendment free-

doms) that no group of students may peaceably assemble into an "organization" unless they have "designed" a "T-shirt." Granted, this need for uniformity might have some roots in our need to clothe ourselves, but if everybody is going to be dressing the same, it would be nice if the T-shirts were fairly original.

Instead, most student groups pick the easy way out and settle for a "cute" shirt telling the world nothing about the organization other than its willingness to bend intellectual property laws.

First-time visitors to A&M might be confused by student apparel, so here's a convenient guide designed to make a few things straight:

1. The official mascot of Texas A&M University is neither Calvin nor Hobbes, but a border collie named Reveille.

2. Texas A&M University does not field any official co-ed naked sports teams or student organizations.

3. Not all lists can be organized into "Top Ten" format.

4. Contrary to popular belief, the makers of Absolut vodka have NOT sponsored an entire class of undergraduates.

The lack of creative verve in some academic organizations might be explained by a time crunch. It simply takes more time and effort to come up with a unique idea rather than polish what has come before.

However, the university lifestyle affords students the rare luxury of being both sources and consumers of new thought. On the outside there are bosses with egos, co-workers with competing interests, and company lines to toe, so students who are saving their free thinking for after graduation might be disappointed.

There's always room for parody and satire, and imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. But our need for fresh ideas is so great that we must stop kissing butt and start making demands for originality.

Democratic fund raising gurus would help A&M

Every year it rears its ugly head, causing pain, grief and hysteria. No, it's not another season of Houston Oilers football. It's the obligatory annual fee increase.

This week, the Board of Regents will vote on yet another Student Services Fee increase. Students are sick and tired of being forced to fork over large amounts of cash to go to school. Clearly, something must be done to counteract this growing burden of Texas A&M tuition.

When it comes to scraping millions of dollars and not worrying where it came from, only Democrats can do the job. In fact, as of Feb. 28, the Democratic Party was forced to return \$3 million in illegal campaign contributions. Texas A&M should start showing the same cash-grabbing zeal. With two million dollars from the Chinese Communist Party here, \$100,000 from an Indonesian gardener there and a fat check from a Colombian drug smuggler, Kyle Field's North End Zone expansion could be completed.

There is no depth to which A&M should

Columnist



Donny Ferguson
 Sophomore political science major

not sink to line its pockets. Dr. Bowen could follow the lead of Gore and make a few fund-raising phone calls from the University's (taxpayers') property.

If asked whether he made illegal fund-raising phone calls, he could repeat Clinton's response to the same question: "I simply can't say that I've never done it." Or Bowen could borrow Al Gore's defense that the law doesn't apply to him and that "there is no controlling legal authority."

Then Bowen could throw in some Buddhist temples for \$500,000 each in "community outreach." The District Attorney might call it money laundering, but Bowen could label it a "distraction" or a "procedural problem."

The University could follow the Democrat lead and funnel contributions from the Chinese Communist Party through a local Chinese embassy. And although allowing foreign governments to influence a Presidential election, laundering millions of dollars and compromising national security are impeachable offenses, A&M needs cash.

The 12th Man Foundation could charge

\$100,000 a night to sleep on Kyle Field. They could just photocopy Bill Clinton's January 1995 memo to his staff about renting out the White House to raise cash and tell Foundation donors to "get other names at \$100,000 or more, \$50,000 or more...Ready to start overnights right away."

The University could pull a Democrat and sell exclusive invitations to White House coffees. Officials could invite the same Chinese arms dealer, Colombian drug smuggler and Lebanese international fugitive Bill Clinton and Al Gore sought. Therefore, for all students who wish to see more involvement in multiculturalism, the University could be under the influence of foreign powers.

All said, A&M has only one choice — to sink to the level of the Democratic Party, therefore eliminating the need for another fee increase. And if things don't exactly work out in 2000, Gore could even become A&M's next president. Just give Gore a phone, a government office, a couple of hours and pretty soon students won't even have to pay for tuition.

Little things like federal law should not be allowed to get in the way of raising money for the University. It's a good thing the Democratic Party is here to pave the way.

