

Thursday • July 17, 1997

Back in the saddle again

O.J. Simpson returns to the public eye; deserves no societal acclaim

Orenthal James Simpson who? Just when it was safe to watch CNN, O.J. returns from the nether region of social outcasts. In the months following the verdict in the civil trial, little had been reported about him until this past week. It turned out to be a banner coming out. First there were the reports of his last hour at his Rockingham Estate. Simpson greeted guests and talked with the members of the media and passing tourists, who only a short time ago were comparing him to Satan.

This was followed by reports of the auction of his home for failing to make mortgage payments. The starting price of \$2.5 million would do little to help pay the Goldmans, even if the money was going to them.

The weekend was topped off with his first interview since the trials. CNN's new legal whiz, Greta Van Susteren, made her name with commentary about the trials. It is only fitting that she should be the scavenger to pick over the bones of this case.

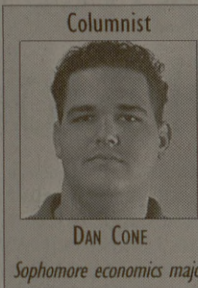
At the conclusion of the civil trial, Simpson had become the most hated man in America. No person, with the exception of his family and close friends, wanted anything to do with him. Now the impossible has begun: the remaking of O.J. The man who was completely os-

tracized from society is now trying to make a return. With the smile and congenial attitude that were his trademarks, he is attempting to once again become a regular "Joe" to America and the world.

This action should outrage everyone who believes the system failed Nicole Brown and Ron Goldman, but it shouldn't surprise anyone. With time comes apathy and forgetful minds. It is easy to allow Simpson back into society because time makes people forget.

Life goes on for everyone, and now he wants to recapture some of his past glory. With \$33.5 million owed to the Goldmans and Browns, he had better find some of that magic soon.

For over two years, a day didn't go by without some reporter having to cover Simpson and the case against him. CNN devoted much of its time and energy to covering the developments in the case. A person would have had to have been in a coma not to have known the case by heart. Finally, after too much coverage and excessive commentary, it was over. Now, unfortunately, Simpson has returned, and is trying to once again become a member of the society that considered him a monster only a few short months ago.



DAN CONE
Sophomore economics major

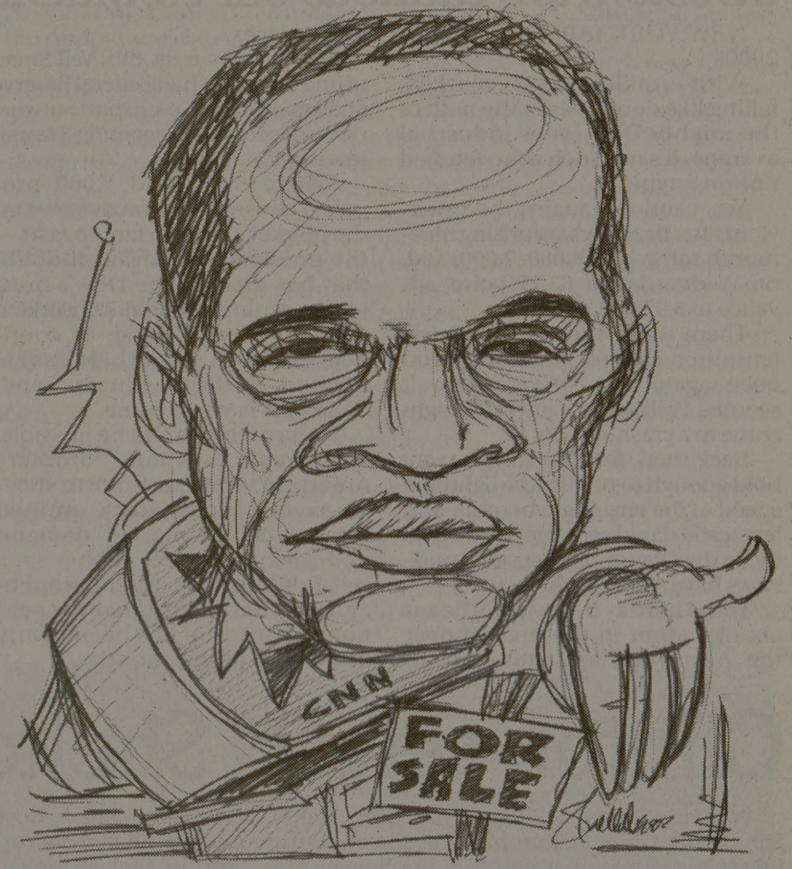
The rebuilding of Simpson's social image is going to be a mammoth undertaking. Only with time and public apathy, he will be able to find an acceptable niche in the public.

It would not be surprising to hear of his next movie project being the story of the murder of his former wife and Goldman. With no further threat of criminal action, he could easily do a project and make up some story to legitimize his involvement in the murders.

If there was to be a movie with Simpson portraying himself, there would be no way to estimate the profits that could be made. If only to hear him admit to the crime, even in a film depiction, every red-blooded American would be glued to the television or be willing to pay for tickets to go to the theater.

One of the reasons for the fall of Rome was that the public became more interested in being entertained than being informed. The same is becoming true in our society. Americans want to be entertained and forget the inequities in the world around them. This has led to the rise and acceptance of people such as O.J. Simpson.

There is no way to legitimize the return of Simpson to the forefront of the news. The only place he deserves to be is in a shack in the middle of nowhere, where he can never be heard from again.



University rules, regulations serve no practical purpose

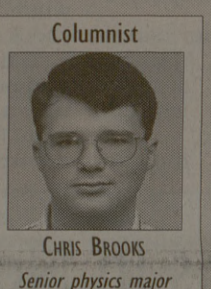
Too many people work for Texas A&M University. Apparently many of them have nothing better to do than sit around and think of ways to make students' lives harder. There are many rules, regulations and restrictions on this campus that serve no practical purpose, and they should be abolished.

All students are required by the University to take at least four semesters of kinesiology classes. The purpose for this requirement is to introduce students to different activities that they can continue throughout their lives. This will hopefully ward off the "freshman 15" and perhaps make Aggies more physically fit after they leave school.

All of this sounds like a wonderful idea. Then, some party crasher decided that there must be written tests in these classes. And, of course, these tests are guaranteed to occur in the same week as at least two other tests — probably physics and that advanced genetic engineering class which proved to be a bad idea from the beginning.

No one bothers to explain why students must study for two days for a test in a one hour class, nor will anyone offer any reason why physical tests are not sufficient for a grade in a physical education class. The truth is that there is no good reason. Someone in the kinesiology department just got bored one day and, poof, there were written tests in strength training and soccer.

Another ridiculous requirement is encountered by many students



CHRIS BROOKS
Senior physics major

in classes such as PHYS 218. Although it is true that many of the equations students are required to memorize can be derived from scratch, (no, the professors aren't just engaging in intellectual masturbation when they derive those formulas) deriving an equation on a test eats up valuable time, and the alternative

of memorizing takes away time that could be used for working practice problems.

There is no logical reason to require students to memorize an equation that could very easily be provided by the professor. If anyone in academia, research or industry were to look up an equation before applying it to his or her work, no one would come along and beat the offender with a stick.

It is good to be careful, especially when a misplaced negative can change the orbit of a space craft or drop a roof on someone's head. What, then, is the reason for asking students to spend valuable time memorizing equations for a test?

Ah, high school. Hopefully some day it will be a fond memory. For now, it seems too close to reality. Back in the days of high school incarceration, the schools got money based on how many students occupied desks. In college, however, the schools get money up front. Professors and administration officials should not care whether or not students show up to class. What a great system. Wait a minute — someone forgot to tell the University.

For some reason, many departments see the need to require that

students attend class. It does not matter if the professor barely speaks English, and students are better off spending class time at home reading their texts. So students are trapped in a classroom for 50 to 75 minutes suppressing the urge to ask the professor when he or she is going to take up the lunch money. If attending class is important, the students who want to do well will attend, and the rest should be able to exercise their right to do poorly if they wish.

The "piece de resistance," and this one must have taken the University a while to come up with, is another hold over from the high school era. "Honey, be home by 10 p.m." It must be at the top of the list in the Parents' Handbook.

While the University hasn't quite taken its meddling to that level, it has chosen the next best thing. "Honey, be sure to have that nasty boy (or girl) out of your room by 10 p.m. You don't know where he's (or she's) been." While the University officials were at it, they banned toasters ("We don't want you to hurt yourself."), crock pots — for some completely unknown reason — and cooking meat in microwaves.

The only good explanation for all of this, with the possible exception of some sick desire to treat students like children, is that the University has too much time on its hands.

The only solution to this meddling is to cull the herds here at A&M. If that is not acceptable, then find everyone some real work to do. Either way, it is high time that the University stopped amusing itself with creating pointless rules at students' expenses.



MAIL CALL

Enrollment figures reveal A&M problem

In response to James Francis' July 15 column:

I think Francis makes several valid points when discussing attitudes toward student representation, but I also feel that he fails to recognize the significance of the numbers, statistics and percentages which reflect the decline in minority enrollment.

With this continued decrease in minority enrollment, these individual "specks of paint" that are so beautiful in their collaboration will begin to blend together into a homogeneous one-dimensional picture.

I don't think George Seurat's painting would have been labeled a masterpiece if he had only used one or two colors, and this will be the case if something is not done to combat this problem.

Francis says that we are all in the same boat, but what the statistics show is that it is harder for some of us to get on this maroon and white boat.

Jesse Harrison III
Class of '97

PTTS should face students, businesses

In response to a Battalion news story written about PTTS:

Last year The Battalion published an article which, if memory serves me, reported that PTTS made about \$3 million a year in citations.

What interest of PTTS would be served by alleviating the parking situation, and thereby reducing a revenue of \$3 million? Consider that this is \$3 million less to be spent at local shops.

Perhaps this is enough money to get the retail business community involved. After all, Texas A&M does claim to have a good neighbor policy.

Pressure from both students and businesses would be much harder to resist than either group alone.

John Ferguson
Graduate Student

Texas tuition fund helps middle-class

In response to General Franklin's July 16 column:

Franklin's column bad-

mouths the Texas Tomorrow Fund, because he claims it discriminates against the lower class. Does he also think that need-based scholarships discriminate against the middle and upper class?

I wish I had a nickel for every scholarship that I wasn't eligible for because it was "need-based." This way I could have paid for college.

The Texas Tomorrow Fund is a fantastic idea for families which are not eligible for need-based scholarships, but still can't afford college tuition and fees — it's a pretty big group.

My twin brother and I are both in Texas state universities. This is a huge drain on our family, but we still don't qualify for need-based scholarships. I wish the Texas Tomorrow Fund had been around when we were small, and for my mom and dad, too.

It is ridiculous for Franklin to claim that the lower class is saddled with paying for college for middle-class kids. Everyone knows the truth, which is that the middle class has the biggest tax burden, and it receives the fewest benefits.

There are scholarships available for lower-class kids. Just about anybody who makes decent grades in high school, and does well on the SAT can go to college — as long as the family income is below the "need-based" cutoff point.

It's those of us who don't qualify for need-based assistance, but aren't rich either, who really get stuck in the mud when trying to pay for college.

The Texas Tomorrow Fund is a godsend for all of us here in the middle. It's probably how I'll send my kids to college.

Rebecca Pedersen
Class of '98

Prepaid tuition plan deserves support

In response to General Franklin's July 16 column:

I was disappointed to read Franklin's column. Franklin insists that the prepaid tuition plan should be done away with. He preaches against class bias. Those who speak in defense of the poor should beware of taking that path.

The poor are much better off than they would otherwise be because of class bias. Poor citizens receive free and/or discounted food, housing, job placement assistance, education, etc., all funded by an inherently class-biased society.

The prepaid tuition plan was not created to help the poor. It was created to help the lower-middle class, those individuals who often cannot afford to pay for college, but who make just enough money to be unable to receive need-based scholarships.

I herald the program as an

undeniable success. As for the notion that the poor are funding the rich in their educational endeavors, Franklin should seriously reexamine the situation. Tax dollars come disproportionately from the wealthy. And these tax dollars help fund universities and graduate schools alike.

Franklin is correct about one thing: The poor should have every opportunity to attend a good university, and education is the great equalizer.

Americans should support any program that makes sure that everyone can afford the opportunity for a good education. But the class warfare on both ends of the spectrum needs to be done away with.

Joseph Donley
Class of '99

Washington officials must guard America

Last year, World magazine wrote an important article on the lack of a United States national missile defense system. The article noted that North Korea would have ICBMs which could hit the U.S. by the year 1999.

Last May, the Washington Times warned Americans that communist China would soon have ICBMs which could strike the western United States, including California and many Rocky Mountain states.

With the proliferation of nuclear missile technology among rogue nations and possibly terrorist groups, a nuclear strike against the U.S. is not the elaborate fiction of a Tom Clancy novel, but a very real danger.

America is vulnerable to incoming missiles which might carry nuclear, biological or chemical weapons. There is a complete lack of domestic missile defenses to shoot down incoming missiles targeted for American soil.

Why does Washington refuse to protect its citizens?

Steven A. Costello
Lake Jackson, TX



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