

Wednesday • October 1, 1997

# Stamping out test stress

Preparing for exams requires focusing on time management, setting priorities



**JAMES FRANCIS**  
opinion editor

creases the risk of falling asleep during the exam the next day).

Now comes the studying part. Begin reading each chapter with the chapter review or summary first; this way, you will know the different subjects you are about to read in that chapter.

Next, take a look at your notes and begin to correlate the information you took notes on (you have been attending lecture, right?) with the respective topics in the book. Usually lecture topics can be further explored within a class' textbook, so this might be the best way to learn as much as possible about the subjects in question.

When you start to get tired of reading words, words and more words, take a break and go outside. The air will revitalize your studying skills and soon you will want to get back to more chapters of reading.

Continue this process until you get to the point where the walk outside does not work anymore. At this point, put the books aside, set your alarm clock to ring two hours before the test and go to sleep (you cannot take a test without some form of rest and relaxation).

**•The Morning of the Exam**

The alarm goes off. Remember not to panic; you still have two hours before the test becomes a reality. Get some more coffee brewing (or get some more orange juice), pick the books up off the floor and start refreshing your memory. Make sure to study in an upright position — if you get into the bed to study (say hello to Mr. Sandman for me), you can guess what will happen next. After reviewing everything you studied the night before, begin going over whatever materials you have yet to examine.

During this time, remember to check your clock; you do not want to study through the beginning of the exam. Forty-five minutes before the exam, take a shower. This will invigorate the body, stimulate

the mind and eliminate the coffee smell you attained during your cramming.

Get to class 10 minutes early in order to find a seat, calm down and prepare any pre-test materials, such as a Scantron, pencil or pen and bluebook. After the tests

have been handed out, the rest is up to you. Do not let your mind wander. Keep all your thoughts centered on biology, or calculus or whatever subject your test covers.

With a little luck and these helpful hints in mind, hopefully your first tests of

the semester will go well. Now if you all will excuse me, I have approximately 350 pages to read before my first two tests of the semester on Thursday.

James Francis is a junior English major.



JAMES FRANCIS/THE BATTALION

## Coed dorm policy offends Orthodox students

If you do not like living with women, why don't you go and join a monastery? Oh wait, wrong religion.



**MASON JACKSON**  
columnist

Five Orthodox Jews attending Yale are threatening to sue the school because of its housing policy. The policy, of which the students were aware before applying to Yale, makes all freshmen and sophomores live on campus, and all in coed dorms.

Yale feels, correctly, that it will be an enriching experience for their students to live in dorms where men and women will learn to cope with one another.

The freshman year the sexes are on alternating floors, while sophomore dorms are divided into single sex suites within the same floor.

The whiners say that the everyday contact between men and women and the "easy sex" are an affront to their faith. If you talk to the residents of the few coed

dorms at A&M, they may say that the implication that sex is easy in a coed dorm is an affront to reality.

This policy should be a non-issue. If the environment that Yale provides is at odds with Jewish Orthodox beliefs, then why would these students want to go there? One student seeking to live an even more sheltered life gave this response, "Why should I have to go to another Ivy League school? Presidents have gone here, so why shouldn't I?"

The reason he should not go there is because it does not suit him, and the college has no responsibility to him to change its practices — it is a private school. Yale has already tried to accommodate Jewish students on issues that will not alter the Yale "experience."

They provide Kosher meals and have key-locked entrances on the dorms to allow the Jewish students access on the Sabbath, when the use of electronic devices is prohibited. This comes from the 11th Commandment: "Thou shalt not harness the power of the lightning (formerly Thor's hammer) for the purpose of

access card identification."

Yale has done everything within reason to avoid discriminating against this group.

One thing to be remembered in all of this is that Orthodox Jews are a very small percentage of all the practitioners of Judaism. And they can be likened to similarly extremist groups in other religions who choose to live their lives by following extremely literal interpretations of stories and guidelines written by people (yes people) thousands of years ago.

Change and progress are guiding forces for our species, in fact the world we live in today would be considered an alien culture to people living just one hundred years ago.

For someone to live their life according to an ancient document that is so profoundly ignorant of the times we live in is misguided. For them to expect special treatment for having those beliefs in a forward moving society is unreasonable.

Mason Jackson is a senior marketing major.

## Drug ban outcry shows American "fix it with pills" attitude

Last week the Food and Drug Administration pulled from the shelves two products and sent the weight loss community into an uproar.



**ROBBY RAY**  
columnist

These products are fenfluramine and dexfenfluramine, marketed as Redux and Pondimin, respectively, and comprise one-half of the popular drug combination fen-phen. The outcry resulting from the government's action illustrates the distressing trend in American society. Americans are decreasingly able to deal with problems without resorting to drug use.

Americans no longer seem capable of doing anything, positive or negative, without a pill to pop or a drug to swallow. If kids are misbehaving, the immediate diagnosis is Attention Deficit Disorder, and they are fed Ritalin like candy. If people need to lose weight, there are a wide range of drugs and drug combinations which are available for use.

If people feel depressed, there are other drugs from which to choose. In addition, the attention given to the massive series of tobacco lawsuits has brought nicotine and alcohol to the forefront of public opinion, because of their supposedly unconquerable effects on people. There seems to be no limit to the things drugs can do in today's culture.

In the past, Americans relied on discipline and self-control to solve their problems and shortcomings. It was exemplified by the typical "pull yourselves-up-by-the-bootstraps" mentality and epitomized by John Wayne. But with the advent of modern psychology and sociology, it is all too easy to find an excuse for undesirable behavior.

Americans no longer have to take responsibility for anything, it is either caused by their brain chemistry, their upbringing or other environmental factors both beyond their control and above the reach of any amount of desire to change or overcome.

The previous generation sang "We Shall Overcome", but today people are told that they have no hope and no chance of ever overcoming the sum of their background and their chemical make-up.

This problem is deeper than just simple vanity or an unhealthy obsession with physical bodies. It is a weakening of society, not from the top down, from the politicians and leaders of society, but from the bottom up.

It is not spread from institutions to individuals, but from individuals to the institutions. This happens as they grow up believing in their own innate weakness and infect the institutions with those attitudes as adults.

The problem is bad now, but stands to get far worse as the current generation of young people who have grown up being told all their lives that they are powerless to change their behavior without drugs grow up and take their positions as leaders in society.

Recently, a class-action lawsuit was filed by two Houston-area women against the makers of these drugs, alleging that they were victims of false and misleading advertising and should have been warned of the possible side effects and consequences of taking the drugs.

But the fact remains that they should not have been on the drugs in the first place. Both were described as being "moderately overweight but otherwise healthy" before starting the drug regimen.

The makers of the drugs have from the beginning, stated that the drugs could be helpful for "morbidly obese" people, but have never approved of the use of the two-drug cocktail. The FDA, as well, has never approved of the use of the two drugs together as a weight control agent.

Once again, lazy people who are not willing to work for something are looking for the easy way out and thought that they had found it in these drugs. And once again, they are realizing that there is no such thing as an easy, free ride. Only this time, as in the tobacco situation, people expect that someone else will pay the bill.

Robby Ray is a senior speech communications major.



### MAIL CALL

#### Film Society offers on-campus movies

In response to Travis Irby's "Let's go to the movies" Sept. 30 feature: College Park Six is not the only discount theater in Bryan-College Station. The MSC Film Society shows low-cost movies in the Rudger Theater Complex every semester. This Fall's Aggie Cinema calendar features summer blockbuster hits such as Men in Black and Air Force One, alternatives films like Chasing Amy, and "modern classics" like the Indiana Jones movies and Ferris Bueller's Day Off.

The Film Society also provides a free video/lecture series twice a week (Thursdays and Sundays), and sneak previews of new movies by Terry Maguire and Ransom were "steamed" by the Film Society), and the Texas Film Festival every February, where students can see independent movies they will never see anywhere else.

Our ticket prices are half as much as Hollywood.16 (even less if

bought in advance), and we accept Aggiebucks. All of our movies are chosen by A&M students, and this semester anyone can vote for our final movie of the semester by visiting our Website at <http://films.tamu.edu>.

We find it difficult to believe that Mr. Irby could miss all the programming and discount movies that the MSC Film Society provides, considering that we advertise weekly in his newspaper.

Brent Troyan  
Chair of the MSC Film Society  
Class of '98

Accompanied by 20 signatures

#### Adding law school not an A&M need

In response to Len Callaway's "Absence of A&M Law School..." Sept. 30 column:

Callaway has correctly pointed out that the only major school missing from A&M is a law school. However, his case for one is rather weak, based mostly on the desire of students such as himself to attend law school here, rather than elsewhere.

But universities, just like businesses, must focus on meeting their customers' needs. For A&M, the customers are primarily the taxpayers of Texas.

Taxpayers support public universities because there is a high

correlation between education levels and economic well-being. As Chancellor Thompson has said, one of Texas' most important strategic problems is its relatively low worker education level, which results in its relatively low per capita income. Increasing the overall education level, particularly among minorities, will obviously benefit Texas. I have never heard anyone claim that more law schools will benefit Texas. Thus, the A&M system investment in universities in south and east Texas, rather than a law school.

Hank Walker  
Dept. of Computer Science

#### Unfounded remarks make for bad column

In response to Donny Ferguson's "The boob tube" Sept. 30 column: You have to love it when you can sit down and read all the educational articles printed in The Battalion each day. It always follows right in line with all the traditions that made this school what it is.

You can go to the Mail Call section if you want to see where the hearts of all the current students reside. Hmm ... maybe not. Seems to me that The Battalion is turning into a gossip column, looking for someone to poke fun at. I don't agree with some of the dilemmas society has thrown this university to deal with, but I try to

deal with them on a day-to-day basis instead of whining about them in an opinion column.

Why don't you offer us one of those educated political solutions to bring some entertainment solutions between the agricultural society and your obviously political society? Texas A&M was and always will carry the name, if nothing else, Texas Agricultural and Mechanical.

In closing, have you ever been to the Dixie Chicken, and have you ever met some of the people that visit, such as Robert Earl Keen, Pat Green and several other artists.

I speak for myself in this. If you want to slam me for being a poultry science major and going to the Chicken, why don't you meet me first?

Brian Schroeder  
Class of '96

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less 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:

The Battalion - Mail Call  
013 Reed McDonald  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, TX  
77843-1111

Campus Mail: 1111  
Fax: (409) 845-2647  
E-mail: [Batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu](mailto:Batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu)

For more details on letter policy, please call 845-3313 and direct your question to the opinion editor.

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played in  
math classes to the  
of writing poetry, students are gearing  
for their make-or-break first tests of  
the fall semester.  
The weather has rerouted from its few  
days of cool breezes back to the scorching  
summer heat — yet another reason for  
students to feel the imminent gloom of  
fall-taking. However, this first week does  
not have to be so bad if students follow  
some simple rules to insure that their first  
week of tests will go without a hitch. Al-  
though many students may have heard  
these suggestions before (and never fol-  
lowed them), it never hurts to give a little  
advice to freshmen and new transfer stu-  
dents.  
**The Night Before**  
This is the time when a student takes a  
look at his or her class syllabus for the se-  
cond time since the beginning of the se-  
mester. This is also when the student real-  
izes that the class' first test, covering five  
chapters, is tomorrow.  
Although students should try to avoid  
this occurrence, there are ways to ease the  
panic once a student discovers he or she  
has fallen into this situation: Get the coffee  
brewing (if you're a coffee drinker — if  
you break out the orange juice) — you are  
going to need all the energy you can  
muster to pull the mighty all-nighter (an-  
other aspect of last-minute studying stu-  
dents should try to avoid, because it in-  
creases the risk of falling asleep during the  
exam the next day).  
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reading each chapter with the chapter re-  
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