OPINION PINION

CITY BEAT

Park place

Iorthgate parking garage offers needed resource to campus, College Station residents

ver the past several months, Aggies wheard rumor of a wparking garage to located in the inthese District. Could it be? Could dents actually see a wparking lot built davailable for stuatuse as opposed seeing our already



LEN CALLAWAY columnist

ricted parking
why devoured by A&M construction?
The answer is simple — students can
ness this great event and they can have
and in making the garage a reality.
Students have probably seen the signs
tplainly but confusingly read "Support
Parking Garage — Vote Against!"
What! Support — Against.
Ok, Heres the deal.

An initiative will be before the voters College Station (that's us) on May 2 It states:

"The City of College Station shall not hend, use, or lend funds, nor shall the yof College Station make grants of fincial aid or grants of any kind, for the velopment or construction of the rthgate Public Parking Garage Project (uncil Resolution No. 9-11-97-7b)."

The simple fact behind all of the politiskullduggery and verbage is the City of lege Station needs to get off its rump thuild the garage.

The City of College Station hired a prosional parking garage consultation mcalled DeShazo, Tang & Associates, to aluate the feasibility of a "multi-leveled rking garage" in the Northgate area. The teport went through a couple of also using different criteria each time at the result remained the same — build

The firm specifically recommended a 32-space garage to be located on 1.65

acres of ideal land right in the middle of all

The garage would be in close proximity to the areas three most prominent churches and all of the local culture to be found in the Northgate district.

In addition, the report indicated that by using a conservative scale of (\$1per hour/\$2 per day maximum) the garage will be able to annually earn 1.5 times its expenses, thereby, actually yielding a profitite first year of expension.

it its first year of operation.

The garage has widespread support including the police and fire departments, as well as many Northgate business owners. The plan does not even call for an increase in property taxes — quite to the contrary — the garage will probably boost property values.

Larry Haskins, attorney for the Culpepper family, recently stated "It is extremely unlikely that the mud lot will be available for parking after December 31of this year." When asked why the lot would be unavailable Haskins simply replied "It will be developed."

Mud lot provides 700 parking spaces for Aggies every day of the year, and when it's gone those people still have to attend class

So, if the city and the voters do the right thing, they can have the 700 cars go to their new, clean, well lit and affordable parking garage with the students' fresh green backs in tow. They could literally choose to laugh all the way to the bank.

So, what's the problem, you ask.
Three of the seven-person city council doubt the reality of the numbers established by DeShazo, Tang & Associates.
Since when did three guys on a city council become confidant enough to dispute the validity of an expert firm's estimate? Even if this argument is valid, the city need only increase the daily maximum charge for parking and the dispute over numbers would be a moot debate. The report does state that the numbers for sug-

gested rates are conservative.

I know there are accountants working for the city because somebody adds up my utility bill, in addition to sending my parents nice little notes saying something about unpaid parking tickets. So why can't these number crunchers check the firms estimate? I'm no math major but it can't be that hard.

Now for the interactive part.

Aggies must learn to vote.

The only way the city is ever going to begin listening to students is if they are put into a position to have to listen or lose their prestigious "city council" seat.

The process is rather simple and can be mastered by every Aggie with just a few seconds of contemplative practice. Pick up the phone and dial the county tax assessor/collectors' office. Tell the person who answers you would like to register to vote in Brazos County. He or she will ask a couple of easy questions (short response—sorry, no multiple choice) and then mail the card to your local address. They don't even send you a bill for the postage used to mail the card.

It's that simple.

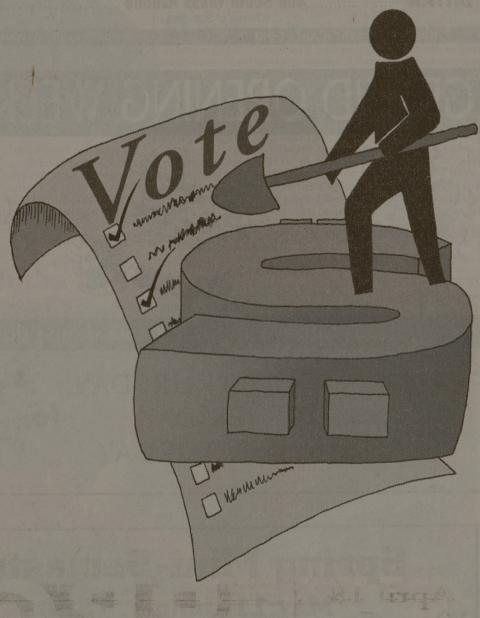
This columnist has come to understand that the margin needed to gain approval for the parking garage is only a few hundred, there are 40-something thousand Aggies currently enrolled so the math is real easy, even for a journalism major.

The time to register for the May 2 election has passed, but assuming the initiative fails (remember, it has to fail for the garage plan to move forward) but the vote for the garage plan itself will be coming soon and then we can flex a little red ass student muscle.

The Northgate parking garage is truly a worthwhile undertaking on the part of those that support it, and its fruition will directly benefit the students of Texas A&M. Do what you can to ease the parking woes

in College Station. Register locally and vote.

Len Callaway is a junior journalism major.



AMPUS CONNECTION

eaching only Creationism alienates other religious belief systems

reaching creation-science in the public schools admees religious beliefs even attempts are made to elimite overt references to the ble, the Creator or other glous concepts," Ameri-Civil Liberties Union, willard v. Treen (1982). Evolution. It is the scientification for how life bearon Earth, and how it with the created on other



MANISHA PAREKH columnist

olds in our Universe. Ever since this theory was woduced by Darwin in 1859, it has been at the later of great controversy.

In fact, until the mid-20th century, the theory of Olution was not allowed to be taught in many shoots. The predominant teaching was Creation—n, or the creation of man according to the Bible. After the Scopes trial, the theory of evolution and its way into the classroom as Creationism

quietly went back to Sunday school.

Until, now, it seems.
Across the country, members of the religious right are waging a war to get Creationism back into the schools, either alongside or in place of evolution.

Many school systems are bending to the pressure of this very vocal group and allowing creationism back into the classroom or taking evolution out.

So much for separation of church and state.
Despite the fact that Creationism is an idea that is solely based upon the Bible and is only adhered to by Christians, there are some groups who feel that it needs to taught in school as an "alternative" to Darwin's theory.

That sounds fine ... as long as children are also taught about the Hindu, Shinto, Muslim, Wiccan, and Jainist ideas on the creation of life, along with every other religion of the world.

We would not want to give the idea that American education has a religious agenda, right? Otherwise, we might as well rename Biology 101 as

Christianity 101.

But the religious right might have a problem with their children being taught about those "heather" religions

Therefore, some schools have taken out the discussion of evolution all together.

Never mind the fact that the theory of evolution

Never mind the fact that the theory of evolution is a scientific theory that has been highly regarded and accepted as the most likely explanation for life as we know it.

It goes against the teachings of the Bible and

Christianity. Therefore, it must not be allowed to be taught or heard.

Just like Galileo was silenced when he taught

Just like Galileo was silenced when he taught that the Earth revolved around the sun, and not the other away around.

It is pointless to point out that if the religious right wants their children to be exposed to the Creationist idea, perhaps they should send them to a private Christian school or teach their children at home or in Sunday school.

That would mean that public schools are not centers of religious conversion to Christianity,

which we know is the religion of all Americans.

True, it is hard to believe in the theory of evolu-

True, it is hard to believe in the theory of evolution and in Creationism at the same time and it might cause some conflict in the minds of impressionable children.

But that conflict might also cause the children, the students, to think for themselves and decide what they believe is true and what is not. And it is this ability, the ability to think for one's self and choose one's beliefs, that is threatened when opposing ideas are censored.

Religion has its place, but that place is not in the science class.

Christianity has its place, but that place is not to alienate members of other religions, which most assuredly will happen if Creationism is brought back into the classroom.

Public schools are supposed to be places for learning and thinking, not indoctrination and brainwashing.

Manisha Parekh is a sophomore journalism and psychology major.

PERSPECTIVES

ccusations against pro-life group exemplify "terrorism" witch hunt

A ll of you peace-lov-ing people out there may not be aware of it, but his country is

ROBBY RAY guest columnist

Inder attack by a

Joup of terrorists so insidious that they
ondone and even encourage murder in
old blood to advance their cause.

What is even more shocking is that they

What is even more shocking is that they are not slinking around in shadows and hiding under rocks. In fact, they are a nationally-recognized organization and have wen been spotted on this very campus.

The terrorist group is none other than

gasp) Operation Rescue.
If all of this wasn't shocking enough, it seems the law enforcement agencies are powerless to protect us from these intaders. It has fallen to the National Organization of Women to defend this country from its enemies.

The above was sarcasm. What follows is absolutely true and deadly serious. NOW has filed a federal lawsuit alleging that Operation Rescue and the Pro-Life Action League, another similar group, are engaged in a campaign of "force, violence and fear." NOW is asking the court to hold these groups responsible for acts of terror against abortion providers even though they neither condone violence nor practice it.

It is similar to trying to hold yell leaders responsible for a fight that occurs at an Aggie football game versus the University of Texas. In fact, their exact argument could be directly applied to our yell leaders.

NOW attorney Fay Clayton said even though the individuals named in the suit did not directly participate in or advocate the acts of violence, they should be blamed for them because they, according to Clayton, created an atmosphere in which others carried out these acts.

By the way, let's put this terrorism thing in perspective. More people have died on this campus from food allergies in the last two years than in abortion clinic bombings since abortion became legal in the United States.

Not only is this lawsuit a threat to prolife advocates, it should also frighten anyone who ever speaks out on anything at all. For example, *The Battalion's* own Michelle Voss could be held liable for damages resulting from the Unabomber crimes, because she has spoken out against technology.

There is no doubt that most women, even most members of NOW, are not so blinded by a single issue that they are not able to see the danger in this lawsuit. What a NOW victory would mean to the country would be an end to free speech, as no one would be able to advocate any moderate position that happened to be similar to one held by a terrorist group.

People would be able to believe that Israel should grant Palestinian autonomy, but no one in this country could ever form a group in support of the Palestinians or even speak out against Israel for fear of being subjects to a lawsuit brought by victims of Palestinian terrorism.

Others might dislike the Internal Revenue Service and think the government had overstepped its bounds at Waco, but they could not say it in public, because some holding those beliefs have committed acts of terrorism.

No one could even advocate affirmative action or racial equality because some racial groups have committed acts of violence and terrorism in pursuit of these beliefs.

No one could preach any kind of religion because millions of people have died through the centuries in such a divisive religious atmosphere.

Every religion has its radicals. And listen up environmentalists, the environmental

movement would be outlawed because some radical "eco-terrorists" have committed murder by spiking trees in order to kill loggers, and caused millions of dollars in damage through vandalism, all in the name of protecting the environment.

In short, freedom of speech would almost completely disappear from this

Conservatives, and especially pro-life advocates, are often accused of being "one-issue voters," which is to say that they allow a candidate's position on a single issue, such as abortion, to determine their vote. But in this case, it seems to be NOW that is being so narrow minded and short-sighted so as not to see the long-term consequences of their actions. Then again, maybe they know exactly what they're doing.

Robby Ray is a senior speech communications major.