

PERSPECTIVES

Mother knows best

Raising children stands as a noble pursuit, not easy way out

The word homemaker does not mean maker-of-cook-and-oven-floor-crubber. This label is prepositional in our post-feminist era.

Yet motherhood took on nasty connotation thanks to the philosophical poverty of the feminist movement.

In fact, people often scoff at women who chose to have children and to work with their families. And, it is just that, work.

Raising children is quite possibly the most important job on the planet — probably a close second to those guys who clean the windows in the space shuttle.

Rather than telling women they have options to pursue a doctorate, a run for political office or to raise children, raising a family is ribbed as backwards, demeaning, oppressive, a waste. A waste? May it never be! Children are amazing creatures, albeit stinky, whiny, and hyper, they are truly precious gifts.

Along with children, good mothers are equally precious.

You know, I find it rather offensive that our society has warped the thinking of so many young women. We are even told by our peers that there is something wrong with wanting to have children.

Typical response: "What? You're in college and you want to raise a family? [snickering, rolling of eyes] Why are you here?"

As a matter of fact, the women who raised me were all college educated women who chose to stay at home with their children.

The resulting product is an intelligent being who is functional in society.

Well-rounded women with a varied interests, or even specializations, in science, literature, technology, art, nature, music, sports and, yes, cooking [gasp] are the perfect role models for children.

Isn't it about time we gave posterity more than just The Zone at Kyle Field?

Indeed, a well-educated woman can pass down her diverse knowledge and wisdom to her family.

The result is more often than not a well-adjusted child who can articulate themselves better than the average bear.

Moreover, the rampant hostility towards motherhood in our culture is a rather bizarre phenomena.

Considered holy, sacred, beautiful, and mysterious in other cultures, we seem to have devalued the entire process of what is and should be thought of as miraculous.

While this is not intended to be an anti-abortion column, it should be obvious to our culture that the 1.6 million abortions that happen in our nation every year contribute to an anti-nurturing environment.

Our nation has become violent towards the womb, our advertising neuters women of their hips and breasts, in essence, of their reproductive powers.

Women seem to have fallen for this nonsense. Instead of believing the ability to have children is empowering, our culture encourages women to think that their bodies are oppressive.

However one looks at it, it still re-



mains an inescapable biological fact: women's bodies are made to carry a child.

This does not mean every woman will make a good mother. Some women make great doctors or great professors, great journalists or great business-owners, motherhood does not appeal to them.

But for the young women out there who want to have a family and raise their children themselves — good for you.

Feminism means supporting women everywhere. Therefore, women who decide to be home with their children have the support of this feminist.

In fact, it is one of the most noble pursuits of our time for women to be homemakers.

Why do I support homemakers? Because my mother is one.

My mother ran her own interior design business, volunteered at my school, was politically active, made a delectable pesto chicken over pasta [with basil from her own garden] and stitched my Halloween costume — she is a homemaker.

She made time for both herself and her family; otherwise she would have gone bonkers, as she might say. She's not an ignorant, passive mouse either.

She's an independent, creative mind with a college degree in science and home economics.

In all, she is a gorgeous woman with brilliance, savvy and wit.

So, call your mom and let her know there's nothing like a good mom.

Michelle Voss is a sophomore English major.

CAMPUS CONNECTION

A&M promises to be a changed place by the year 2028

Ask an "old Ag" what his college experience was like and he will probably tell you about morning reveille, President Rudder and a two-deck Kyle Field. Ask a recent grad what their college years were like and you'll hear about jammed telephone registration, jack-booted parking officers and an arm-length fee statement.

Obviously, Texas A&M has undergone a dramatic change over the past thirty years, transforming from an agrarian military school out in the middle of nowhere into a overcrowded, top-heavy bureaucratic school out in the middle of nowhere. But what does the future hold for A&M?

One can only imagine what new and intriguing changes A&M will go through in another 30 years.

Kyle Field has grown along with the University. Originally a single-deck football field, the University added second and third decks to accommodate the needs of tens of thousands of new students and added "The Zone" to accommodate the need for tens of thousands of new dollars.

By 2028, fans at Kyle Field can also enjoy a luxury box and mixed drinks in The Third Row, The Track, The Overhang, The Corner of the Second Deck and The Wobbly Bleacher on the Seventh Row on the Student Side.

Not to be outdone, the now-30-year-old Reed Arena will be razed and replaced with the All Sport Shaquille O'Neal Memorial Arena (tragically killed by an errant free-throw attempt).

"The O" boasts 25-foot moving baskets and a 100-yard court painted green with white yard lines to attract fans. Coach Watkins, in his 70s, will seriously consider recruiting at MTV Rock 'n' Jock events.

MSC OPAS will sponsor a Broadway version of "The Dukes of Hazzard" in an effort to increase ticket sales. "They're Just Good Ol' Boys!" will end its run as the most successful musical in OPAS history.

New A&M President, an elderly and unemployed Vanilla Ice, promises to lower student fees and increase scholarship funds. President Ice is soon removed by the Board of Regents after he is spotted at the intersection of Texas and George Bush holding a "Will Dance At Your Organization's Function For Food" sign.

Further down the street, the George Bush Presidential Library will share a jammed West Campus with the George W. Bush Presidential Library, the Phil Gramm Presidential Library, the R.C. Slocum Presidential Library and the Garry Mauro Presidential Library (elected president under the little-known Constitutional clause, "Once every 30 years, the individual States shall appoint the least-effective state Official amongst them to serve as President," with Arkansas having done so thirty years earlier.)

2028 will also be a year of turmoil and tragedy. Just like its predecessor, the Soviet Union, A&M Administration will collapse under its own weight and campus-wide anarchy will prevail. The Department of Hypochondriac Eskimo Harpoon Fisherman Services will prove too much for the over-burdened, over-regulated Administration.

Sadly the Freshman Leaders of Tomorrow, We'll Make You A Leader, Aggie Leaders for the Future and 633 of the University's 659 leadership groups will also collapse — ironically, from a lack of leadership. Anarchy reigns as blue tags park in yellow lots and Student Government sponsors an event without passing out stickers or designing a T-shirt.

Parking congestion on the 149,000 student campus compels Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services to junk their expensive new Jeep Cherokees for black helicopters.

Sadly, 25 students will be gunned down as they attempt to park in front of the MSC. Eventually, the National Guard is called in to control PTTs troops. All 300 Guardsmen are killed and ticketed for failure to display parking tags.

Yes, A&M will change dramatically over the next thirty years. After three decades of bickering and whining, A&M will get a Department of Music, only to sadly learn it will be headed by Ginger Spice.

But nonetheless, A&M will continue to survive change — that is, until a careless genetic engineering student accidentally releases the flying monkeys.

Donny Ferguson is a junior political science major.

STATE OF THE UNION

Educational programs must look at long term

Laws, policies and programs have the best chance at long-term success when they are designed with the seventh generation in mind. That is, they must not only work for us, they must work for our children and our children's children.

By thinking as far ahead as the seventh generation of our progeny, policy-makers can make a lasting and conscientious addition to our societal framework. Nowhere is this forward-thinking needed more than in education.

Congress is slated to begin debate on President Clinton's plan to reduce class sizes in the early grades by hiring 100,000 new teachers over the next seven years. Additionally, the leadership of the two national teachers' unions, the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) are finalizing a merger that has been in the works for years.

Although both of these events have the potential to improve public education in the short term, neither shows evidence of seventh-generation thinking. Both Clinton and the

union leaders can and should shore up their plans by including provisions that ensure long-term benefit.

Critics of Clinton's plan are quick to point out that the problem isn't quantity of teachers, it's quality. Furthermore, the detractors cite studies showing that lower class sizes don't necessarily translate into more classroom success.

The critics are correct on the former but mistaken on the latter. Studies aside, anyone who has been in front of or been a student in a classroom at any level knows there is greater teacher-student contact as overall numbers decrease. Granted, not all teachers and students will take advantage of this opportunity for greater learning, but it is at least possible.

But the critics have a point in that current teachers who don't know their subject matter or who are ineffective in the classroom are indicative of a quality problem. This is where seventh generation thinking can help.

Clinton can answer the charges of his opponents by modifying his current plan to include provisions that would address the quality issue. For example, some of the funding that Clinton is intending for the new hires can be directed toward an assessment initiative to determine the exact scope and nature of the quality problem.

The AFT-NEA merger raises similar issues. Already, the two unions individually have not

entirely-undeserved reputations for coddling ineffective teachers. Additionally, they have taken flack for opposing equal access to education (by poo-pooing vouchers) and open competition (by resisting charter schools). It's no wonder that some fear this super-union will be twice as large and twice as oppressive.

Each union has generally tried to emphasize that it is committed to promoting quality in public schools. But given their records of unmitigated self-interest, these proclamations seem little more than lip-service.

However, it is not too late. The AFT and the NEA can help assuage the fears about their marriage by simultaneously staking out a new political position that is more open to reform. This position would involve some risk for the union, as it would have to sacrifice some of the self-protection that it has built up for itself over the years.

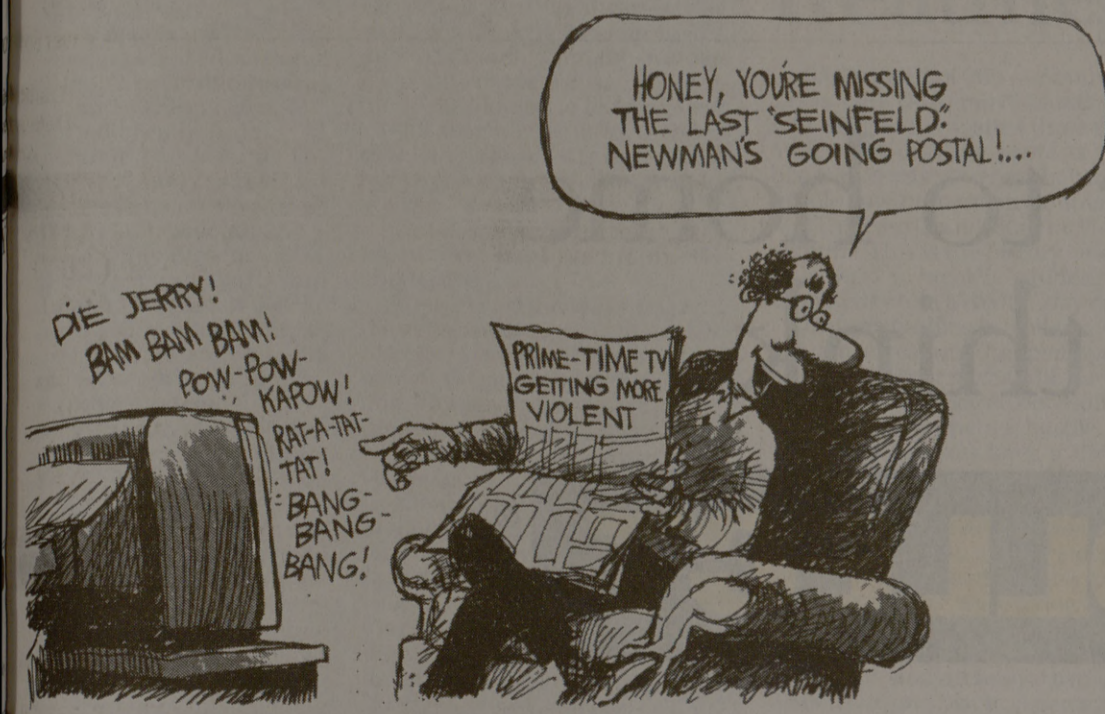
Unfortunately, risk frequently surfaces when policy-makers have the courage to seek something other than short-term solutions to long-term problems. If Clinton and the unions are willing to endure those risks, then they might end up with results that not only look good to our eyes, but also to those of the seventh generation.

Adam Collett is an educational administration graduate student.



ADAM COLLETT
columnist

Mike Luckaich ATLANTA CONSTITUTION



MAIL CALL

Movie patrons fail test of maturity, respect

The other night, I sat in a movie theater full of racists and bigots. I have always heard people say how narrow minded and overly conservative this town is, and I have defended it.

The display I saw makes me ashamed to be called a peer of these people. I was watching *The Object of My Affection*.

This movie is clearly advertised as having a homosexual man as a main character. I guess that was overshadowed or perhaps ignored by people wanting to see Jennifer Aniston in a cutesy love story. Well a word of warning to homopho-

bics out there, when a movie is about a gay man, it just might involve gay issues. I was surrounded by people screaming and gasping in shock and disgust when two men kissed.

Don't go see this movie if you are as immature and intolerant as the patrons around me were. I am not saying people are not entitled to their opinions, but those with some degree of dignity and respect for others can control themselves from squealing and throwing their hands over their face. The girl next to me actually pulled her knees to her chest and kicked her feet when she thought a kiss might be coming.

As if the response to homosexuality wasn't enough, people responded just as violently to an inter-racial kiss at the end of the movie. Reinforced by those around them, people left the theater telling the packed lobby to go home and not see this terrible movie.

This was not a terrible movie. This was a movie that dealt rather conservatively with homosexuality and briefly with an inter-racial relationship. The overwhelming crowd response was one of racism and bigotry.

I love Texas A&M, I am not a two-percenter, I am not a gay rights activist, and I am not for "reverse discrimination." I am a human being who saw the worst this town has to offer the other night.

I just hope that from now on the people who were so offended by this romantic comedy will stay home with their heads in the sand and let their ignorance fester, rather than show their true colors in a place where others have to live.

Anonymous student
Class of '98

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