# Opinion

## holternet depression study prompts unnecessary criticism, alarm

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break for Aggies ry over Kansa "wired in" college Cormier ats in general. broke first one of the

faloes' 42-14 er was the road 15th-ranked fuction. Then, with an 82-yarg textbook prices. a touchdown parking. Then, of

He finished, the ever-present turns for 130 tween students and the Parking, and Transportation Services.

v, something else to worry about reek. It's that rnet depression. Jeez. What will ame will showed next? The University will decide Heisman Tye all the parking to West Campus? up against UQ, for the love of God, no.

findings on Internet depression the nation in product of a two-year study of ng (13.8 point cial and psychological effects of Nown led the cernet at home. At the end of the ears, researchers found that sub-

sol vho used the Internet for as little McNown doe w hours a week showed a rds on 36 camed increase in depression. against New results of the study came as a to the researchers and to the corwhether thepse sponsors of the study, companies ing Apple Computer, the Intel eisman race, wration, Hewlett Packard and the nal Science Foundation.

1ay have come as a surprise to the chers, but probably not to anyone ctually uses the Internet. Those 1341 yards introuls know about suffering. Depres-

sion stems from trying to download Netscape 4.0 Gold on a 66 megahertz computer and then watching the harddrive spontaneously burst into flames.

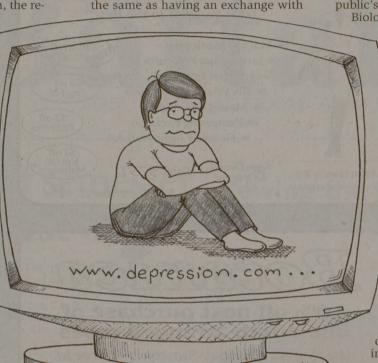
In all seriousness, though, the researchers had earlier hypothesized that the Internet would have more positive effects because its main function is interaction with others online. It is one of the few places people can interact with others from a huge range of eclectic environments and cultures on an

everyday basis The Internet has many social features on it, such as chat rooms and personal Web pages

These are all basically designed to foment human contact, if only by computer screen. And that is what researchers found to be the problem.

Of the people who used the Internet, most did frequent the chat rooms, but the lack of face to

face interaction seemed to affect them. In that aspect, the findings are not really all that shocking. Being in close quarters with a computer screen is just not



an actual human being, no matter how enthralling the cyber chat might be.

The study is a strong reminder that direct human contact is essential to the public's health and well-being. Biologically, people are social ani-

mals. By denying the basic need to have direct social contact with other people, individuals can begin to lose their sense of self and their place in society.

> Though that is one huge theoretical leap, with at least 70 million adults online these days (adults include college students, scary as that may be), Internet depression is one topic that deserves some attention.

Attention it will most likely receive. In 1996, the big media circus busied itself with delving into the "Internet addiction." Pages upon pages were written about youths who were suffering withdrawals likened to those of hero-

However, more serious investigative reporting threw out the idea was learned that the phrase itself had

But with some actual research done in the area of Internet depression, the findings will be harder to dismiss. Does that mean there will be a rapid media backlash against technology?

Hopefully not. The study, though quite thorough, was hardly conclusive. The subject group was not ever randomly picked. There were also many non-controlled variables that threw off the findings, such as sleep-deprivation and flaming.

Flaming is a concept that says remote human interaction increases candor. This would mean that the Internet users, spending more time alone, cut off from society of the tangible sort, were only more aware of their depressed sensibilities than their non-Internet using counterparts. And as anyone who has recently visited a chat room knows, lack of candor on the Internet is most definitely not a problem, especially in comparison with everyday social interaction.

This study may show the negative sides of the Internet, and there are plenty, but one-sided evaluations are useless. Until a more scientific and conclusive study is completed, using the Internet should continue to be a positive activity, and not one that will send us running for our psychiatrists.

> Beverly Mireles is a sophomore microbiology major.

## lany freshmen underestimate Recycling efforts change campus cohol's potential health threat

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CAULEY

he drinking d stop, and if the room pinning, it is too late. nking is not an activity that yed only by those of legal ig age. In fact, drinking often than not begins during first year of college. So Agre all a bunch of alcoholics No, but it is responsibility revents one from taking it

e of the biggest challenges by freshmen is responsibilfter leaving behind currules and reprimands,

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of North it is by no something to brag about. night students venture to favorite bars and enjoy a of drinking and then get heir cars to drive home. ch year, thousands of people lled in alcohol-related acci-Drinking and driving don't Many freshmen confronting ifluence of alcohol for the

ime underestimate its ef-

mer Often times, they begin to limited reason and consee awareness. organization with the infamous beer goggles on, an inebriated fish is more likely to fail to recognize the immediate dangers involved in driving while intoxicated. Many times people will altogether deny their impaired state, claiming they are sober enough to drive.

It is important to know when to say when. And as the saying goes, friends don't let friends drive drunk

Do not cheat yourself by riding with someone that is not as drunk as you. If they are drunk at all, find another way of getting home. It only takes one misjudgment for you to never make the same mis-

One night of being irresponsible can be a fatal mistake.

Last year, Scott Krueger, a freshman at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, made headlines after falling into a coma as a result of excessive drinking, which ultimately led to his death.

that freshmen tend to be the most susceptible.

Freshmen exploring their first year of freedom often drink more than they can handle. Many freshmen admit that they drink to get drunk.

The first year away from home can be difficult. There are a lot of adjustments to be made. One of the hardest adjustments to make is meeting new people and making new friends. Often freshmen turn to drinking to loosen up and to make their conversation and socializing less inhibited.

Sometimes, the buzz they wanted to have for the sake of meeting new people turns into a drunkenness that makes for a night of regret. According to statistics, alcohol is related to many cases of sexual assault. Alcohol also lowers inhibitions and increases the likelihood of couples engaging in unplanned and unprotected sex.

Nights you cannot remember are not the only result of too much to drink. Alcohol is strongly associated with missed classes and lower GPRs.

Researchers at the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse say

alcohol is a factor in about 41 percent of all academic problems and 28 percent of all cases of student dropout. Do not forget the

reason you are at A&M in the first place. It was hard enough to get in the first time, remember? So what does all this

boil down to? One thing. When you drink, drink responsibly. No one wants to hear your "I was so smashed" stories. No one wants details about how you puked your guts up or about the girl you brought home.

Do not be immature about drinking. Be responsible. Coming from a fellow Ag, no one wants to hear your name called at Muster vet

> Corrie Cauley is a senior journalism major.



RICHARD With Reed **PADDACK** Arena completed

and the numerous other construction sites becoming less and less of an eyesore, A&M is starting to feel more like a major university, and less like a hard-hat area. Even Sbisa received a much-needed facelift this summer. But aside from the many structural renovations; A&M has now begun renovations on mother earth.

Starting this summer, A&M joined the ranks of the many selfless organizations and universities throughout the country in the efforts to conserve our planet's natural resources and save the tax payers and students a little money in the process

The recycling center is not new at A&M, but due to the recent ef-Department of Residence Life they have taken recycling to the next level. But these efforts may be short lived unless students and faculty make the effort to cooperate.

The latest of the new recycling projects have been a success.

The most recent achievement of these recycling efforts took place last week during residence hall move-ins.

With the help of the Physical

Plant, Department of Residence Life, Department of Food Services and incoming students A&M was able to haul away 18,000 pounds of cardboard. Before move-in periods fliers were posted with a list of locations accepting the students used cardboard boxes, whereby in return the students received coupons for a free drink

from Food Services. Once the boxes were bundled, they were then shipped to a Waco recycling center where A&M recycling center then received cash per pound depending on the pre-

Another recent addition to the cause is the Battalion Recycling Bill, which focuses on the clean up of the excess of Battalions left littering the campus at the end of the day.

The recycling center has placed temporary recycling bins at the five main distributing locations on campus until funds for permanent bins are available. Mind you these bins are not just for Battalions, but other newspapers as well.

You will also notice the donated other buildings for plastic bottles.

The problem that arises with any non-profit organization is the lack of funding, this is the case with the A&M Recycling Center.

The recycling center is mostly funded from the money they receive from recycled products and this is how they stay afloat," said Elizabeth McKee, a student senator and a senior animal science major. "The problems the recycling center is having are lack of expansion and the lack of departments urging their employees to recycle." she said.

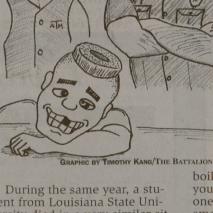
It is obvious that a stronger commitment needs to be made by everyone. It is just another case Aggies helping Aggies

With the latest influx of freshmen it is even more crucial that we all chip in. Many universities have instilled recycling programs on their campuses and with student and faculty cooperation they are saving hundreds of thousands of dollars in cost avoidance from dumping fees alone, not to mention what they are making from what they recycle.

A&M will save thousands in dumping fees as well. Recycling also improves A&M's image, enabling the campus to serve as a model for the community at-large, and students will take their campus recycling habits with them wherever they go.

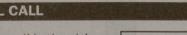
So, the next time you are flipping through your insightful and colorful school publication, do not throw it on the ground or the this week get up a little early and maybe catch an episode of "Captain Planet." You could even go buy some of that cool fibrous-looking recycled paper. For Aggieland's sake. Look around for recycling bins Ags and make a conscious effort because in this case the ends will justify the means.

> Richard Paddack is a senior journalism major.



dent from Louisiana State University died in a very similar situation. Although much of the blame was placed on the fraternities they were involved with, it is up to the individual to know their limit. Knowing when you have had too much to drink is a personal responsibility.

So why point the finger at freshmen? Obviously freshmen are not the only ones who overindulge, but statistics show



Any student at A&M can succeed and have a wonderful experience without having to resort to faith and

of students here are practicing Christians, there are definitely non-Christians out there, and we are having just as much fun as everyone else.

tor. Letters must be 300 words or less and in clude the author's name, class and phone

letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed Mc Donald with a valid student ID. Letters may also The Battalion - Mail Call
013 Reed McDonald
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX
77843-1111

Campus Mail: 1111



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### real fulfillment

sponse to Andrew Baley's of A&M 7 column: a senior and a long-time read-

Yells and Spack by Andrew Baley's column the Battalion, I was rather takmed to the continuous dison of religion at A&M, but until v calendars have not seen such outright gelism in the Battalion.

nile I do not object to the right

MAIL CALL

of Baley to write anything he wishes, I want to let new students on campus know that there is opportunity at A&M for non-Christian students.

religion. Believe me, I know. While the overwhelming number

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