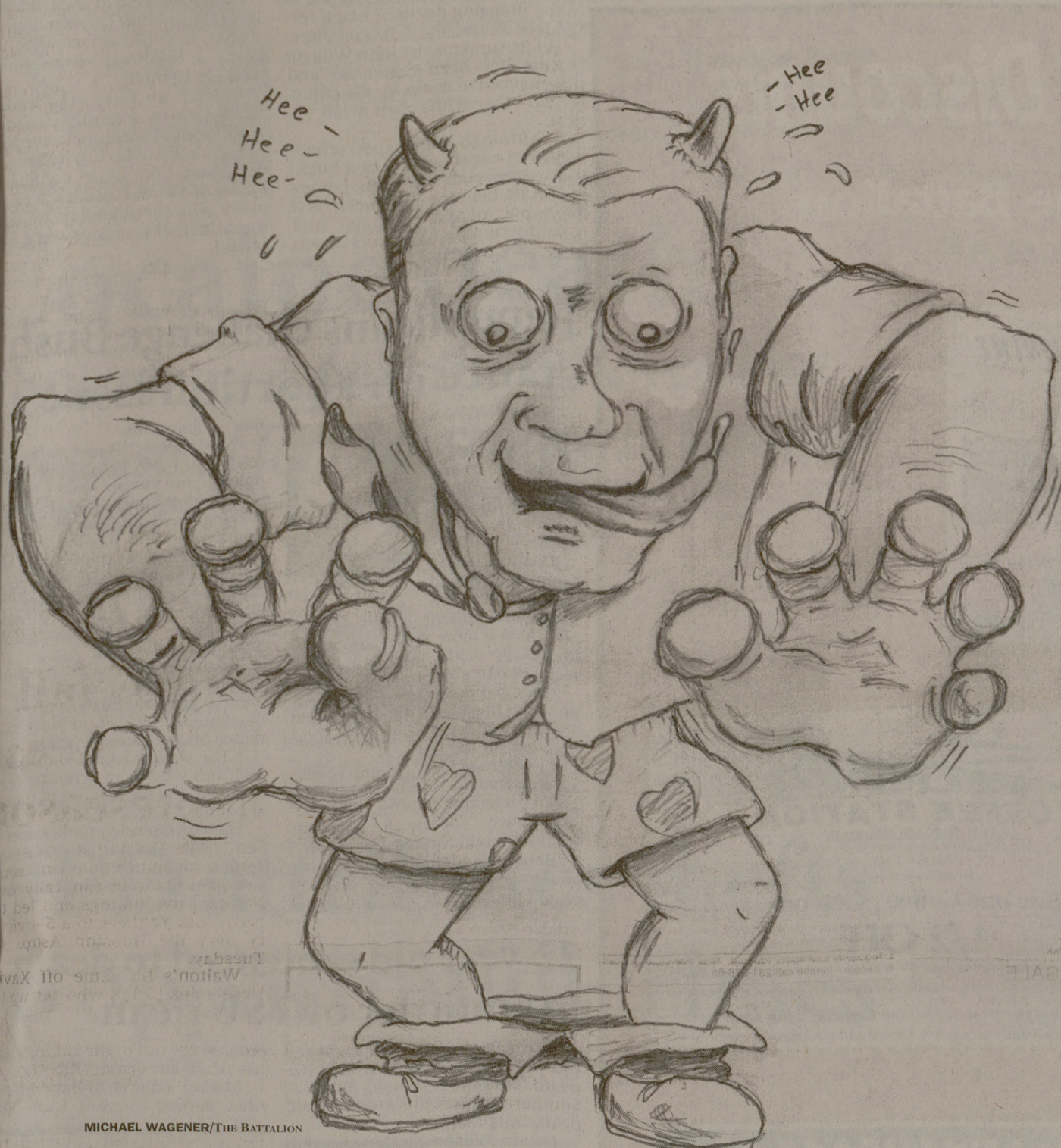


Let's talk about sex, Billy

Clinton's sexual behavior exemplifies symptoms of sex addict needing professional help



MICHAEL WAGENER/THE BATTALION

Fine, no more Monica Lewinsky talk. But for the sake of argument, forget for the moment that Bill Clinton is the President of the United States.



DAVID LEE

Forget the notion that he is the most powerful man in the free world.

When it comes down to it, he is a perverted old man with a family in shambles.

These are harsh words for a harsh reality, a reality shared by many families across this nation who have been ripped apart by infidelity. Perhaps this is why so many people can relate to the soap opera of the past year and still support the President.

It is truly sad that in the midst of all the sex, lies and videotape, no one has cared to examine the human elements of this tragedy; a wife scorned, a daughter disgraced. Those wounds may never heal.

No one knows if Clinton's meager attempts at reconciliation will work. So, what is the best course of action he can take in regaining the trust of his family? Other than swearing off his craving for cigars, he should admit that he is a sex addict and seek professional help.

There is no denying it; all the signs are there. Sex Addicts Anonymous' (www.sexaa.org) and Sexaholics' Anonymous' (www.sa.org) self-questionnaires urges anyone who answers yes to any of the following questions to seriously consider getting professional help for sex addiction:

Do you keep secrets about your sexual or romantic activities from those important to you? Do you lead a double life? Yes and yes. It is not likely that Bill informed Hillary of his close encounters with his mistresses as they were going on. The infamous Starr Report documents quite thoroughly his two-faced nature, how he led a naive Monica Lewinsky into thinking that he would leave his wife after his term in office expired.

Months later, at his reelection victory speech, he clasped the hands of his daughter and his wife proudly in front of the cameras, extolling the greatness

of family values. Yeah right.

The Starr Report also cited his remarks to Lewinsky that he had cheated on his wife countless times before, substantiating the claims of Gennifer Flowers. This is obviously a disturbing pattern that cannot be denied.

Have your needs driven you to have sex in places or situations or with people you would not normally choose? Well, the hallway outside the Oval Office is not exactly the most romantic of places to get intimate with someone.

Perhaps a romantic romp through the Rose Garden may have been more appropriate of a setting. Unless the President has a seriously perverted sense of what is kinky, receiving oral sex while on the phone with a member of Congress is not something any normal person desires.

Do you lose time from work for it? Seeing as how all of the encounters in question took place near or within the Oval Office, one can argue that the President was slacking off on the job.

Does pursuit of sex make you careless for yourself or the welfare of your family or others? Vernon Jordan, Sidney Blumenthal, Betty Currie, Monica Lewinsky, Hillary Clinton, Chelsea Clinton, the Republican party, the American people. The casualty list goes on and on.

As the saying goes, the first step to recovery is admitting a person has a problem. Who knows, maybe when his life in the White House is over, President Clinton can become a spokesperson for sex addicts everywhere. Maybe a joint speaking tour can be arranged with his former competitor Bob Dole, the spokesperson for impotent men and Viagra.

Two men at opposite ends of the sexual virility spectrum. They would make strange bedfellows. The possibilities are endless. The President should seek professional help in light of this impromptu questionnaire.

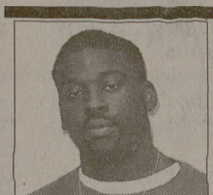
History will make its judgement on him as a president, something that he is consumed.

Perhaps with the admission that he has a problem and is willing to seek help, history will not be as cruel on William Jefferson Clinton.

David Lee is a sophomore general studies major.

People should be allowed to smoke without fear of punishment

Thank you for not smoking." In such a politically correct time, when a person cannot even call a midget, "a midget" they prefer to be called "little people"), it is astonishing that there is still one group of people who are discriminated against.



DEMOND REID

This group is publicly shamed, and outright ridiculed for what they choose to do. No, not the Spice Girls, the persecuted group in question is the yellow-toothed, funky-breathed, cancer cell incubator fraternity known as smoking.

Smokers are about as hated as the Internal Revenue Service in mid-April. Smokers should be left alone and be allowed to suck on as many cancer sticks as they can. As Darwin's theory of natural selection proves, the herd always finds a way of thinning itself out, and the herd in this country is getting pretty thick.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau the popula-

tion in this country is roughly 272 million. That is too many people for this small piece of land. Smokers should be rewarded because they are volunteering to kill themselves to make room for other people. If smokers do not care about their own health, why should other people?

Based on the intense anti-smoking campaigns, the majority of non-smoking zealots think the ends justify the means, so they have the right to try to shame smokers into quitting, because it is for their own good. That raises the question, "Why is this tactic employed against smoking when other bad habits have just as a bad of an effect?"

Former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop asserted obesity is a chronic disease that afflicts more than 58 million Americans, accounts for \$100 billion annually in health care costs and causes 318,000 deaths per year.

Obesity's annual fatality rate falls a close second behind smoking's fatality rate. Acknowledging these statistics, why are fat people not as persecuted as smokers?

If Johnny Emphysema wants to puff down a

pack of Marlboros through the hole in his trachea, that is his problem. But when big Bertha decides to squeeze her 250-plus pound frame into a thong bikini and scamper across the beach, it affects every person who witnesses such an ungodly sight.

Anti-smoking legislation pops up in the most unnecessary places. As of Jan. 1, Californians are no longer allowed to smoke in bars. The reason is Sacramento lawmakers said they are protecting the health of bar patrons who do not smoke.

First of all, if these patrons are so concerned with their health, maybe they should not be in a bar to begin with.

Second, and most important, there is no evidence linking second-hand smoke to lung cancer. In fact a subgroup of the World Health Organization (a smoking foe), called the International Agency on Research on cancer, did a large scale study on the health risk of second-hand smoke.

It compared 650 lung cancer patients with 1,542 healthy people in seven European countries. The results were expressed as risk ratios, where the normal risk for a nonsmoker of contracting lung

cancer is 1.

People exposed to tobacco smoke in the home had a risk factor of 1.16 and the risk to people exposed to tobacco smoke in the workplace increased to 1.17.

Ordinarily this would represent an increase of 16 or 17 percent, but since the margin of error is so wide — 0.93 to 1.44 — the true risk ratio could be trivial or even nonexistent. Simply, there is a better chance of seeing Mark Fuhrman at the next Million Man March, than contracting lung cancer through second hand smoke.

In the Revolutionary War, brave patriots fought for life, liberty and the pursuit of self-destruction. This is the land of the free and the home of the brave, so law-abiding citizens should be able to engage in any activities that do not affect anyone else.

Since second -and smoke is the only way smokers can affect other people, and second hand has been proven to be harmless, smokers should be allowed to smoke without any social stigma.

Demond Reid is a sophomore journalism major.

MAIL CALL

F. Home-schoolers not poorly educated

In response to Brandon Mullen's Mar. 9 opinion column.

I agree that home-schooled students should be held to higher standards than the University's current admission standards. Placing them on the same level as out-of-state students seems appropriate.

However, I believe Mullen's argument that home-schooled students are socially "undeveloped" is absurd.

My sister has been taught at home for the past 10 years. She is able to communicate better than some collegers students I know. She interacts with both adults and peers without any handicap merely because she attends school at home.

I fail to see how the argument on social skill development is at

all related to admission standards of the University.

The only "other education" home-schooled students may miss out on is constant peer pressure, popularity contests, and crowded classrooms that students from public schools receive.

Home-schooled teens are no different than other students except they learn in a more controlled environment that promotes a good self-image.

In the future, I hope debates over home-schooled students remains focused on issues of importance. If you argue for fair admissions standards, keep arguments focused on SAT scores and extracurricular activities.

Please keep your own biased views on social development out of the argument.

Emily Puder
Class of '01

As a student who was home schooled from fifth to 10th grade, I was concerned that the viewpoint expressed by Brandon Mullen in his column on home schooling would go without comment.

Home schooling is a difficult issue to address because, by its very nature, it is characterized by a wide disparity of academic and social development.

I am quite fortunate because my parents worked hard to prepare me academically and socially to meet the challenges of the world. I feel that their efforts have largely paid off.

Academically I have done well, I am a junior physics major with a 4.0 GPA. Socially I think I have also held my own. I am the president of a student organization, and a small group Bible study leader.

I credit whatever success I have had in college to my parents' abili-

ties and commitment in educating me at home. In my experience, home schooling works when the parents and student are willing to invest time and effort into it.

The people I have known who have had negative home-schooling experiences had parents who didn't do a good job.

Home schooling allows parents to provide a rich, challenging and nurturing learning environment for their student which is often better for all aspects of his or her life, including the social aspect, than a conventional classroom.

I know that I have more to offer A&M because of my years of being home schooled. I have not been "short-changed for life," instead I will be reaping benefits, both academic and social, all my life.

Julia Smith
Class of '00

Professor's policy necessary step

In response to Zach Hall's Mar. 9 opinion column.

The key question that Hall fails to ask is, "Who's in power?"

Who makes more money for equal work, males or females?

Who maintains the vast majority of political power in the U.S., males or females?

Who is centralized in issues of language, males or females?

On the other side of the coin: Who are more often the victims of rape and aggression by members of the opposite sex, males or females?

Who, as victims, are more often blamed for instigating the rape and aggression they suffer, males or females?

Who, only recently, finally received the legal right to vote in

the U.S., males or females?

In order for men and women to be treated equally in the U.S., structural changes in our society will have to take place.

I believe the Boston College professor is working toward that end.

Tim Birchard
Doctoral student

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
Email: batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu