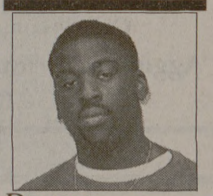


## Campaign fever 1999:

### Campaigns, races waste of energy

“Vote for me.” Once again, the week following spring break marks the beginning of campaign mania across campus.



DEMOND REID

From sunup to sundown, A&M students are bombarded with fake smiles and empty promises from ambitious Aggies looking to pad the “extra-curricular activities” section of their resumes. Despite the obvious enthusiasm shown by all those involved, it is quite apparent that the majority of the Spring 1999 campaigns suck more than a Hoover vacuum powered by a diesel engine.

From the student body president race all the way down to the election of the campus dog catcher, it is no secret that all this campaigning is more annoying than jock itch.

For example, a good portion of the student body president candidates are taking their campaigns a little too seriously. These are the candidates whose supporters pounce on unsuspecting pedestrians and swamp those pedestrians with an absurd amount of fliers.

And the fliers never say anything simple like “Vote for Joe Blow.” The fliers are like autobiographical manifestos with entirely too much information about the candidate. No one cares that Joe Blow won the 1983 second grade remedial spelling bee or that he was once president of the Vanilla Ice Fan Club.

Is it too much to ask to be able to walk around campus without being mauled by someone in tight and a cape, resembling some sort of out-of-work comic book hero? What makes the situation worse is that Super Dork’s only comment about the person he is endorsing is that the candidate is a “really good guy.”

“He is a really good guy” is not something a person says to endorse a candidate; it is something a person says at their brother’s parole hearing.

To all the people walking around with the yellow plastic hard hats, stop it. Believe it or not, the yellow hard hat people actually look dumber than Super Dork. At least Super Dork looks silly enough to get a laugh, while the yellow hard hat people just look silly.

Candidates waste voters’ time by presenting platforms because student government has no real power. Yeah, Joe Blow might actually have a good platform idea, but once he is elected he will not have any power to carry that idea out. There will be an all-white starting five for the Harlem Globetrotters before any of Joe Blow’s platform ideas get implemented.

It does not matter who gets elected as student body president because all the candidates will do the same equally pathetic things. Whatever this University is going to do, it will do it regardless of who the student body president is. Koko the gorilla could get voted into office and things still would run the same way.

The big issue among the student body president candidates is diversity and multiculturalism. Now, isn’t that the pot calling the kettle white? With most of the presidential candidates, their idea of multiculturalism is watching two Spike Lee movies in the same week.

Also, a lot of the campaigning is unnecessary. There is actually a person putting up fliers to run for historian. Why? That is a senseless waste of a tree. If by some minor miracle more than one person wants to be the historian, let them. Being the historian is not a privilege. On the top-100 elected position preference list, historian ranks slightly above campus pooper scooper.

Voting for yell leader is a waste of an election. It would be better to have some sort of fundraising contest for a charity than have an election for yell leader. The yell leader race has been reduced to who can be the biggest fool and the competition is pretty stiff this year. It does not take much talent to prance around in front of a crowd like some sort of disgruntled postal worker in a Good Humor Man uniform screaming “Beat the hell out of” that week’s rival opponent.

Anyone considering a campaign for next year should take into consideration the mistakes of this year’s campaigns. It is not necessary to annoy the voting public or be a complete idiot. To run a successful campaign it is important to remember two key words that the A&M voting public will respond to: free alcohol.

Demond Reid is a sophomore journalism major.



RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

### Candidates need support, praise for efforts



CHRISTIAN ROBBINS

What do parents, used cars, and A&M candidates have in common? They all pose a minimal annoyance, but they are important and are necessities as a whole.

While Aggies may be a bit disgruntled by the influx of colored posters, fire trucks, happy faces and hard hats that flood the campus during campaign season, they must applaud the candidates for attempting to win such important and time-consuming positions. Candidates, once elected, must look forward to countless meetings, sleepless nights, and constant criticism. A typical A&M senator must sit on a senate committee, complete a community service project, research bills, speak at organizational meetings, be a liaison to campus organizations, schedule numerous meetings with faculty members and administrators and attend the biweekly senate meeting that traditionally continue until the wee hours of the morning. These are just a few duties, which are minimal compared to the responsibilities of the student body president, yell leaders and other elected officials. In addition, all of these duties must be fulfilled while maintaining a C average.

At some state universities, elected student leaders are paid, but at Texas A&M all elected student leader positions are unpaid, so the candidates take on these enormous responsibilities because they want to make AggieLand a better place.

The candidates spend up to a thousand dollars and many of hours campaigning, attending meetings, networking and planning campaign strategies in the hopes of gaining the most votes. It may seem annoying when an overly excited candidate sticks fliers in students’ hands as they rush to class, but Aggies have to

remember that basically the candidates, from student body president to class historian, just want to serve their university.

Students who do not have the ambition to run for a leadership position may argue that candidates run to pad their resumes, but simply examining this year’s student body president candidates disproves this pessimistic argument. The majority of the candidates have more than impressive resumes without adding student body president to their list of service and leadership positions.

Other Aggies who probably do not take part in organized political processes anyway may contend that elected positions have no power, so there is no point in having elections. All anyone has to do to see the error in this opinion is look at the “Lupe Medina” and the “Outbound Dining” bills, which are accomplishments of A&M elected students.

Texas A&M would be a better place if more students would go out and seek leadership positions for no other reason than the desire to serve. All of the candi-

dates should be commended for their ambition and if nothing else, they should be respected for their effort to serve their university. Students should take a good look at their service to their campus and community before criticizing the elections. Maybe if they put more effort toward service, they would have less time to criticize those who try to make a difference.

Christian Robbins is a junior speech communications major.

### MAIL CALL

tion? Several years ago, when debating the wrongness of abortion, a student argued that abortion is OK if the child is unwanted.

My answer is that we don’t kill people because they are unwanted. Not “wanting” some people is the source of numerous horrors throughout history. “Hitler didn’t want the Jews,” I said, “maybe he didn’t go far enough.”

My comment was obviously sarcastic and my point was the opposite of how I was represented: Hitler, abortionists and others make a grave mistake when they claim that any human being is “unwanted.”

Parekh can disagree with me all she wants, but please have the integrity to cast stones at me for what I really believe and not make me out to be some monster in cahoots with Hitler when you know that is not the case.

Did I tell this Jewish student she would “burn in hell”? Again, the context sheds valuable light on what happened. The interaction went like this. An A&M student challenged me by saying, “I’m Jewish, am I going to burn in hell?”

“Well,” I said, “it all depends on your relationship with Jesus. Do you accept Jesus Christ as your Messiah and Savior?”

“Of course not, I’m Jewish.”

“I know many Jews who believe in Jesus. Why don’t you check Him out?”

“Listen! I’m Jewish! I don’t believe in Jesus! Just tell me, am I going to burn in hell?”

“Well, if you won’t believe in Jesus and you die in that state of unbelief, then it doesn’t matter what you are, yes, you will burn in hell.”

The important point that this student, Parekh and all of us need to understand is that no one goes to heaven or hell based on their ancestry, race, culture or even their religion.

Jesus Christ alone can forgive sins and bring us to the Father. Apart from Him, we die in our sins, unforgiven, and yes, we go to hell. This is what the Bible teaches and no desire to be politically correct will get me to deny the clear teaching of the Bible.

Parekh claims that “intolerance is alive and well in America” and that it “keeps neighbors from understanding each other.” Despite acknowledging that what she actually heard me say was a

message of salvation, her hatchet job on me and the Christian message makes me wonder whose really the intolerant bigot.

Tom Short  
Worthington, OH

### Student challenges preacher’s statements

In response to Joshua Hill’s Mar. 25 mail call.

Conscientious Christians should be concerned with both Tom Short’s ideas about “evolution” and Joshua Hill’s March 25th defense of Short’s remarks on the subject. Short apparently said that “if evolution was true, then Hitler did not go far enough.”

Darwin’s theory of evolution states that species evolved as their lesser members died off and the stronger ones were left to reproduce.

Relating Hitler’s policies of extermination to the theory of evolution means assuming that people who were not members of the “master race” (Jews, blacks, and others) were hindering the progress of the human race.

In his attempt to apply evolution to human activity, Short makes an assumption that Hitler himself made. If being a Christian is (at least partially) about spreading the message of Christianity to others, then Short has a special responsibility. Because his words are going to be heard and considered by so many, he should avoid the types of messages that allow others to label him as intolerant.

Daniel Lauve  
Class of ‘00

### Legal system rules in place for good reasons

In response to Demond Reid’s Mar. 24 opinion column.

In response to Demond Reid’s Opinion article, I would like to present another view. As a licensed attorney, I find that the outlandish cases that are publicized

in the media can lead one to the conclusion that money is the sole pursuit of lawyers and their clients, and that with enough money, one can create any loophole necessary to prove innocence. However, state legislatures, the Congress and the American Bar Association are working to curtail the size of the civil financial decisions that are being granted by juries.

And, for every ridiculous case that is publicized in the press, there are thousands of cases that never even make it into the courtroom because a judge or an attorney found them to be without merit.

As a former prosecutor, I understand the frustration with the case involving the cocaine that was seized. Many of the decisions that created these rules came from officers stopping “suspicious” individuals who had committed no overt criminal act, but were based upon the race of the individual within the car.

The cost to the rights of untold individuals who are stopped without any cause or crime is too high to allow this. Unfortunately the judges and attorneys who are out there, doing their jobs with the highest degree of integrity, are rarely deemed newsworthy.

In closing, I would also ask you to keep in mind that pointing out the inadequacies in a system is easier than finding the solutions. If you believe that you have a way to make the system better send in a letter about that, or write your legislator or congressman, or, and I know this may scare some of you, sit down and talk with an attorney about it, and whatever you do, do not let him or her charge you for it either.

MacGregor Stephenson  
Graduate 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  
E-mail: batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu

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### Preacher responds to columnist’s opinion

Once again I visit Texas A & M where I am greeted by a large number of students who attentively listen; some agreeing and some engaging in serious and respectful debate when they disagree.

And once again The Battalion falsely slanders me and my beliefs by passing on inaccurate and inflammatory stories. Therefore, I will, once again, clarify what I did and did not say and hope that this puts an end to these needless controversies.

I am accused of being “dangerous” because my “intolerance” is cloaked in words of love and salvation when my “accusatorial words” reveal “a man who hates everything not like him.” As evidence that speak such hateful words,

Manisha Parekh refers to an article on my Website in which I bemoan that “people do not make enough judgements about right and wrong.” While she does stated — so I do not say how this is “hateful,” she falls her leadership even more by not giving the context of the statement.

In context of the article, I was referring to some people who are so “tolerant” and “non-judgmental” that they refuse to condemn Adolph Hitler as being an anti-semitic or bad man!

Certainly Parekh doesn’t think it “hateful” to judge Hitler as evil does she? The deceitfulness and deviousness of her opinion piece sinks even deeper when, just two sentences later, she attacks me for telling a Jew she would “burn in hell” and that “Hitler did not go far enough.”

Even though the Website that claims I said this includes a denial that it ever happened and the article she quotes from my web site clearly teaches that I believe Hitler was an evil, murderous man, Parekh seems to have no bad conscience about passing this inflammatory story on to her readership.

To do so without seeking a statement from me, the group that sponsors me on campus or even taking time to read our written account given in past years to The Battalion takes journalistic ethics to a new low and causes me to seriously doubt her interest in truth and accuracy. But is there any truth to these accusa-