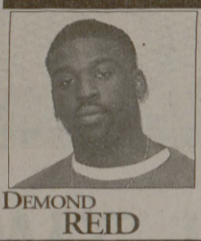


## Of feminists, abortion and pregnant men

Feminist case against abortion' presentation offered little support for controversial stance

A case in point." On March 29, Serrin Foster, the executive director of Feminists for Life of America, presented a lecture titled "The Feminist Case Against Abortion" at Rudder Tower. Foster's well-organized presentation was filled with facts, statistics and some historical feminists, relevant up-to-date statistics and significant vivid personal testimony.



DEMOND REID

If a person already coincided with Foster's beliefs, then the presentation served to strengthen that belief. But with all her facts and obvious speaking skills Foster proves that feminism in this country is veering off in more directions than a drunken New York cab driver.

It is hard to believe that feminists would be against anything concerning the rights of women. A feminist against abortion is like a drowning man against a life preserver.

Feminism and anti-abortionism should mix together like water and oil. On one hand, there is an idealism dedicated to the autonomy of women, while on the other hand there is an idealism that would shackle down women's individual freedom. If abortion is a question of an individual woman's choice. Why? Because individual women are the ones getting pregnant.

Attempts by the Supreme Court and Congress, which are mostly made up of men, to pass a bill to outlaw what a woman can do with her body are outrageous.

A woman's body is that woman's choice. The same could be said if the Supreme Court and Congress were comprised mainly of women and they passed a bill outlawing a man to have testicles past the age of 25. That man's testicles, that man's choice.

Since women are the ones getting pregnant, the issue of abortion hits them the hardest. Women have the power to make the babies, but not the power to make the policies. However men do.

If men were able to get pregnant, abortions would be easier to get than gonorrhea at a latex-optional bordello. If men got pregnant there would be abortion clinic commercials during the Super Bowl sporting such winning sales pitches as "get two abortions for the price of one" and "done in thirty minutes or your abortion is free."

Foster also offered plenty of solutions to help eliminate the reasons women seek abortions. One of the more plausible solutions was prevention. Foster explained how her organization offered teen-pregnancy prevention for boys and girls.

Foster went on further to say that 80 percent of the girls who went through the prevention program most wanted to know how to tell a boy no without hurting his feelings. In Foster's paraphrasing of the events, the girls were told "you have a right to your body."

Now, unlike the street in front of Blocker, shouldn't vaginal rights run both ways? If Foster believes women have the right to choose what goes into their vaginas, shouldn't they also have the right to choose what comes out of them?

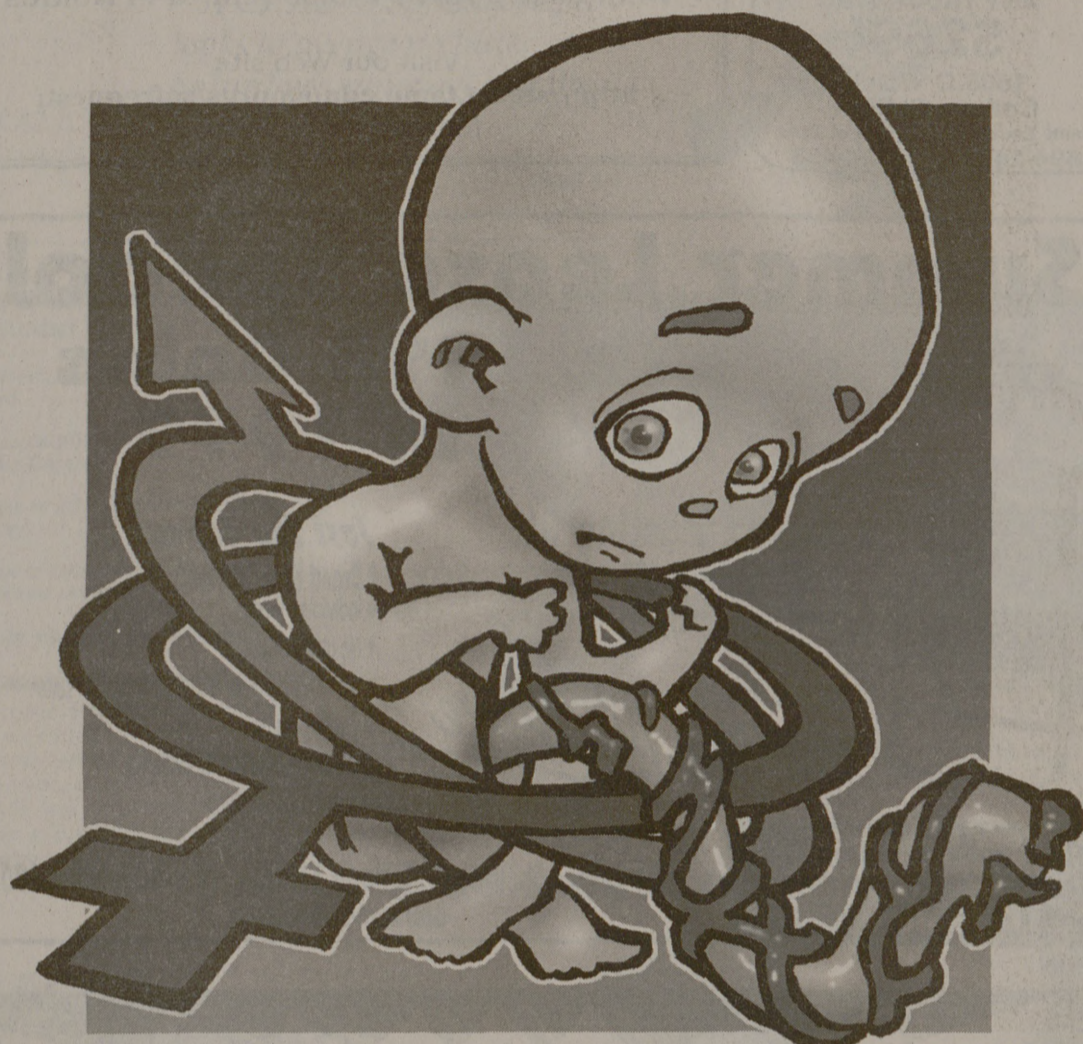
The only bad part of the presentation was when Foster tried to equate abortion with violence against women.

Smacking a woman upside the head because she brought home regular-cut green beans instead of the french-cut green beans is violence against women.

Punching a woman because she would not be quiet during the "yada, yada, yada" episode of Seinfeld is violence against women. Equating abortion to violence against women is an insult to all women who have had to endure real violence.

All in all Foster's presentation of "The Feminist Case Against Abortion" was well-organized and highly informative about the organization of which she is executive director of. But despite the sincerity and effectiveness of the presentation, in the court of public opinion, the feminist case has no merit and should be dismissed.

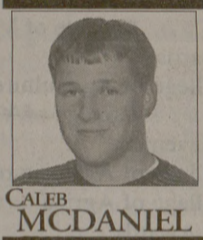
Demond Reid is a sophomore journalism major.



ROBERT HYNCEK/The Battalion

## OPAS needs praise for offering culture to students, community

Texas A&M University has long struggled with the image that it is nothing more than an engineering college, that an evening out on the town in College Station consists of various combinations of barbecue and bonfires and that the closest Aggies come to art appreciation is a rousing round of "hullabaloo canneck."



CALEB MCDANIEL

For over 25 years now, the MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society (OPAS) has been working hard to combat these myths. As it enters its 27th season, it deserves a round of applause for doing such a great job.

MSC OPAS is a group of highly dedicated students and community volun-

teers who aim to "enlighten, entertain and inspire the students and community of the Brazos Valley." On all three counts, they are succeeding admirably.

OPAS programs enlighten Aggieland by giving it a wide-ranging, free-wheeling cultural education each season, and the shows that visit Rudder Auditorium are incredibly diverse in style and substance. During the season that just ended, everything from ballerinas to "Bully" presidential impersonators graced the stage.

OPAS further expands the cultural consciousness of the Brazos Valley by bringing performance troupes from all parts of the globe, from New York to St. Petersburg. The unique connection between audiences and performers from completely different cultures is always interesting and enlightening.

At the same time that OPAS edu-

ates, though, the education it provides is hardly stuffy or high-brow. This is because OPAS is very committed to its second aim as well — to entertain its patrons. The society contacts and selects shows that will be sure to bring audiences to their feet when the curtain falls.

These shows do not just educate and entertain. True to the OPAS mission, they often inspire. Even a ballet like "The Sleeping Beauty" communicates the power of true love in the face of impossibility, and the blockbuster musical "Les Miserables" brought a powerful message about faith and forgiveness in the face of injustice. People who attend OPAS events definitely leave feeling enlightened, entertained and inspired.

In recent years, OPAS has also broadened its mission and worked to build an arts community in Bryan-College Station that can reach people throughout the Brazos Valley instead of

just at the University. Its work with the Arts Council of Brazos Valley and its youth program, OPAS Jr., have provided valuable arts services to the entire region.

Even so, OPAS has never forgotten its original commitment to the students of A&M. They have managed to keep ticket prices low enough to accommodate college student budgets. They have created innovative services like offering a fee option for students to purchase season tickets at registration.

Moreover, they are forever investigating how to improve; for example, they often distribute convenient surveys at performances to gauge student perceptions about the job they are doing.

The only regrettable thing about MSC OPAS is the fact that more students do not take advantage of their hard work. Thanks to OPAS, A&M is leaving behind its days as a third- or

fourth-rate arts community, so students should take every opportunity to support OPAS events.

Earlier this week, next year's OPAS season was unveiled and it is as spectacular as ever. Classic American musicals like "The King and I" and "Annie" share the slate with the Moscow City Ballet's "Nutcracker" and the New York City Opera National Company's "Barber of Seville." Students should take advantage of this great list of shows.

And they next time a student wearing an OPAS t-shirt walks by, give him or her a pat on the back — or maybe even a standing ovation. He or she is part of the organization that is making A&M stand as much for "arts and music" as it does for "agricultural and mechanical" sciences.

Caleb McDaniel is a sophomore history major.

### MAIL CALL

#### American entrance in Kosovo vital

In response to Zach Hall's Apr. 5 opinion column.

There are those who believe that we need not be involved in Kosovo as it boils down to a Yugoslav land dispute, within its own borders. So it is a Yugoslav problem right? But history shows us that we would not be wrong to intervene.

In the late 1930s, Britain and France stood back and watched as Germany settled its land disputes in such areas as the Rhineland, the Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia and eventually Poland before they acted.

By then it was too late. Just a German problem, I guess.

And as refugees fled across Europe spreading stories of executions, concentration camps and "supposed ethnic cleansing," everyone shook their heads and said it was just the refugees' problem.

Hall says that there is no way to verify that ethnic cleansing is actually going on, and that is true. But 4,000 refugees leaving the country every hour is a pretty good hint that something is not right.

There is no way that Hall can hold President Clinton responsible for the lives of the captured American soldiers. I am sure that the soldiers are fully aware of the dangers in the area and the thought

of President Clinton probably has not crossed their minds. They are soldiers and they get paid to fight wars, keep peace and guard borders. It is extremely unfortunate that they were captured, but that is what happens in wars.

Hall himself said that ground troops are the only means to end the conflict. I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but in a ground war, a lot of good soldiers are going to get a lot more than just captured. Will Clinton be held responsible for them too?

President Milosevic is an evil man and must be stopped at any cost. Though Hall may not agree, he is as good a reason to intervene as any. In this decade alone, he has fought wars in Croatia, Bosnia and now Kosovo. A lack of action on our part would give him a green light to continue with the killing.

And now the current crisis threatens to spill over into the neighboring nations of Macedonia and Albania. Hall is right about one thing though. The Balkans may soon become the flash point of two world wars and not just one.

Matt Lucas Class of '00

#### Environmentalists perform good deeds

In response to Luke Saugier's Mar. 31 opinion column.

Perhaps Greenpeace is trying to take the world's problems on

its shoulders, but why condemn them for that.

We all need to take responsibility for our actions if we do not then we are the ones being arrogant. True, we must draw the line somewhere, but we cannot draw that line with humans, with humanity.

What real and true benefits do circuses and zoos have for humans? What benefits do we gain by pollution and harming the environment along with non-human animals?

We can all live beneficial lives without any of this; there are many cultures that have a reciprocal relationship with nature and do not cause harm.

If we do not take into account these culture's lifestyles, and only try to force our own, then we are the ones being narrow minded.

Most activist groups are not necessarily trying to "fix" the damage already done but trying to slow the process of damage or bring it to a halt. Whether or not we have a lasting effect on the earth, there is nothing foolish about using alternative methods if they exist. It is only foolish if we do not try.

There are plenty of people alleviating the suffering of other people, so why is it so bad for those that want to help the environment and non-human animals?

It is natural for us to care and to want to help, that is what makes us human. And just because something is beneficial

does not mean that it is moral.

Chris Pace Class of '99

#### Possibility that morality not relative

In response to Lisa Fook's Apr. 7 column.

I would like to respond to Lisa Fook's column of April 7. She states that there is a life philosophy that, just as all paths up a mountain get you to the top of a mountain, so all religions are heading in the same direction." She then goes on to talk about how we should find our own moral codes "privately" and not force our morality on others.

This all makes sense only if her underlying philosophy is true. The truly important question which Fook fails to answer is not "How should we show tolerance since we're already OK?" but "Are we really OK?"

There are physical laws all around us, which are not affected by our opinions about them. Gravity, for instance, exists. We did not make it, and if we do not choose to accept it, we will be the ones in the wrong (and are very likely to suffer the consequences).

How does Fook know that morality is not the same way? There might be moral laws that exist regardless of our philosophies. There might be only "One Way and One Truth," but unless we are willing to look for it, we will all be heading in the same wrong direction.

What we need to do is consider

different philosophies and weight them seriously and honestly. If, for example, a philosophy makes historical statements, such as "Jesus was crucified and then came back to life and was seen by many people," then that philosophy needs to be weighed against documented historical evidence.

If the evidence seems to support that philosophy, then it might be worth investigating further. Automatically assuming, however, that truth cannot be found is not only a cop-out but could be the most serious mistake possible.

Faith Boone Class of '00

#### College meant to expand horizons

In response to Benjamin Borgers' Apr. 7 mail call.

Benjamin Borgers does not seem to understand why he is in college. He is here to learn how to think. Unfortunately, he seems dead-set against the idea.

It is silly to ask a newspaper not to report news or opinions you do not want to hear. It is a fact of life that some people have ideas that are not exactly like yours, and that is OK. The whole point of an "opinion" is to have an exchange of ideas. Without different opinions, the "Opinion" page would be really boring. By writing an article that "everyone is going to absolutely despise" Manisha Parekh was doing her job.

The newspaper is not here to stroke your truck-driving ego; it is here to provide facts and information. SUVs kill people. Like it or not, that is news. If you want to bury your head in the sand, please don't read the newspaper. Why do we need to "create more campus enthusiasm and agreement?"

Weren't we acknowledged by Newsweek or something as having the most school spirit in the entire country? Isn't that good enough?

We should not be afraid to think about why we have the opinions we do. By listening to opposing views we force ourselves to test our own feelings and make sure we are still comfortable with them. It is childish to refuse to listen to other people's ideas. Benjamin seems to be saying, "OK I've got a nice consistent world view that works for me, now don't go screwing it up with the facts." That scares me.

John Patterson 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:  
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