

## Show me the money

### Slocum's contract prioritizes athletics over academics

C. Slocum, the winningest football coach in Texas A&M history, hasn't just made a career out of winning — he has made a tradition out of it. Everyone at A&M knows how bound this school is to tradition and how willing it is to accept the sacrifices that can come from worshipping tradition. No matter the consequences, tradition marches on.



BEVERLY MIRELES

all, a fairly sweet deal for a football coach. R.C. has made a lasting impression on A&M, no one doubts that. But his contract signing is just one more instance of how the University has turned from making knowledge its business to just plain making business.

Let there be no mistake about it — when it comes to money, A&M is at its most businesslike.

In fact, most of the time A&M is so money-driven that the business of keeping the alumni happy becomes the most important task at hand, often at the cost of the students.

This is the factor at the root of the athletics over academics problem.

Team sports are great for students and alumni alike. They are something we can all support. The feeling of fan unity can reach a fever pitch at sporting events.

However, it seems those who graduate tend to forget that they attended A&M for intellectual reasons, not just for the football.

This leads to a backlash against current students.

It may not matter to the alumni if students are getting the short end of the stick when it comes to funding for liberal arts departments, but it certainly does matter if Texas wins the next clash on Kyle Field.

Unfortunately, this is something students have to deal with.

Compared to the alumni, many students feel they are only numbers in a computer.

When the alumni come rushing back

into town, the students are often treated like second-class citizens.

This is a problem not only when the alumni are in town, but year-round.

Because there is so much pressure on the administration to keep those alumni donations flowing, sports become more important than individual academic colleges.

Sure, administrators could argue education is the main focus of A&M, but the point seems moot when one compares the dollar amounts thrown into The Zone, Reed Arena or the new alumni building on George Bush Drive compared to funding for the journalism department, for example.

There are a total of 10 art classes at A&M, but money goes to building plush luxury boxes at Kyle Field for alumni.

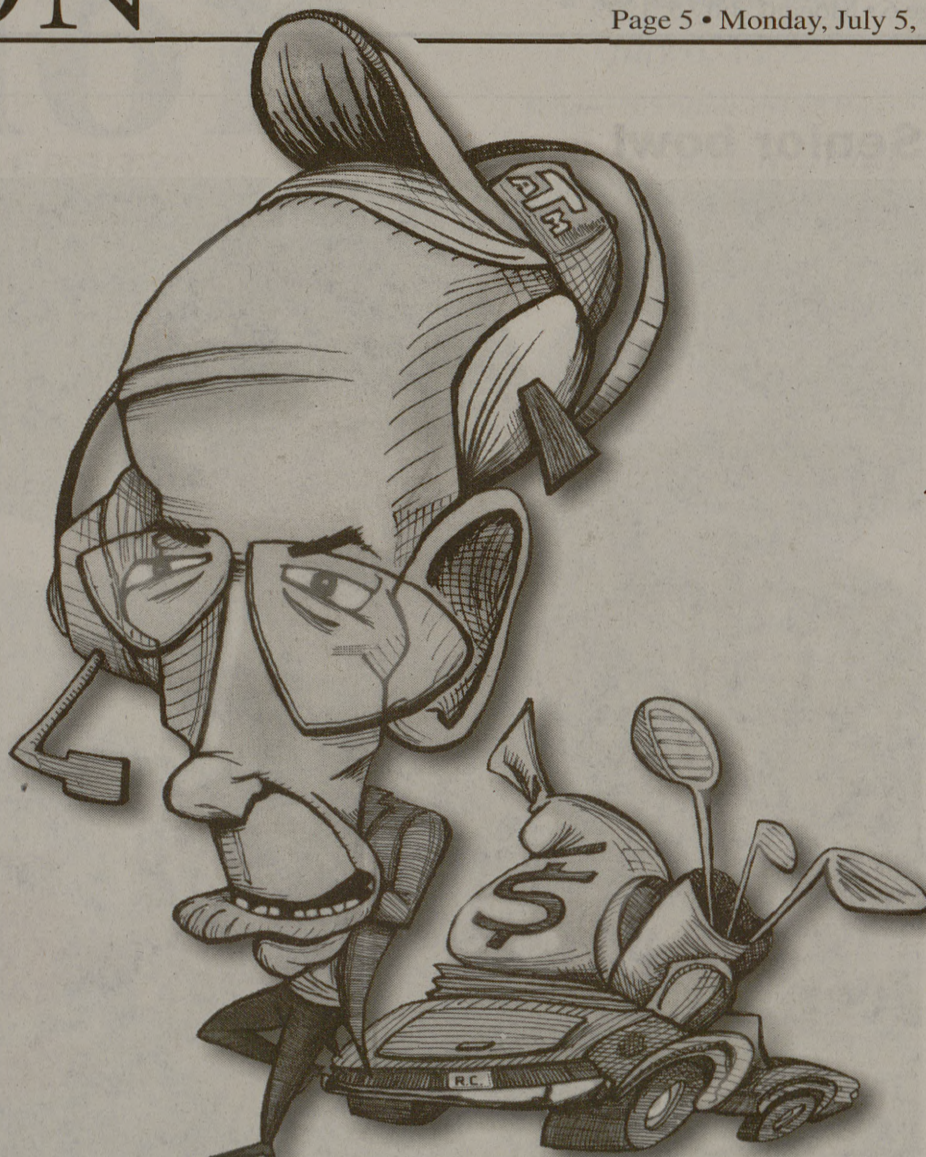
That does not seem stupid so much as it seems criminal.

Having a winning football team with a winning coach is great. But how much longer will we throw money at athletics while academics and professors suffer?

Educators, whether they teach high school or college, will never make millions.

However, in a place that is supposed to be a stronghold of intellectual excellence, one would think that academics would get the respect they deserve and not be treated like a boring extension of A&M athletics.

Beverly Mireles is a junior microbiology major.



MARK MCPHERSON/THE BATTALION

### MAIL CALL

#### Estate tax not poor policy

In response to Jeff Becker's June 29 column.

The estate tax was originally established mainly to prevent the concentration of wealth within families whose fortunes could forever amass, not, as Becker said, to redistribute wealth. The tax was designed to prevent a tyranny of the minority. On this note, Becker's assertion that the "tax inhibits savings and work and encourages consumption and spending" is also incorrect.

Again, the wealth of one family can't continually go untaxed under our current system.

Besides, a little bit of tax planning can all but eliminate the estate tax, even for the "farmers and family-owned businesses."

Furthermore, the article did not even mention the unlimited marital deduction for the deceased.

This is not an estate tax planning tool that only the "extremely wealthy can afford."

It is designed to only tax the couple one time if one's property is bequeathed to his or her spouse.

To blame the tax on the

failure of farms in America is a blatant overstatement.

Brian Oliver  
Class of '99

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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## Where is NOW now?

### Women's group values few issues over its core values

On Thursday, June 24, Mary

Moran, wife of U.S. Rep. James P. Moran Jr. (D-Va.) called police to the couple's Alexandria, Virginia, home and stated that her husband had grabbed her and knocked her down during an argument.



MARK PASSWATERS

The police did not file charges against the congressman, but they did take pictures of the bruises visible on Mrs. Moran's arms.

Later that day, Mrs. Moran filed for divorce, claiming her husband had engaged in conduct "detrimental to [her] health and welfare."

Sounds like something the National Organization for Women (NOW) should comment on, considering the emphasis they placed on domestic violence after the O.J. Simpson fiasco.

Instead, Patricia Ireland, president of NOW, said "given that this is not someone who's saying that she has been a battered spouse, it may be less relevant to Moran's public office."

Really? So NOW no longer has any interest in protecting women who are threatened, verbally abused and pushed around by their husbands?

Let us not be unfair to NOW. It only turns a blind eye to individual women whose husbands have voted with President Clinton on issues which NOW's leadership deems important.

If someone does that, then NOW will be more than happy to sell out any one individual.

NOW's track record during the Clinton Administration does not help them,

should they care to rebut this accusation. The warm embrace of this nation's Chief Executive is a very clear example of how this group has discarded many of the more general rights of women in exchange for the furthering of a couple of issues.

NOW is strongly pro-choice; Clinton has steadfastly opposed any attempt to limit abortions in this country, including vetoing the plan to ban "partial-birth" abortions, which many Democrats supported.

Clinton has also been a supporter of extending the maternity leave a working woman may take with pay, another policy which NOW supports. Because of Clinton's support of these issues—most notably the abortion issue—NOW has been 100 percent behind Clinton in both the 1992 and 1996 elections.

Since Clinton has coddled NOW with his work on these issues, NOW has, in turn, been more than happy to ignore President Clinton's abuse of far more fundamental female rights.

The fact that NOW had very little to say about how Clinton humiliated his wife by allowing her to swing in the wind for eight months during the Monica Lewinsky affair is astounding. On top of that, he destroyed the self-respect of Lewinsky by denying their affair and allowing his staff to go on record calling her "deluded" when what she was saying was factual.

On top of that, he used his White House secretary, Betty Currie as a pawn so his fingerprints would not be directly on the coverup of his affair with Lewinsky.

Also, remember that Bill Clinton settled a sexual harassment suit filed by Paula Corbin-Jones, has been accused of groping Kathleen Willey in the Oval

Office and has been accused of rape by Juanita Broaddrick. If even one of these accusations is true, NOW's charter would direct it to act as if Clinton were the Antichrist.

Instead, NOW has said nothing in support of these women, whose most fundamental rights may have been violated. Instead, NOW stands by its man—blatant philanderer and adulterer that he is.

Not even Tammy Wynette would take it this far.

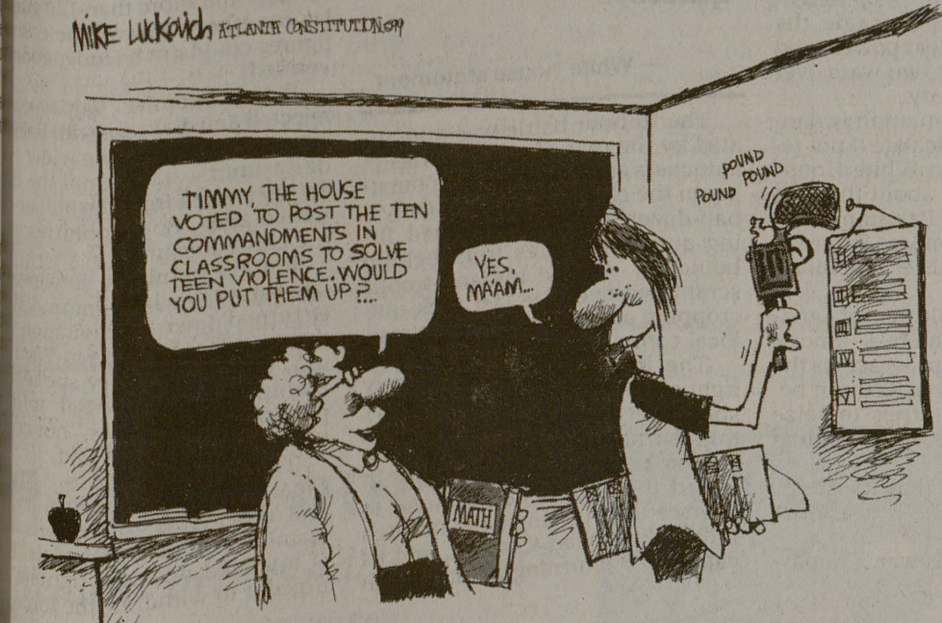
Apparently, NOW has decided that if someone, like Clinton or Moran, backs them on a few select issues that are politically "hot," then they are free to do what they please with women in other situations. NOW has abandoned their struggle to ensure that women are treated with equality, decency or even basic respect in order to ensure that a woman may have an abortion.

There are no two ways about it—NOW has sold out women on the simplest of issues. If it chooses to cuddle up with people who say one thing in public and then go on to prove they truly do not believe in what they say, then this group cannot retain any shred of credibility.

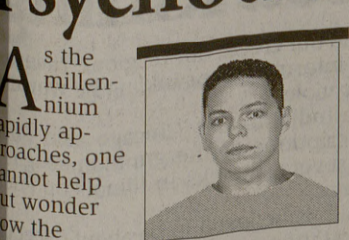
It is truly shameful that in its crusade to make sure a woman retains a right to choose, NOW has compromised all of its other values and the integrity of the organization.

If this continues, women seeking to ensure they are treated with dignity or respect will have to look elsewhere, as NOW has allied itself with those who have proven to have no personal respect for women's rights.

Mark Passwaters is a graduate student in electrical engineering.



## Psychotic murderer wrongly gets plaudits instead of punishment



RYAN GARCIA

As the millennium rapidly approaches, one cannot help but wonder how the American way of life has become so twisted and distorted in the past few decades. Horrific murders and rapes spanning both sexes and all age groups dominate news coverage. The proliferation of extremist groups and cults has subjected America to domestic terrorism. Exploding mail, cannibalism and necrophilia are more than enough to get even the greatest optimists down. But take heart, for the American legal system, with its legacy of justice and impartiality, has given us a hero in the midst of all this chaos.

This month, Marie Noe, a 70-year-old, white-haired woman who suffers from diabetes and arthritis, has graciously accepted a plea bargain deal that will keep her out of prison and allow her to undergo psychiatric treatment to determine why she killed eight of her children over a 19 year period beginning in 1949.

On June 29, Noe pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in the suffocation deaths of eight of her children previously believed to have died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Amazingly, she avoided prison and was sentenced to 20 years probation in exchange for her cooperation with psychiatrists.

If this sentence seems lenient, the important thing to remember is that Noe doesn't have the heart of a murderer, at least if we are to believe her attorney, David Rudenstein, whom should be trusted implicitly.

After all, just because Noe killed eight innocent, defenseless babies, ranging from 13 days to 14 months old, without so much as flinching doesn't qualify her as a cold-blooded killer.

Indeed, Noe's words dripped with humanity when she said, "Elizabeth was a lot stronger than Richard was, and she was fighting when the pillow was over her face. I held the pillow over her face until she stopped moving."

Of sterner stuff, few people are made. Even Noe's attorney was choked up over her courageousness in agreeing to work with psychiatrists rather than go to prison.

"I don't know any other person accused of this type of crime in the history of the world who has ever come forward to work with doctors the way this woman is willing to," Rudenstein said.

Move over G.I. Joe, there's a

new American hero.

Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham said she thought the sentence was appropriate, and Deputy District Attorney Charles Gallagher said the sentence was not important, but the fact that the medical and legal communities realize that mothers do suffocate their children is important.

With the logic inherent in Gallagher's statement, it's easy to see how such a fair and just plea bargain originated.

Lest readers begin to think Noe's psychiatric evaluations are not a fair trade-off for her avoiding imprisonment, they should take heart in the fact that the entertainment industries will great-

ly benefit from her ranting and ravings of how "ungodly" she is.

A made-for-television movie and several book deals for Noe and her doctors are sure to flood a market suffering from a lack of such perverse topics.

A "Just Say Noe" award could be given to honor those who have shown extreme acts of courage and heroism.

In addition, the amount of deranged data that psychiatrists will interpret and then attempt to apply to the greater deranged community will prove invaluable because everyone knows that generalization is the key to any quest for knowledge.

By interpreting what one obviously sick individual espouses,

the medical community will instantly know what motivates every mentally ill person.

By stepping up, Noe is bearing the cross for the betterment of America.

So in an age where atrocities happen at an hourly rate, it is comforting to know one Philadelphia courtroom has taken America's well-being to heart and transformed a violation of our most sacred security — the mother-child relationship — into a "get out of jail free" card, creating an American icon.

Alleged railroad killer Rafael Resendez-Ramirez, who authorities have linked to a possible 18 deaths, would do well to learn from this lesson in American justice and turn himself in so he can cash in and receive the laurels of American heroism.

Ryan Garcia is a senior journalism major.