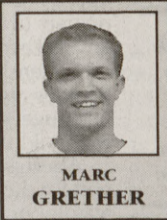


## Not playing with a full deck of cards

### Donald Trump wrong for presidency, supports disastrous economic policies

When thinking about Donald Trump, what comes to mind? He is a billionaire real estate developer, a brilliant graduate of The Wharton School of Finance, a womanizing blowhard and a shameless self-promoter.



MARC GRETHER

All of the above describe one of America's richest and most outrageous personalities. But after announcing his desire to run for president and presenting his "soak the rich" tax plan, kooky also must be added to the list. He is the wrong person for the job. If he somehow became president and his tax plan enacted, the effects would be disastrous for the country.

Trump is a rich man. Trump is a smart man. But neither of these qualities make "The Donald" a good choice for president. Though he may be smarter, or at least more politically savvy, than several other presidential candidates, he is not the right person to be president. Moreover, he is not even the best choice among the current crop of candidates.

The job of president of the United States comes with very few specific job requirements. The president must be a natural-born citizen, at least 35 years old and have been a resident of the country for 14 years. Trump meets these minimal requirements, but so do close to 150 million other Americans.

The job comes with unwritten requirements as well. Presidents must have integrity and charisma, demand respect from foreign leaders and have the ability to form coalitions with a wide variety of lawmakers. As a president elected from the Reform Party, Trump would have none of these qualities.

Among the other candidates for

president, most have at least one of these qualities. John McCain, Bill Bradley, Steve Forbes and Pat Buchanan are all known for their integrity. Al Gore has the respect of foreign leaders. George W. Bush has charisma dripping off of him.

Although Trump claims to have never smoked, consumed alcohol or used drugs, he probably does not have the respect of middle America because of his womanizing.

Also, Trump already has criticized of several foreign countries, including France, Cuba, North Korea and Japan.

**Womanizer, celebrity and self-promoter, yes. President, no.**

In doing so, Trump has shown no tact and has lost the respect of many foreigners.

In today's political climate, no third-party candidate would be able to consistently get his or her agenda items passed.

Quite possibly the worst thing about the Trump candidacy is his plan to pay off the national debt.

According to his Website, Trump "would impose a one-time 14.25 percent net worth tax on individuals and trusts with a net worth of over \$10 million." He claims this tax would bring in \$5.7 trillion dollars, thereby paying off the national debt.

Trump also proposes doing away with the inheritance tax, which he — erroneously — asserts harms "farmers and small businessmen and women more than anyone else."

But Trump is living in a dream world if he honestly thinks his proposals would work.

Contrary to the opinion of many economists, Trump does not think the affected millionaires would try to avoid the additional tax.

Unfortunately, previous experience shows people with the means to do so avoid paying taxes as much as possible.

A 14.25 percent tax is very significant, and it is obvious many, if not most, of the millionaires with the ability to do so would move their money out of the country, into tax shelters or evade the tax in other ways.

Further, as David Jones, chief economist of Aubrey Lanston, explained in the Nov. 9 edition of CNN's "Inside Politics," the economy would suffer from the risk of losing capital of "the Ted Turners and Bill Gates of the world." Jones used less restraint in characterizing the plan as "really dangerous."

The economists have suggested worse impacts, including a recession, a stock-market tumble or even a depression resulting from the proposed plan.

Trump seems alone in his rosy prediction of a "35-40 percent boost in economic activity."

Overall, the Trump plan seems to be a ludicrous suggestion.

His candidacy may turn out to be just a ploy to sell his fourth book, *The America We Deserve*, which is due out in December.

There are a few benefits to his candidacy: it has truly shown how ludicrous presidential campaigns have become (particularly in the platform-light Reform Party), and his tax plan has brought the issue of paying off the national debt out of the cellar current politicians had placed it in.

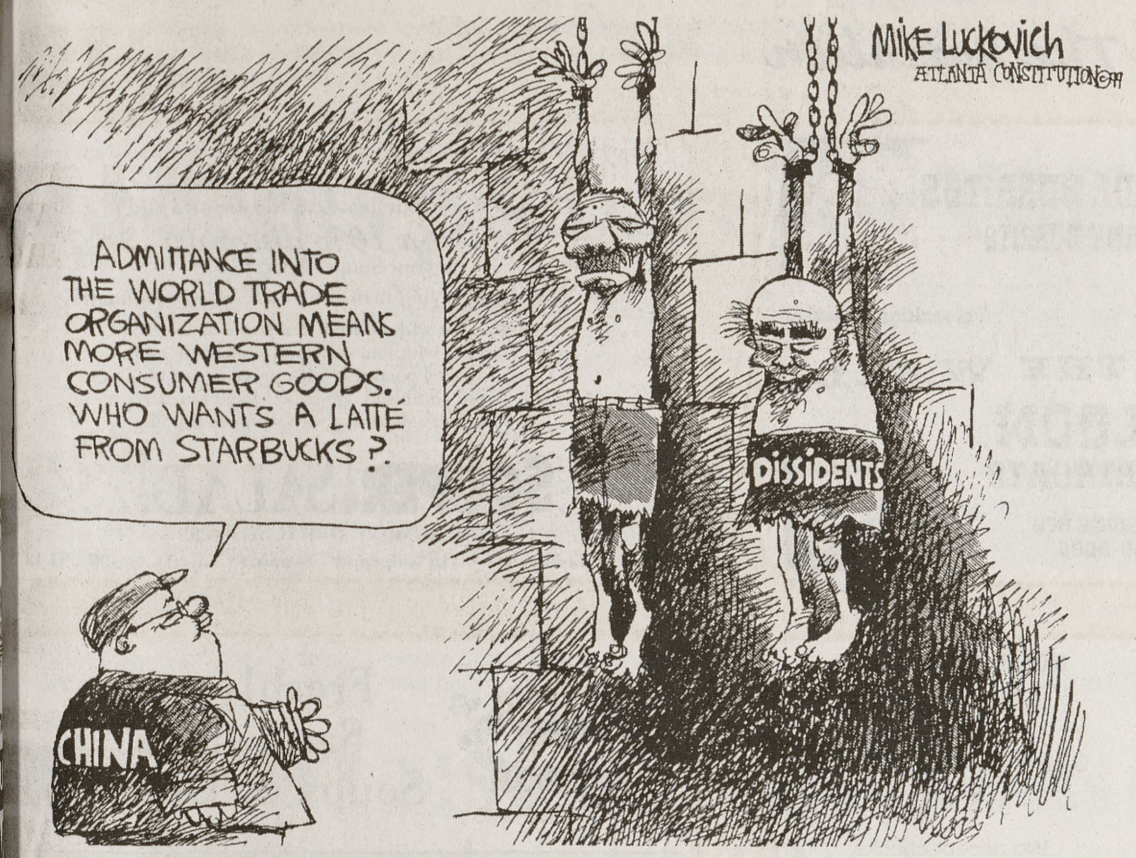
But neither of these reasons are convincing enough for anyone to vote for him.

Marc Grether is a mathematics graduate student.



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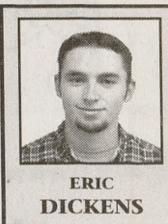
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## Adult crimes deserve adult trials

On Oct. 29, 1997, outside a Michigan convenience store, Nate Abraham fired two bullets from his .22-caliber rifle in the direction of 18-year-old Ronnie Green.



ERIC DICKENS

One of the bullets struck Green, who died hours later. Those facts are accepted by both sides during Abraham's trial, but it was debated whether Abraham intended to kill Green.

The legal debate ended when the jury found Abraham guilty of second-degree murder. But the debate outside the courtroom continues.

What makes this story so disturbing is that at the time of the shooting, Abraham was only 11 years old.

Despite Abraham's young age, he was arrested, charged and tried for capital murder as an adult.

Under Michigan law, prosecutors can charge a child under the age of 14 for violent crimes, including murder.

It was under a flurry of controversy and heavy criticism that the state of Michigan tried Abraham as an adult, but as unfortunate as the case may have been, Michigan prosecutors did the correct thing.

It is an accepted fact that many people experience a rebellious phase during adolescence.

Many teen-agers disrespect their parents, play hooky from school or even experiment with dipping into the criminal world by stealing candy (or other goods) from the neighborhood convenience store.

Those kinds of childish crimes should receive childish punishments.

A week-long grounding for skipping school or making them return the stolen candy to the

store and apologize to the clerk are appropriate punishments.

But as the severity of crimes increase, so should the seriousness of the penalties.

Murder is murder, no matter how old the killer is.

Carrying a .22-caliber rifle to a convenience store and shooting another person is not a childish act of rebellion.

Adult crimes, like murder, deserve adult punishments.

Almost everyone grows out of his or her rebellious phase, but not everyone shoots and kills somebody before they are out of that period.

It is a sad day indeed when a phrase like "child criminals" can include murderers, but the fact is Abraham is not the only youth to fatally pull a trigger.

**Murder is still murder, no matter how old the killer is. Shooting another person is not a childish act.**

One of the main purposes of trial and punishment is to deter future crime.

When somebody, no matter his or her age, believes the consequences of their potential actions to be too great, they will not carry out those actions.

This kind of tragedy, and the trial that followed, cannot help but send a message to the youth of America.

If a child today is even lightly toying with the idea of firing a rifle at another person, that idea should quickly be crushed by thoughts of that action's consequences.

Maybe Green's death was an accident.

Maybe Abraham did not mean to cause any harm.

But the boy should not have been carrying a loaded rifle, pointing it at or near people and pulling the trigger.

If Nate was competent enough to make a rational decision — and the court believed he was — then what he needed was something to dissuade him from violence.

He needed some kind of voice in the back of his head to tell him the consequences of firing a gun would be too high and his actions too dangerous.

Hopefully, the next child who considers doing something like Abraham did will remember his case and make a more mature decision.

When Michigan prosecutors decided to try Abraham as an adult, it was not an easily-made decision.

But despite what may have been in their heart to "go soft on the kid," they still made the right call.

If there is an optimistic note to this story, it is the effect the trial will have on the future decisions of would-be adolescent criminals.

State prosecutors did their part to prevent future youth crimes by trying Abraham as an adult and sending youths a strong message about the consequences of such illegal and dangerous actions.

Imagine what kind of message would have been sent if prosecutors played to the shooter's age and did not try him as an adult.

If children believe they will get off easier because of their ages, even when they kill someone, then punishment becomes less of a deterrent, and youthful age becomes an incentive to criminal behavior.

Eric Dickens is a junior English major.

## Temper UT rivalry with more respect

In response to David Lee's Nov. 30 column.

I applaud David Lee's appreciative column on the very commendable response of the UT community to the Bonfire tragedy.

But I differ with a concluding remark that "we usually mask our mutual respect for each other through lighthearted teasing and ridicule." If only it stopped at lighthearted teasing and ridicule.

Unfortunately and far too often, we have heard much harsher comments about the University of Texas — the word "hate" and similar terms are often included in such comments, many of which have made it to the printed page.

It is time to stop such highly negative characterizations of UT. There is no place for it in any institution of higher calibre. UT is a very fine university, and Austin is

a very nice city. Let us build on these fine gestures from the Austin community and adopt a more respectful approach to UT.

And this approach should not be just for a short grace period — if for no other reason because then it would require an extreme lack of class to go back to the old ways after such a dignified display by the UT community.

Root for the Aggies? Of course. Vilify the Longhorns? Please, no more.

Thomas Crowley  
Faculty member

## ATM convenience worth paying fees

In response to Elizabeth Kohl's Dec. 1 column.

I question Kohl's assertion "most individuals would gladly sit through a 30-second advertisement" at their ATM machine.

I support Wells Fargo and Bank of America in their response in California. The general public may have felt pinched by the additional fees, but they will really feel the pinch when they see their convenience factor drop out of sight.

I suspect lawmakers will rethink this prohibition when the public sees the real cost to themselves.

O.W. Fine  
Class of '61

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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