

## PROMOTING HATE AND FREE SPEECH

### Northwestern officials' restriction of racist Matt Hale blurs line of First Amendment rights



JESSICA CRUTCHER

Does freedom of expression mean freedom to promote hatred? That is the question white supremacist and self-proclaimed reverend Matt Hale is causing Northwestern University to seriously consider. Hale, who admits to being racist and anti-Semitic, recently visited the campus to proclaim his message to the students and spread literature from his World Church of the Creator. His goal is to have Northwestern officially recognize a student group of his chapter. Northwestern officials are hesitant to allow Hale to speak on campus, or even to allow students to form the organization, reasoning that, since it is a private university, they have a right to regulate what will be recognized.

But in creating student organizations funded by student activity fees Northwestern has created a public forum for all students to express themselves, no matter how hateful their beliefs. As long as the students are not directly threatening the physical welfare of themselves or others, it is wrong to forbid them from forming an organization. First, the ban narrowly avoids a violation of First Amendment rights. It opens up the possibility for future breeches of freedom of speech at other universities. Also, such a ban shows a complete lack of respect for the students' abilities to think for themselves.

Undeniably, a private university has a right to restrict certain people from coming to campus. The question is whether school officials should restrict a speaker's right to speak simply because that person offends the officials. Alan Cabbage, vice president for university affairs at Northwestern, said "It troubles me that Hale is using Northwestern as a launching pad for his garbage."

Cabbage's comment is just as intolerant as the beliefs expressed by Hale, and unacceptable as a reason to keep Hale from speaking on campus or forming a student organization. Cabbage certainly has a right to express his personal views, but he should not use them as a basis for

making decisions which will affect the entire student body.

Most universities, including Northwestern, add a student activity fee to tuition costs. This charge helps finance "university recognized" student organizations. The general understanding is that if students wish to form an organization, they can. It is unreasonable for Northwestern officials to charge students "activity fees," and then not allow them to utilize those fees to suit their own interests.

In addition, banning a set of beliefs from any campus sets dangerous precedents for other schools who will face similar challenges in the future. Many other universities, private or public will inevitably decide to follow in Northwestern's steps. But university officials will not stop at censoring racists. If Northwestern is allowed to censor Hale, it will open the door for college officials everywhere to censor any beliefs they dislike on that particular campus.

Also, withholding the students' right to listen to Hale shows a disturbing lack of respect for the students' ability to logically think for themselves. College is a place of higher learning — a time when students learn to formulate their own opinions of the world, by taking into account many different beliefs.

College students are adults capable of making their own decisions, not easily-swayed junior high students who need to be protected from controversial ideas. In addition, the contrariness of human nature often makes ideas seem more exciting when it is censored. In denying Hale the right to speak and denying students the right to form an organization, Northwestern may be causing fascination with a set of beliefs that would otherwise be ignored.

Hale may be a racist. He may be anti-Semitic. He may be offensive to 99 percent of the people at Northwestern.



RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

But there is still that 1 percent that cannot and should not be silenced.

The First Amendment was not written to protect majority views — the majority is quite capable of protecting itself. Universities ideally are forums where everyone can

express what they believe in. Northwestern should think long and hard about the consequences before departing from this tradition.

Jessica Crutcher is a sophomore journalism major.



### MAIL CALL

#### CRACK program detrimental

In response to Eric Dickens' Feb. 8 column.

I must agree with Eric Dickens in his opinion on the CRACK program. What kind of message are we sending as a society? What happened to rewarding responsible individuals who work hard, and benefit society, not rely on her?

These unfortunate individuals do need society's help, but paying them to go on birth control only validates their lifestyle. Addicts are irresponsible in all aspects of life including sexually. Birth control then is probably in the best interest of that individual, and should be provided for free. Giving them a cash payout though is totally counterproductive. That is like saying, "Here is \$200 to feed your habit, just don't get pregnant."

Is that the kind of message that the kids who grow up in neighborhoods with junkies should get? What happened to awarding hard working responsible people? Shouldn't they get \$200 for not being on drugs? With the clouded messages we send our youth it is no wonder they are such a troubled generation. While reaching out to addicts is greatly beneficial both to the addict and society, one must do it with social responsibility, and send the right message. "We want to help you, but we don't approve of illegal drugs and what you are doing."

The Crack program should provide birth control to the addicts free of charge, but give the cash to the kids of these troubled neighborhoods

to go to college. That would be sending the right message that responsibility and hard work is rewarded.

Joseph Kuebker  
Class of '02

#### Students support Queer Aggies

In response to Dana Jamus' Feb. 8 article.

I would like to thank you for posting the unbiased article, "Group to address issues."

I think it is a good sign for our campus newspaper to have addressed the issue so eloquently. I would like to clarify, though, that there is no law prohibiting TAMU from including Sexual Orientation in the nondiscrimination clause, as was implied in the article. Bowen cited "legal liability" as his reason; this does not translate into a state law. Regardless of what his personal beliefs are, I would like to reiterate what John Hall said about GLBT equality. Every human deserves equal rights under the law just as the civil rights movement of the past proclaimed!

Jason Patton  
Class of '02  
accompanied by 11 signatures

As the student who brought the issue of including sexual orientation in the University's nondiscrimination policy to the forefront, I would like to

respond to the article on the group Queer Aggies. Although I am not a member of that group or GLBTA, I wholeheartedly support their efforts on obtaining "equal rights" for members of the GLBT community.

Subsequently I must point out two errors in the article:

Amy Hinz is quoted as saying, "GLBTs could be expelled from A&M due to their sexual orientation."

This quote is misleading based on the fact that there is a deeper issue here.

It is very unlikely that a student would be expelled from A&M due to their sexual orientation.

Because there is nothing about this issue in University policy (i.e. University Rules or Student Rules), it is possible for expulsion based on sexual orientation, but in all likelihood would never occur.

Also, the article mentions that Bowen cited Texas law as a reason for denying the inclusion of sexual orientation in university policy.

First, Bowen never stated anything other than "legal liability" as a reason, for his disapproval of the measure.

Most importantly, there is no state or federal law prohibiting the protection of GLBT individuals from discrimination.

While the university once included sexual orientation in its policy in regards to students, I hope that any individual or organization can help aid in the effort to include sexual orientation in the nondiscrimination policy once again.

With no firm legal issue preventing the inclusion, it is imperative that our university act in favor of this issue.

David Kessler  
Class of '99

## Masculinity in media a trap, issues exclusively for profit



MELISSA JOHNSTON

Men, break out the beer and pretzels; testosterone is making a comeback. After much hype in recent years about women's issues, the cultural focus on females appears to be fading. The media are working to create male-centered contexts — on television, in film and in print. In this emerging era of post-feminism, men are the new hot topic.

Men should certainly be given the opportunity to have their day in the sun, or more appropriately, in the media's spotlight. However, they should think thoroughly about the realities of that spotlight. Fooled into thinking their voices are finally being heard, men are teetering on the edge of a trap. Truthfully, men's issues are not even men's to begin with, but the media's — and those issues are giving men a bad name.

Here is how the media's trap works: they manufacture an issue they think people should be interested in and people, being ultimately self-centered, buy into it thinking it was their idea in the first place.

Tricky, is it not? Men's interests have become the media's latest playground. For example, judging by what has recently emerged in male-focused culture, men's interests can be summed up in two words: beer and women. Men also have been known to like women and beer. And do not forget the greatest combination ever — women with beer.

Come on, men — the media must be stopped from continuing to degrade the very concept of maleness. Even women know there is much more to a man's life than beer and women, though every man has been known to appreciate both at some time. Life will always imitate art, and the

media will continue to create truth, if no one is brave enough to stop them.

Sadly, many men have already bought into the media's "male" issues. Look at what has happened so far: males aged 12 to 24 everywhere can be found singing along with Adam Carolla and Jimmy Kimmel; "Grab a beer and drop your pants / Send the wife and kids to France / It's 'The Man Show!' / Quit your job and light a fart / Grab your favorite private part / It's 'The Man Show!'" So this is what men have been waiting for — songs about matters best left out of public conversation. If that is not enough, men can surf over to "The Man Show"

thrill of the chase has begun to fade. Transferring the same equation to men is simple: more articles about men plus more shows about men equals more money from men. Males ages 12 to 24 spent \$278 billion last year. Think the media have any qualms about catering to men's whims as long as they are pocketing the profits?

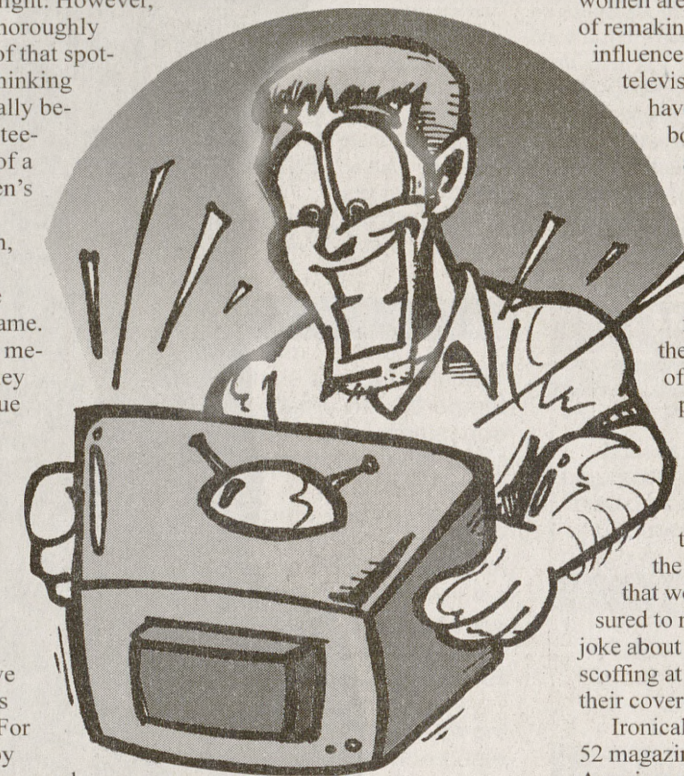
Women, though certainly sad to see men getting sucked into the same traps they have experienced, might also be the tiniest bit glad about the media's waxing interest in men. Perhaps women will finally get a break from the constant pressure of America's beauty myth. Having waged a long battle with media versions of perfection, women are constantly in the process of remaking themselves. Under the influence of magazine editors and television actresses, women have worn high heels, bought beauty products, accessorized, gone on diets and cut, highlighted and teased their hair into every latest style.

It has been a losing battle. No average female can compete with the airbrushed appearances of celebrities on glossy pages or the ultra-thin women on prime-time television. Just by flipping through any of the "beauty" magazines out there, one can clearly see the unrealistic expectations that women often feel pressured to meet. Men, in fact, often joke about those very magazines, scoffing at the life-changing advice their covers claim to provide.

Ironically, over the past decade 52 magazines targeting the young American male have come into existence. Remember that commercial with the middle-aged guy who asks the viewer if his pants make him look fat and laments the size of his thighs? Its original intent may have been to parody female self-image, but now it looks like a foreshadowing of the male future.

As one guy said to a group of women after flipping through the latest issue of Glamour: "This is why y'all are so messed up." Exactly. Guess who's next?

Melissa Johnston is a senior English major.



RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

Website; a place "where men can be men, a haven for long-suffering testicles." Perhaps this appeals to men's baser natures, but surely it cannot be how they originally intended to be perceived.

No matter to the media, though. They are more than happy to oblige men's newfound interest in, well, themselves. If men want to see more "manly" shows and articles, the media will soon come through with plenty of them. The media have long been flirting with women (and their wallets), and the