

Hell on Earth

Summertime in Texas magnifies all that is miserable, undesirable!

The beach is a symbol of summertime freedom. Nothing says summer more than herds of college students frolicking in the sand, their taut bodies glistening under a thin sheen of putrid water from the giant toilet we call the ocean.



JASON BENNYHOFF

As their hormones call them toward one-night stands with random members of the opposite or perhaps the same sex, whose physical features seem to blur strangely amid the sweltering heat and cheap beer fumes, I sit on my wicker chair sipping a Mint Julep, taking gentle puffs on my Monte Cristo reminiscing about why I hate summer.

There is really nothing wrong with the idyllic summer — cool breezes blowing through the hair of beautiful people on the beach. Packed concert schedules combined with the summer movie season liven up the nights, when relaxing with Dostoyevsky's greatest works and warming a brandy (while sitting in an overstuffed leather chair in a smoking jacket seems a bit slow). Summer is supposed to be a time when days of heart-pounding parasailing are followed by nights at clubs where the music is as smooth as the Italian leather of the best Oscar De La Renta shoes.

The people are kept dry and odor free in the balmy weather without a hint of decomposing bodily secretions.

However, this is Texas, where everything is bigger, dumber, smellier, uglier and corn fed.

Summer at Texas A&M University combines everything bad about summer and magnifies it, while exterminating all that is good about it as quickly as possible. The daily events that were bad during the year become outright evil as classes run five days a week, turning a student's mind into a diseased pustule oozing sentence fragments and truncated pleas for water like the viscous white substance that accumulates at the corner of said student's mouth when he hasn't had anything to drink.

Texas summers bring out the ugly in people, or maybe they just bring out the ugly people.



Summer at A&M is a time of renewal. A time when the most hideous physical specimens feel that even they can be as beautiful and vibrant as the most stunning of supermodels. Summer in Aggeland is the time when even those who weigh in at a "deuce to a deuce-and-a-half" have delusions of grandeur fueled by the images of thong-clad beauties parading on television. They feel that they too can transform their pasty-white ham hock thighs into shapely, curved appendages and wear the most revealing of fashions. Wrong.

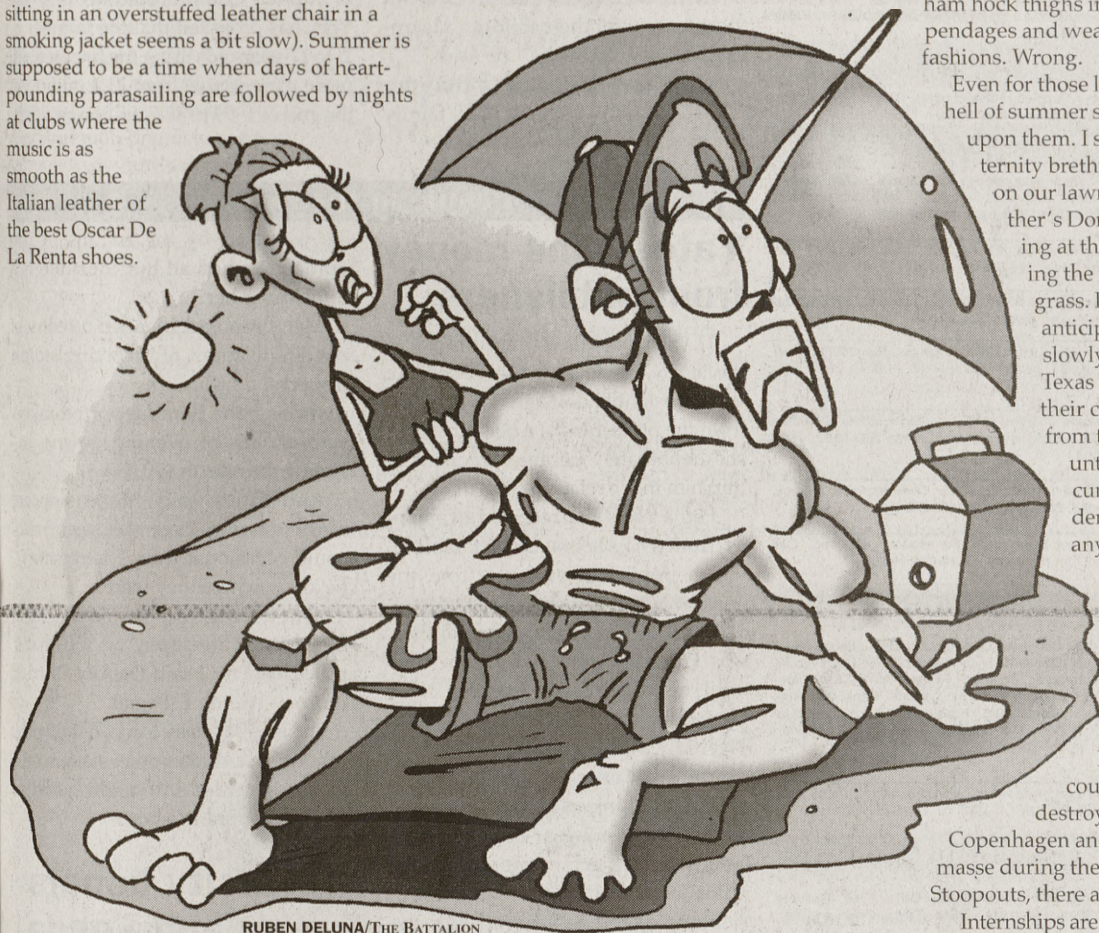
Even for those lucky enough to avoid the hell of summer school, summer work is upon them. I say them, because my fraternity brethren and I will be lying back on our lawn chairs in front of my father's Dominion townhouse laughing at the vermin who toil shortening the thousand square yards of grass. I fairly squeal with glee as I anticipate watching them grow slowly more dehydrated in the Texas heat. There is a provision in their contract to keep them away from the water hoses and faucets until all the work is done. Security searches them for hidden liquids at the gate, and anyone caught drinking is dragged before me and forced to kiss my Gucci shoes as I slowly sip an extra dry martini. When they tire me, they are taken behind the carport and throttled with a 1962 Rolls Royce tire iron. Of course, for those who have not destroyed their minds with Copenhagen and Schlitz consumed en masse during the ever-offensive Hart Stoopouts, there are always internships. Internships are divided into two categories.

First, there are those that pay an obscene amount of money, for example working in my father's oil refinery — the offices of course — and those that pay nothing. Working in that black pit of tar and tears known as the "refinery floor," where we take no responsibility for personal injury, is of course an internship that pays nothing. Nothing that is except for the knowledge that whatever unknowing souls enter will never return, but instead be stashed in a dark, damp corner with all of society's other mistakes.

In the refinery's offices, only the highest class are admitted, work is sparing, and the bourbon-toting lackeys are plentiful. Here is where the world's decisions are made. In rooms like this one all over the world, society's greatest men and their favorite college-enrolled sons make decisions on how everyone else will live. No women are allowed to participate in these decisions as the offal that is estrogen leaves its stain on the minds of all men. Not to mention the fact that it is summer, and there's no time for misogyny like summer.

The last summer tradition, and the greatest, is the degradation of women. There is no time when women feel more overweight, unworthy of love and downright hideous than when they try to force themselves into bathing suits they wore when they were 13 years old. Women live their lives normally in all but the summer months, when they suddenly realize that there is a societally imposed necessity to show skin and lots of it.

So they then spend countless hours running, lifting and sweating to produce just one picture where they look good in a bikini and hook the perfect man. Both pursuits are in vain, and they end the summer miserable, single and feeling violated by the realization that the man they thought would bring them eternal happiness is married and has hideous genitals. Hooray for summer.



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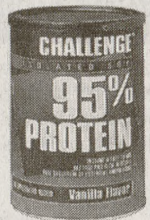
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