

stitute a Web-based... a new set of terms... designed to receive... of HTML compa... software would need to... student to access... internet browser.

associate registrar... of Texas-Austin, who... based registration... said that a univers... purchase a pre-design... on its own.

is going to be a cost... n said. "If you buy... product, it still has to... ur system. If you desig... ur programmers and... ts will be putting a li... ney."

d pre-designed pro... t between \$10 million... A&M will design it... e said.

d that before any p... ned, the administration... whether to construct... at would interact with... IS, or to build a new... cess.

n from a centralize... mputer. However, as... ds and software pro... faster and more com... current SIMS become

gn a Web-based regis... ff the current one and... SIMS, they are just... oney down the drain."

d that a new way of... stration times would... eloped with a Web... on system.

rent system, the ove... e system causes some... e Station to not be able... e," he said. "If we... stration, it would only... orse, unless the times... d into smaller blocks... the times would prob... ized into blocks of... es for 100 people at a... instead of the current... 0 to 4,000 people over... ay."

ued from Page 1

udents with physical... to the fact that physi... evident, while men... 'invisible' and hard... Williams said.

e, the director of... Assessment Clinic at... clinic works hand-in... ensure that students... ate accommodations... nt is diagnosed with... g problem, we send... to their department... o the student in any... said.

it is sometimes diffi... roach her professors... o miss a class.

u how many times I... pressed) when I... an unstable mental... cing severe anxiety... ssor with whom I... missed classes and... leery of me and not... ke accommodations... nd documentation... by the ADA,"

The SSD does not... ead of helping me... er."

oad experience does... partment discrimi...

ent may be experi... problem, kind of like... ger at McDonald's... the most part... etty consistent with... s. Every now and... oad experience. It is... dent has claimed to... erience with the...

who suffers from... nior ranking and col... at saying the depart... es is an overstate... o longer registered... use of the problems...

tion program is... Deats said. "They... ate the faculty and... u take tests early... y, which is helpfu... cate the professor... modate mentally... "

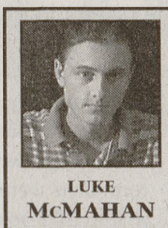
OPINION

THE BATTALION

Nightmares & 'netscapes

Online books not the end for conventional publishing

Artistic creativity and the ability to make money usually mix about as well as tequila and dairy products. Writers are just one group who face this obstacle. The decision to make creative writing one's livelihood is sometimes a choice to live a life of financial instability.



LUKE MCMAHAN

Writers make money when their published material is bought. Hurdles must be cleared before a published work is put on the shelf. The publishing industry is like many other industries: Seniority and knowing the right people can be as important as the substance of a writer's work. Countless authors spend years trying to get their first work published. The process is arduous and often plagued with countless disappointments. Many authors have had their works turned down dozens of times, only to have the same pieces become bestsellers years later when the author's name is well known.

However, Stephen King has recently taken a bold step to change the normal practice of publishing. On July 24, King placed his newest novel, "The Plant," on his Website. Readers can download the novel in its entirety. King has stated that the whole distribution process will be on the honor system, meaning that downloaders are asked—but not required—to send King \$1 for every copy downloaded. King said he will continue this process if and only if at least 75 percent of readers pay for their downloads. King was quoted as saying, "If you pay, the story rolls. If you don't, the story folds."

The publishing community is concerned. Some publishers feel that King is merely flexing his ego. They say King's move should not be emulated by other writers for fear that it is a path of disaster for most writers.

King is simply bringing to the writing industry what musicians, filmmakers and day-traders have had for some time now.

John Baker of Publisher's Weekly echoed these sentiments when he said, "There are few authors who will take this kind of risk. Conventional publishing will continue to be the leading way for authors to publish."

This is true, but the defensive words spoken by publishers are in response to what they believe to be a challenge for their spot in the industry. No one will ever compete with the big publishers. Most writers will opt for the big-time marketing campaigns that only big publishers can provide.

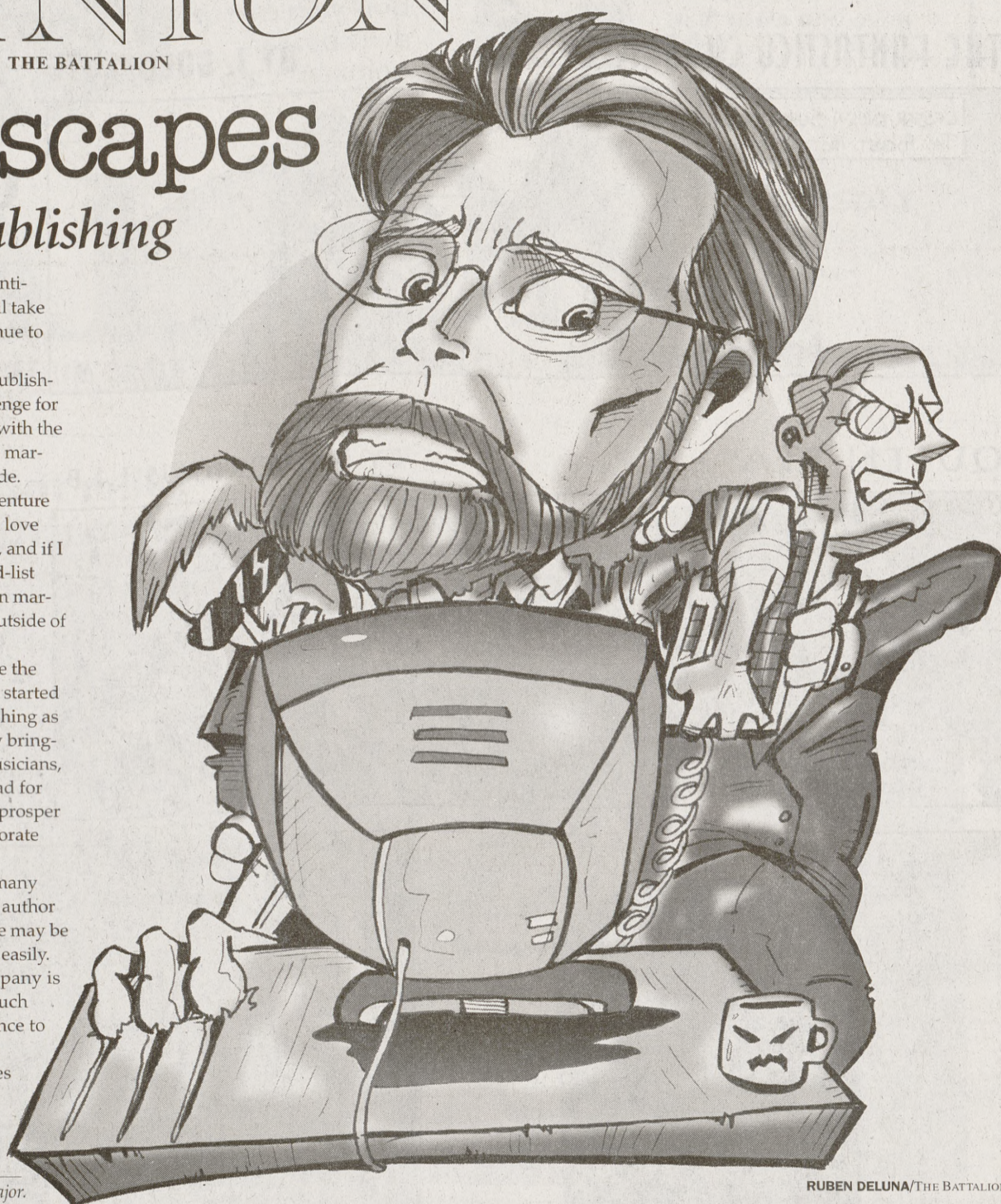
When King was asked whether or not his latest venture was the end of publishing, he said, "Good God, no. I love my editors, and I like my publisher. I also like books, and if I could break some trail for all the mid-list writers, literary writers and just plain marginalized writers who see a future outside of the mainstream, that's great."

King is not going to revolutionize the publishing industry. What King has started is certainly not the end of big publishing as the industry is today. King is simply bringing to the writing industry what musicians, filmmakers and day traders have had for some time now: the opportunity to prosper without paying the traditional corporate middleman.

If King's campaign is a success, many others will follow. If a lesser-known author has success selling material on the Internet, he or she may be able to sign with a publishing company much more easily.

Publishing is, in essence, speculation. The company is calculating how well the piece will fare or how much money the sale of the work will bring. With a chance to establish themselves on their own, writers will be much more appealing to big publishing companies and will be able to encounter more success with the aid of the big-time marketing that these companies have at their fingertips.

Luke McMahan is a senior industrial engineering major.



RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

Poverty and AIDS a lethal combination

The stage was set for history to happen. Experts from all over the world, doctors and dignitaries alike, came together on common soil to participate in the 13th Annual AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) Conference.

While the conference was momentous—representatives from six continents would sit side by side to break the silence on the devastation wrought by HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), the most lethal virus known to man in the modern era—the site chosen for the discussions was of paramount importance as well.

The conference took place in South Africa, part of the poorest continent on Earth. Moreover, within recent memory, South Africa has become a paragon of triumph as heart-wrenching blood baths for racial equality were transformed, into exuberant celebrations for hard-won freedom.

Thus, South Africa is to the whole world what AIDS is to the body—a struggle within a larger struggle that shall see the dawn of glory through preparation, education, determination, courage, resilience and dignity.

So when President Mbeki christened the conference with his opening speech by saying that poverty,

and AIDS, was the single most destructive component in the lives of Africans, the calculated link between cause and geography took a turn toward uncharted waters.

By all accounts, there is no denying that Africa has been, and if current trends are to continue, will continue to be the continent worst hit by HIV-related AIDS. Scores of villages have succumbed to HIV, in part because a number of fundamental institutions like the family, church, schools and government have found it extremely difficult to break with traditional mores and talk about sexual activity within their respective communities.

But Mbeki's speech placed a sharp accent in another area: Africa's reality and the obstacles that must be met in order to tackle the virus head on. In blatant terms, Mbeki referenced the devastating contribution AIDS & HIV have made to the continent while making it known to the world that poverty affects the likelihood of survival among African sufferers much more than their western counterparts could possibly imagine.

Because of poverty, few Africans eat more than one meal a day. Because of poverty, that meal may or may not contain one or possibly two small portions of the basic food

groups. So their immune systems, like their diets, are already impoverished, making them more susceptible to illnesses associated with AIDS.

Vaccines to fight HIV need to be stored in refrigerated areas. Because of poverty, most villages have neither electricity nor a constant supply of sanitized running water to down the capsules that could keep their latest affliction at bay. Because of poverty, the means to distribute the vaccines are lacking, as are roads absent of potholes that cause fatal delays when reaching a needy population of patients under strict orders to take their medication at a specific time.

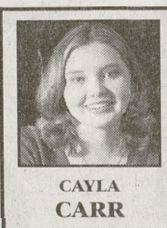
Poverty not only permeates choices, it translates into a wager between life and death, determining how death or survival come about.

The importance of Mbeki's speech was not that it deviated from the conference's initial agenda, but that it challenged a naive spirit parading the globe where good intentions and unacknowledged need never meet. If AIDS has meant anything to Africa, it is a call to change. If AIDS has meant anything at all to the rest of the world, it is a similar call to change.

Nanna Hadikwa Mwaluko is a columnist for the Columbia Daily Spectator at Columbia U.

Punishing students comes second to preventing phone code misuse

Before entering college, most students thought of higher education as "a world of opportunity," "a place for freedom of thought" or "a chance to soul-search." Once in college, students realize that higher education can also be stressful and financially overwhelming. After paying for tuition, fees, books, gasoline, parking tickets and other expenses, some students find it is almost impossible to afford a long-distance phone service to keep in touch with friends and family.



CAYLA CARR

Some students, burdened by high expenses, stumbled upon a long distance phone code used by Texas state employees to call other state entities without incurring long distance charges. These students' intention was most likely not to waste the universities' money, but to save some of their own. Now, instead of simply correcting this lapse in security, University officials have launched an investigation with plans to pinpoint the code users and penalize them for using the number without authorization.

A&M University officials say that with students accessing the government code, the November phone bill for all participating universities was \$15,000 more than the average monthly bill. They attribute the extra amount to students and other unauthorized callers using the phone code. This \$15,000 excess was not caused by only A&M students. The \$15,000 is not so outrageous considering that students from several other colleges also had access to the phone code and contributed to the bill.

Also, if this phone code was supposed to be kept confidential, how did so many students obtain it?

Ronald Jackson, assistant director of Texas Agriculture Extension Services, said that A&M theorizes that the code was discovered by students who used computers to find permutations of numbers that worked for the code.

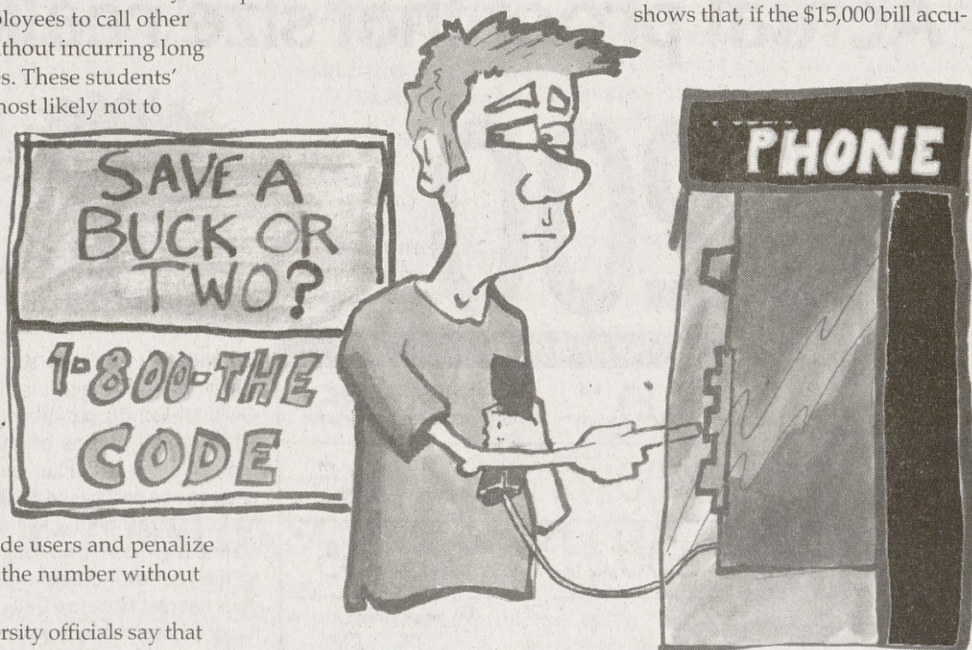
However, considering several students said the code was passed between friends and others noted they received a new number whenever the code changed, it is more likely that students got the number from a leak in the state employee system. Users would not have been able to get the code that quickly when it changed by blindly guessing with computer permutations.

his or her card, there is less of a chance for the numbers to be leaked to students. Making sure this system works effectively is now the priority for A&M officials.

The money that has been spent by A&M determining which students cracked the code is pointless and a waste of state funds. This entire situation would have been avoided if the code had been kept secret in the first place.

Instead of punishing students who stumbled on this code, the A&M should continue to prevent further illegal use. Pinpoint the perpetrators and punish them for breaking university policy a couple of semesters ago is not as important as stopping future problems.

In reality, this code did not do that much damage. A brief calculation shows that, if the \$15,000 bill accu-



BRANDON HENDERSON/THE BATTALION

Off-campus bonfire not the tradition

In response to the July 30 Associated Press article.

Does Will Clark truly believe that an off-campus bonfire will truly be a success? Assuming (quite illogically in my opinion) that this group can find funding without the University's assistance and a site on which to hold it, how exciting will the bonfire be without the Aggie Band, the Aggie football team, the Corps of Cadets and the Yell Leaders? None of these groups will participate due to their determined loyalty to Texas A&M, and I am sure that other groups will feel the same way.

While there are parts of President Bowen's decision that I disagree with, particularly the elimination of student cut, I support it because it is in the best inter-

ests of the world-class University I graduated from. I built four bonfires and watched them burn with my buddies in my time as a student because of my love and devotion to Texas A&M.

These students seem to say, "Screw the University, we're building a bonfire!" So much for Aggie Spirit.

Jay Koenig
Class of '98

I completely understand the desire to watch bonfire burn, however, let's not go maverick. All Aggies, current and former students alike, grieved for our fallen Ags and prayed for the recovery of the injured. Building a "rebel" bonfire is not going to heal old wounds, as the Keep the Fire Burning organization claims, but rip them open again by the controversy it creates.

Dr. Bowen made a compassionate, fair-minded decision,

and we should stand behind him. I charge those young men and women to support their University, and stan fast for two years until the tradition of bonfire is resumed.

Nancy Van Riper
Class of '95

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 014 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to:

The Battalion - Mail Call
014 Reed McDonald
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX
77843-1111

Campus Mail: 1111
Fax: (409) 845-2647
E-mail: battletters@hotmail.com

Cayla Carr is a junior speech communication major.