

athers
agendas

tury
using how to strengthen the role
of state or government. U.N.
a globalized world — an action
items to consider various goals.

Freedom from want
Nations must confront the
extreme poverty and
inequality among countries
and take action on:

- ▶ Debt relief
- ▶ Needs of Africa
- ▶ Bridge digital
- ▶ HIV/AIDS
- ▶ Divide
- ▶ Access to trade

ng the United Nations
▶ Structural reform
▶ Identify and build on core
▶ strengths
▶ Network with private and
▶ non-governmental agencies
▶ Improve interaction
▶ through technology

Wm. J. Casella, S. Hoffmann

certainly be welcomed
lers who have criticized
s as a threat to 30 years
rol treaties.

sts have predicted that
se the summit — and a
meeting with Clinton
re the United States to
missile defense proposi-
Beijing fears that the
shields will render
rowing arsenal of mis-
ce China into a costly

however, will have his
versies to deal with as
the Falun Gong spiri-
t stage continuous
ions against the Chinese
Beijing's crackdown on
part of the 91 demon-
strations this week.

ews in Brief

is refuse to

se American

ANGA, Philippines
Islam rebels holding
can hostage in a
Philippine jungle
Friday to exchange him
ected guerrilla.
Schilling, 24, of Oak-
if., ended a hunger
is being held in a heav-
d bamboo hut, said a
nt envoy. On Monday,
d they had arrested a
d man suspected of be-
the Abu Sayyaf rebels
sed him of taking part
ings on Basilan Island.
spokesman Abu
identified the man as
father, but refused to
for Schilling, who was
d Aug. 28.
bels will not release
or "even 10, even 100
dfathers," Sabaya told
Mindanao Network.
bels, who say they are
to establish an Islamic
the southern Philip-
ve insisted that the ar-
an, Ahmad Opao, be
ore they begin talks for
s release.

en, Jr.
ept.28"
der Gray
ight from
st Texas!
ct. 26"

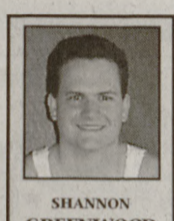
and Ryden
ng and Texas
sic meet

IS BACK AND BOLDER THAN
TODAYS MOST POPULAR MUSIC
V, AND MANY OTHERS. START-
WITH THE ENTERTAINMENT AND
V, VIVA LUCKENBACH, AND VIVA
T (512) 295-3300.

Last call for alcohol

B-CS bars should take hint from rest of state, close later than 1 a.m.

Imagine ... It is 1
a.m. The streets
of Northgate are
flooded with people.
Is there a street par-
ty? No — they have
just been kicked out of
the bars.



SHANNON
GREENWOOD

Meanwhile in
Austin, students from
another university are still partying for an-
other hour. That is ridiculous.

While a beer is being snatched from an
Aggie's hand, people all over Texas are
still enjoying theirs. At a school so famous
for gallons of beer consumed every year,
the bars close earlier than most other places
in Texas.

At a school where it is tradition to con-
sume an entire pitcher of beer when receiv-
ing one's senior ring, people have to go
home early. Why is that? There is no good
reason. Students have not made their voices
heard.

Austin, Dallas, Houston and even Lub-
bock bars stop serving alcohol at 2 a.m. be-
cause people in those cities voted for bars
to close at 2. In Texas it is legal for bars to
continue serving alcohol until two a.m., as-
suming that city has voted to extend serv-
ing hours until 2.

With more than half of the voting popu-
lation of College Station being in college,
the students would have no problem chang-
ing the law if they would register to vote
locally and make their views heard. The
vast majority of the student body would
benefit from this.

Students who are not 21 will want to
have the choice to stay in bars later in the
future. Students who do not frequent bars
in College Station would at least want to
have the choice to stay an hour later. Even
students who do not drink would benefit,
as dance clubs could stay open later.

Also, the bars staying open late will not
affect the late-night restaurant economy.
Laco Cabana will still be open when the
bars close.

One might ask, even if the law changed,

would bars choose to use this
privilege and stay open an hour later?
According to an anonymous
Northgate bar manager, they
would. People tend to arrive at
the bars at about 10:30 or later.
The bar's peak hours are be-
tween midnight and 1.

Bars would make enough
money to offset the cost of
staying open later. Bartenders
may not like having to work
another hour, but they would
make significantly more money
in tips.

It is absolutely ludicrous
that bars do not stay open till 2
a.m. in College Station.

One might argue that people
will get more drunk if the bars
stay open for another hour.
This is questionable. If people
leave a bar and still want to
drink, they will.

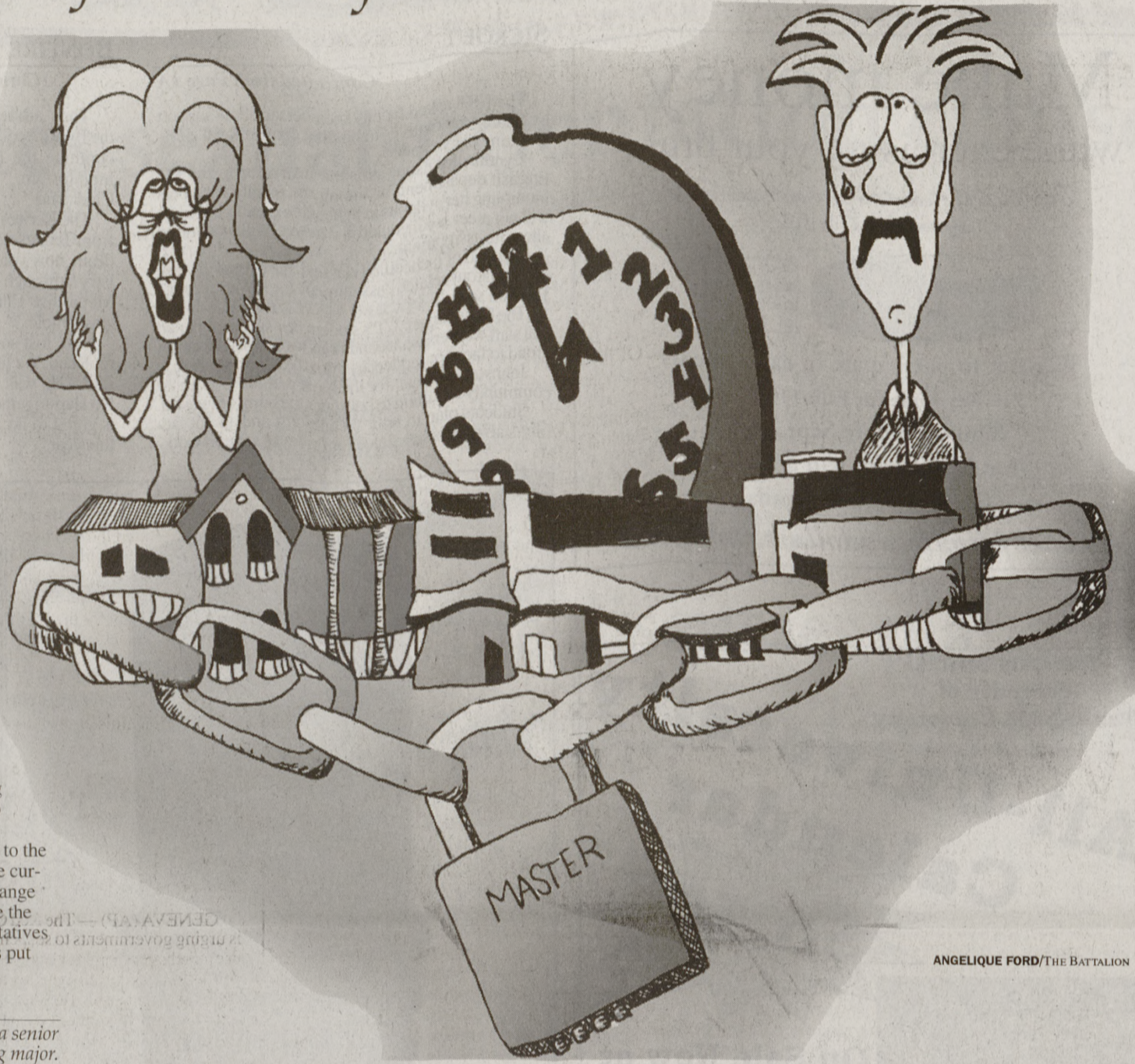
The only difference is that
people are still drinking at the
bars, making the bars more li-
able for peoples' irresponsibil-
ity. With all of the money at
stake, the bars would serve
drinks from 1 to 2 a.m. despite
this extra liability.

So the next time a bar kicks
someone out at 1 a.m., he or she
should not futilely gripe to the
bartender.

That person should do something
about it. He or she should register to
vote locally.

The student body should petition to
the city council to change this law. If the
current city council members do not change
the law for the people, students have the
numbers to elect their own representatives
that would make the students' views put
into law.

Shannon Greenwood is a senior
computer engineering major.



ANGELIQUE FORD/THE BATTALION

Percentile ranking misleading Top 10 percent ruling harms all students

On the surface it sounds
like a great idea. A stu-
dent does well in high
school, say the top 10 percent of his
graduating class, and the Texas uni-
versity of his choice greets him
with open arms and a smile. All of
his hard work paid off. Or did it?



JENNIFER
RAMBY

In 1996, a new state law gave all
students graduating in the top 10 percent of their high
school class automatic admission to any Texas college,
including Texas A&M University and the University of
Texas.

Many believed this new legislation was necessary in
order to maintain diversity in higher education institu-
tions after the Hopwood decision the same year ended
affirmative action in Texas colleges. To some, it has been
a lifesaver. To others, it has been a great disappoint-
ment.

Evidence shows that this law has not done much, if
anything, to meet its goal of countering Hopwood. At
most, it has served to drive qualified candidates of
Texas universities out of state and decrease the statistics
that have made A&M and UT what they are today.
Based on information reported in the Austin American
Statesman and the Houston Chronicle, one example is
St. John's High School graduate Christine Attia.

With a 3.8 GPA, 1520 Scholastic Assessment Test
(SAT) score and a diploma from a prestigious Houston
high school, it was surprising that she was not admitted
to UT's business school. George Mitzner, carrying a
4.49 GPA and 1470 SAT score from Bellaire High
School, also failed to receive acceptance. Both capable
students will continue their educations at out-of-state
colleges.

While SAT scores are hardly an accurate portrayal of
an individual student's ability, they deserve to be ex-
amined and compared with university averages. Since
1996, average SAT scores for both A&M and UT have
dropped, while grade-point averages (GPAs) and drop-
out rates have merely teetered around the norm.

UT accepted many students with SAT scores lower
than 900 because they met the top-10 requirement,
while Texas A&M placed many applicants with scores
in the 1200s on a waiting list.

Additionally, the percentage of minorities attending
the two campuses has not gotten the boost proponents
of the law had hoped. In 1996, before the Hopwood de-

cision, African-American enrollment in the freshman
class at Texas A&M was 3.6 percent. It is currently 2
percent. Hispanic enrollment dropped from 11.2 percent
to 9 percent in the years since the legislation.

Those attending difficult high schools should not be
punished because they endure greater academic chal-
lenges and face a greater risk of not being in the top 10
percent.

Also, schools around the country, as well as the state,
rank their graduates differently, making it impossible to
accurately compare two students based on GPA alone.
As a result, Texas institutions with formerly selective
criteria have to accept students who may not be as pre-
pared or driven to succeed as others.

The opposing argument is understandable. Since
Hopwood ended affirmative action, something must be
done to encourage diversity in institutions of higher ed-
ucation. The top 10 percent idea seems accommodat-
ing, since schools across the state represent all sides of
the spectrum.

Unfortunately, the law does not serve its intended
purpose. It is unfair and frustrating for a number of ap-
plicants, and its effects could be damaging. Imagine that
all students in the top 10 percent of every graduating
class of every high school in Texas have a "free pass" to
any college they wish to attend in the state.

If they apply to UT, A&M and Texas Tech, each of
those schools has to reserve a spot for them until they
choose which to attend.

Meanwhile, these schools are denying admission to
many perfectly suitable candidates in the top quarter of
their graduating classes. Many of these capable stu-
dents are forced to take their talents out of state to col-
leges that do not follow such a law, offering them large
scholarships for their academic excellence.

Eventually, the top-10-percenters makes his selection,
leaving the remaining three universities with one extra
spot to fill. However, now the pool of qualified stu-
dents has been depleted, and more and more students in
the lower percentiles of their class fill the gaps.

There is no easy answer to simultaneously maintain
a fair enrollment system and ethnic diversity. However,
it is clear that A&M has met a difficult obstacle early on
in Vision 2020. How can A&M manage to climb the
academic charts when it is forced to accept so many stu-
dents with mediocre academics?

Imaginary journalism | Media lacks methods of credibility, integrity

The world is slightly
off-kilter. Prime-time
television, which
used to provide the public
with its dose of fantasy and
imagination, is now obses-
sed with reality-based
programming.



MARK
PASSWATERS

The press — where the
public goes in an attempt to
get real information — has fallen prey to a similar
obsession.

Unfortunately for everyone involved, that ob-
session stems from repeated stories about events
that did not happen.

Peter Pan, Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny
must be chomping at the bit for their turn on
the front page of The New York Times. With
each passing headline, the American media
blurs the distinction between serious journalism
and sensationalism.

Two hot stories in recent weeks center on
events that never happened — the "murder" of
Princess Diana and the pill-popping, wife-beating
ways of former President Richard Nixon.

Stories about Diana were expected to pop up in
the press last week because it was the third anni-
versary of her untimely death. The stories that
appeared, however, were not remembrances of the
late princess, but of a lawsuit filed by Mohamed
Al-Fayed against the Central Intelligence
Agency (CIA) regarding the circumstances sur-
rounding her death.

Al-Fayed, the owner of Harrod's department
store and the father of Dodi Al-Fayed, the
Princess's last boyfriend, is convinced that "evil
and racist forces, working through the British secu-
rity services, murdered my son and Princess Di-
ana." In his lawsuit, Al-Fayed claims that the CIA
has information linking the British Secret Service
(MI6) to the crash and is helping in the cover-up.

The truth, however, is far less dramatic. The dri-
ver of the Mercedes that night, Henri Paul, was
drunk. He was not certified under French law to
drive a vehicle that was considered to be a limou-
sine. According to Diana's bodyguard, Trevor
Rees-Jones, Dodi Al-Fayed demanded that Paul
drive at high speeds to lose members of the pa-
parazzi who were tailing the couple. The Mercedes
entered a Paris tunnel at 120 kph — twice the post-
ed speed limit — where Paul lost control of the car
and crashed. End of story.

Not in Mohamed Al-Fayed's mind, however.

Through his attorneys, Al-Fayed claims that Paul
was not drunk on the night of the accident and that
some other person's blood was tested. According to
the Washington Post, Al-Fayed also claims that
Paul worked for the British secret service and that a
blinding flash caused him to lose control of the car.

Repeated investigations by many independent
groups have come up with no evidence to support
Al-Fayed's claims. The CIA categorically denies
any involvement. But Al-Fayed continues to pur-
sue his ghosts, and the press happily follows along.

That is, of course, when the media themselves
are not chasing ghosts. Following the lead of Irish
journalist Anthony Summers, author of The Arro-
gance of Power: The Secret World of Richard
Nixon, kicking Dick Nixon is once again fun for
the press. According to Summers' book, Nixon ha-
bitually used the mood-altering drug Dilantin and
was often incoherent.

Summers also claims that Nixon beat his wife,
Pat. In one instance, Summers quotes a reporter
from the Los Angeles area who had heard from a
friend that Nixon beat his wife so badly "just be-
fore or after" his 1962 loss to Pat Brown in the
California governor's race that Pat Nixon "could
not go out the next day."

Summers' brand of investigative reporting is
suspect at best. Almost all of his damning infor-
mation on Nixon comes from second- or third-hand
sources, which leaves the legitimacy of his infor-
mation very questionable.

Instead of asking questions of G. Gordon Liddy
or John Erlichman, Summers simply writes "some-
body said Liddy said" or "so-and-so heard from
Erlichman that." This information would probably
be dismissed from the work of most professional
journalists. Since Summers used such shoddy
methods, however, the media decided that it has
free rein to use them too.

Perhaps it is too much to ask of the press to
have it live up to standards such as using first-
hand information and verifying facts. It is not,
however, too much to ask to have it keep its fo-
cus upon real news.

Mohammed Al-Fayed's O.J.-like hunt to find
"the real killers" and Summers' lousy piece of in-
vestigative reporting do not fit the bill. Maybe if
something interesting were happening this year,
like a presidential election, these things would not
happen.

Mark Passwaters is a senior electrical
engineering major.