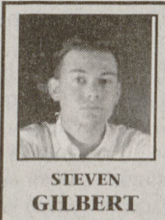


THE BATTALION

Daytime Television

Oprah offers quality, socially useful programming



STEVEN GILBERT

talk shows that glorify people's problems, ridicule the guests, and offer no solution at the end of the show. The shows promote the attitude that "My life may not be the greatest, but it is a lot better than those people's."

home," Winfrey said. In addition, Winfrey is a political force. Last month, she hosted both presidential candidates on her show. Interviewing politicians is not the norm for Winfrey.

women will determine the outcome of the election — Winfrey's audience is 76 percent female. Many women use different set of values when making decisions than men.

Ten years ago, it was unheard of for a presidential candidate to sit down on a daytime talk show to discuss entirely "personal" subject matter. When she invited the presidential candidates to be on her show, she decided to interview the candidates in an entirely non-traditional manner.

"The intention [of this show] is to break through 'the wall' of sound bites and 'practiced answers' to reveal the real man so you can decide who feels like the right candidate for you," Winfrey said.

As for the candidates, their appearance on Winfrey's show might have been the most important interview of their lives.

Another example of Winfrey's positive influence on America began in 1996 when she started on the on-air "Book Club."

Designed to "get the country excited about literature again," according to the official Oprah Winfrey website, every book that Oprah Winfrey has endorsed has become an instant best seller.

Her first selection, *The Deep End of the Ocean*, went from a run of 100,000 copies to more than 3 million. She has the means to vault a little-known author to worldwide recognition almost immediately.

Winfrey's greatest attribute is that she uses her show to promote philanthropy. Winfrey created a program that has raised more than \$3.5 million to provide college scholarships to students in need. She has funded 200 Habitat for Humanity homes, making it a point to have at least one in every television market.

Winfrey should be commended for her effort to make a positive change in America. She unselfishly uses her influences and resources to improve society. Public role models are most always rich in the financial sense of the word, but none are as rich in character as Winfrey.

Steven Gilbert is a senior speech communication major.



RUBEN DELUNA/The Battalion

Winfrey takes an entirely different approach. Her show takes the road less traveled by not only identifying problems in society, but solving them.

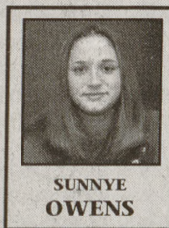
"Now, our mission statement for 'The Oprah Winfrey Show' is to use television to transform people's lives, to make viewers see themselves differently and to bring happiness and a sense of fulfillment into every

Traditionally, Winfrey has shied away from any involvement in the political arena. She normally uses her show to concentrate on humanitarian issues and problems by helping people help themselves.

Political analysts will agree that women make up the majority of undecided voters in this presidential election, and a candidate's ability to attract the support of

College: Is it necessary?

Many people believe it is necessary to get a college degree to be successful in life. For most children of the baby boomer generation, it is not a question of whether to go to college, but where to go to college.



SUNNYE OWENS

Many American college students do not realize that most of the world does not go to college. Although having a college degree has its perks, it is not necessary to have one in order to be successful or wealthy in the 20th century.

Obviously, Bill Gates would be considered by most to be a very successful businessman. Most people do not know he does not have a college degree. Television mogul Ted Turner also does not have a college degree.

In 1997, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that the average college graduate earns \$40,478, while a typical high school graduate earns \$22,895. There is an extreme difference between these numbers, but with a little technical training, a high school graduate can do very well.

Many people who have obtained a college degree are not prosperous individuals. Arizona recently conducted a study on the success of college graduates. Only 26.9 percent of the population in Arizona has a college degree. The study found that, in Arizona, an average person with a bachelor's degree makes \$29,756, and that an average person over 25 with a high school degree makes \$21,000.

There is a difference in these numbers. But in considering the amounts on the basis of one year of pay, a person with a bachelor's degree paid so much to obtain that degree that the person with a high school degree actually has more money.

This is not even considering the time a person spends obtaining a college degree instead of working at a full-time job.

Now companies are requiring employees, whether they have college degrees, to take on-the-job technical training before working for that company. According to Scott Lane, CEO of Oxford Lane, (a Colorado technical training school) some colleges that provide four-year degrees are teaching outdated technological skills.

Most technical training schools, like Oxford Lane, are teaching the latest technology that is necessary for people to carry out their jobs in a safe and successful manner.

Many employers are hiring high school graduates who have a lot of hands-on experience instead of a college graduate. Chris Watts, a public relations professional, is one example of a successful high school graduate.

He dropped out of college, enrolled into a broadcasting trade school and works for the Washington News Bureau of the Associated Press. Watts is certainly a success story. Most of the population looks at a bachelor's degree as a safety net, but it is really, or would a little technical training be just as beneficial?

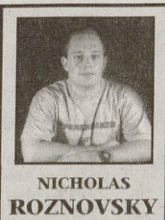
This column may not persuade any of its readers to drop out of college — that is not the purpose. It is just to point out that there are people out there who are happy, wealthy and prosperous without obtaining a college degree.

Although obtaining a college degree is an extreme amount of hard work and should be respected, Americans should also respect the individuals who do not have a college degree and have to work their way up in the world to achieve success.

Sunnys Owens is a junior journalism major.

Newfound Freedom

Recently freed Yugoslavia needs Western support to retain democracy



NICHOLAS ROZNOVSKY

Eleven years after the rest of Eastern Europe threw off the shackles of authoritarian rule and turned to democracy, the people of Yugoslavia are finally getting to join the party.

Over the weekend, protesters in the Yugoslavian capital of Belgrade took to the streets to voice their opposition to the negation of national elections by Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic. In a frenzied scene reminiscent of the last days of the Warsaw Pact, Yugoslavs marched in the streets, captured the parliament house, and seized control of the state television facilities. By the end of the weekend, Yugoslavia had its first democratically elected leader.

Although President Vojislav Kostunica has the support of the Yugoslav people, he will need more to overcome the obstacles facing his fragile nation and bring it into the circle of truly democratic nations. It is imperative that the new Yugoslavian government receive support from the United States and the West if it is to survive.

Kostunica knows that the future of his country is still very much in doubt. "Difficult times are behind us," he said in his inaugural address on Saturday, "but the days ahead also hold many trials."

He does, however, believe that the Yugoslavians can overcome their differences to secure peace and tranquility.

"My deepest political belief is that without democracy, there is no prosperity," he said later in his speech. He also urged "people who think differently [to] find ways to live together in one society."

Kostunica's dream of one society will be extremely difficult to realize. Although the majority of Yugoslavians did vote for Kostunica's party in the recent presidential elections and later forcibly elevated him to office, a portion of the population still supports Milosevic.

The most notable of Milosevic's allies was Serbian President Milan Milutinovic, who controlled Serbia's force of 100,000 state police until his recent resignation. Although Serbia makes up only half of Yugoslavia, the Serbian president is in many ways more powerful than the federal president.

One of the issues that threatens to tear Yugoslavia apart is what will become of ousted leader Milosevic. In an address on Yugoslavian national television on Friday, Milosevic conceded the recent election to Kostunica and announced his intention to "take a break" from public life before returning to the political scene, presumably as the leader of the new opposition party.

According to Western leaders, such a future for Milosevic is unacceptable. In separate statements on Sunday, British Foreign Secre-

tary Robin Cook and U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright reiterated that Milosevic must be deported to The Hague and stand trial before the United Nations War Crimes Tribunal.

Milosevic and a number of other Serbian leaders already face charges of genocide and war crimes committed in Kosovo. The tribunal also recently announced plans to also indict Milosevic by December for ethnic cleansing conducted in Bosnia and Croatia.

Kostunica, saying that he has more pressing concerns than what happens to his predecessor, has said that he will not turn Milosevic over to the U.N. War Crimes Tribunal. Given his already tenuous situation, Kostunica cannot afford to splinter his coalition over the Milosevic question.

The West, however, remains confident that Milosevic will eventually stand trial. "I have no doubt that there will be accountability [for Milosevic]," Albright said Sunday on NBC's "Meet The Press." "Yugoslavia will not be truly free until that happens."

A sizable portion of the Yugoslav people want Milosevic to stand trial at home. If the West forces the issue of Milosevic's deportation too soon, it could trigger the collapse of the new government. The United States and other powers must be careful not to push the Kostunica government too far.

Another issue facing Yugoslavia

is economic recovery. Suffering from years of economic sanctions against Milosevic's regime and the rubble left from NATO bombing campaigns, the Yugoslav economy is in shambles. To survive the coming months, Kostunica's government must receive aid from the West to keep its economy afloat.

On Monday, the European Union lifted bans on oil sales and air travel to Yugoslavia. A further easing of sanctions is promised

The most important component to Yugoslavia's continued democracy, however, is unified support from the international community.

once Kostunica establishes a solid grip on power and Milosevic faction is eliminated as a threat to Yugoslav democracy.

Although the lifting of sanctions is a step in the right direction, Yugoslavia will also need economic assistance and infrastructural development to endure.

An immediate concern is the clearing of the Danube River, a major international waterway closed to traffic because of bridges wrecked in the NATO bombing campaigns.

The most important component

to Yugoslavia's continued democracy, however, is unified support from the international community. Such unity has already been found lacking on the part of the Russian government, which refrained from joining the Western world in supporting Kostunica's claim to the presidency. Russia ultimately did, but only after it had become clear that Milosevic had lost his grip on power.

Albright called the Russians on the carpet Sunday, saying, "Frankly, they were late. They did not play the role that they needed to at the right time."

It is clear that Russian influence will continue to dominate Yugoslav foreign affairs. If Russia cannot join the Western plan for Yugoslav democracy, the Kostunica government may already be dead in the water.

In spite of all these questions, it is clear that Yugoslavia has a much brighter chance for democracy and freedom now than it did just a few weeks ago.

It was not so long ago that the position of democracy in East Germany, Poland and Romania seemed tenuous at best as well.

"I think it is really a historic moment," Kostunica told his fellow Yugoslavs on Saturday. If his government can survive the trials that face it, this past weekend will be but the first chapter in a history of democratic rule in the Balkans.

Nicholas Roznovsky is a senior political science major.

Mail Call

Article on age requirements overlooks current guidelines

In response to Sunnye Owens' Oct. 5 column.

Solely out of sheer, morbid curiosity, does *The Battalion* require its writers to do any research whatsoever? Sunnye Owens wrote a persuasive article ques-

tioning the morality of allowing children to participate in the Olympics, specifically in the area of gymnastics.

Her complaints regarding the age of participants in the Olympics seem a bit belated (give or take four years or so) considering the Olympics set a minimum age limit for participants this year. The Olympians were required to be of at least 16 years of age, ending the previous trend of increasingly younger (Read: more flexible and lighter weight) gymnasts and divers.

While Owens had a good point, it was simply a bit too late to have much effect. This would be a prime example of the need for increased editorial responsibility in journalism at TAMU, not simply regarding typographical errors, but also the factuality and content of articles.

Paul Springer
Class of '97

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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