sday, November 16, 2000

OPINION-

## acWhatever you say I am

## disgrace Protests at University of Illinois in response to Eminem performance absurd; forgetting free speech

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allegation He is known for his

e jury wa success in the music ind she may dustry and his constant exico, battle with critics and ther members of socitorely on ety over his inappropri-

police officiate lyrics. Eminem walks a fine line between using as baffle his constitutional right to freedom of eech and being called the Antichrist. is day that Controversy surrounds Enimem everydid our where he goes. His most recent visit to the A., keet University of Illinois campus was no exgangs and ception. The controversy over his perforon out the mance at the university began as a small discussion between about 10 students and

LUKE

MCMAHAN

the administration. nove the : A week after his performance, the issue as gained national attention. A student acwheen the twist group offended by the rapper's visit not only posted a petition with roughly 200 signane said. tures online at www.dayofsilence.org and loing in the presented it to administrators.

ent, another Even though the sold-out concert is over, ember. In the activist group plans to continue meeting n a susper with university officials, and members plan n. Liddyn to bring the case to court.

The group is accusing the university of condoning Eminem's hateful messages by ere convict bringing him to campus and profiting from ), and Lidt the concert

The activists' efforts are futile and mislirected. Despite the offensive nature of and one att Eminem's lyrics, he has a constitutional ight to voice them. Students of the university have a constitutional right not to attend. The group stated the main purpose of its ndcuffeds: efforts is to hold the university accountable for its statement that it prohibits discriminaon and harassment based on sexual orienation and gender.

> Nick Sakurai, the group's leader, and others are failing to realize that no one was

The issue of gun control divides Americans. From

those who advocate complete freedom of indi-

L viduals to own whatever firearms they choose to

bose who seek limitations on who can own certain

forcefully discriminated against or harassed. This was a performance on a public campus and all concert-goers attended on their own will.

Anyone who claims to have been subjected to discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender did so on their own accord.

In response to the criticism he has received from activists, Associate Chancellor Gene Barton said, "In the entertainment business, a presentation is always done that conflicts with some people's thoughts and behavior. I talk about providing diverse entertainment to the campus community and sometimes that entertainment isn't agreeable to other people.'

Barton seems to be the only one thinking rationally about the controversy. The fact that the activists have such strong feelings about the inappropriate nature of Eminem's material suggests they have listened to it.

Possibly they listened out of curiosity or perhaps they wanted to be able to better define what is so offensive.

Regardless, there are better ways to counter Eminem's vulgarity than taking on the university.

Publication, boycott, protest and speech are all forms of expression protected under the constitution. Activists could have used any of these venues to get in their two cents.

A public university is a place where cultures are brought together, ideas are shared and diversity promotes knowledge. Surely there are existing courses on topics that might offend some students.

These students, however, realize that these courses are not mandatory and they do not have to subject themselves to them. The case with Eminem is no different.

One does not have to be a fan of Eminem or even know who Eminem is to

Ungs Qualified to bear arms? Like drivers,

gun owners should earn license to operate, be held accountable

be able to see that this dispute is cut and dried. The activists obviously share a set of values very different from those of Eminem. These anti-Eminem students, however, must pick their battles wisely.

By taking on the university, they are in fact advocating an environment in which students would be subjected only to "appropriate" material.

This is an environment quite different from the real world and one that should have no place in a public university where diverse ideas are encouraged.

> Luke McMahan is a senior industrial distribution major.

> > Good Bull - Texas A&M

**ADRIAN CALCANEO/THE BATTALION** 

**Bull Board** 

ees improvised, despite adverse conditions, to continue to serve the day's lunch.

EMINEN

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In the Commons Dining Hall, workers moved the serving line near the cafeteria windows and served whatever food they could prepare without electricity.

A cold turkey sandwich is no match for chicken tenders, but considering the circumstances, any lunch at all was something to be thankful of.

Watching the employees run around in the dark to serve hundreds of students was impressive

ypes of guns, it is clear that there is little consensus on Just this month, voters in Colorado and Oregon 88 and: Passed ballot measures to require background checks 1990. Of firearm purchasers at gun shows.



NICHOLAS ROZNOVSKY Americans are allowed to own guns without any sort of licensing or guarantee of safety training.

It is harder to drive a car in 47 states than it is to own an instrument whose express purpose is to injure or kill.

In Texas, only citizens who choose to carry concealed firearms are required to have a license. In fact, state law allows those convicted of a felony involving an act of violence to possess a firearm as long as they keep it at home. Texans who keep their guns at home can do so without any

training or licensing whatsoever. cond Amendment calls

students are used to seeing the lights on campus turned off for Silver Taps, but on Monday when the power went out in a number of oncampus buildings, students and staffers were caught off guard.

However, one group shined without lights - A&M's Department of Food Service.

As the thousands of students who have meal plans already know, being denied even an oncampus meal can be hell when there are only 30 minutes before the next class.

rights a sures won by large margins in both states. Nearly three-fourths of Colorado Noters voted in favor of the background checks.

The background checks are aimed at reducing the number of firearms sold to convicted felons and people who are mentally unstable. Unfortunately, crimes committed with guns often involve people who have never served time in prison or who have not been certified as being nentally unstable.

Background checks may help reduce the number of firearms ossessed by irresponsible individuals, but they will not eliminate them entirely.

who had It is harder to get to servinga drive a car in 47 less er states than it is to own an instrument in June Whose express purpose is to injure or kill.

> Oddly enough, a common sense sotion that can help make sure guns are the hands of only properly trained individuals has been ignored by the majority of ne nation.

As the gun lobby has often said, "Guns don't ill people. People kill people."

It is time to start comprehensive licensing and regisration, not of guns, but gun owners.

In every state of the nation, car owners are required to egister their cars with the state transportation authority. In very state, drivers are required to receive standardized training, and in most cases, pass a est concerning automobile operation and afety

Each state goes to great lengths to ensure that every driver on its roads has received a minimum level of instrucion on how to use his or her automobile in a safe and proper manner. Currently, only three states and the District of Columbia require gun owners to be licensed. 3 Certain metropolitan areas, such as Chicago, also require ome degree of registration and licensing, but on the whole,

millions of citizens to own and use guns without any formal training does not constitute a well-regulated militia; it constitutes a total lack of regulation whatsoever.

Even opponents of gun control are advocates of gun safety training. The National Rifle Association (NRA), the largest and most influential gun rights group in the nation, has several programs designed to teach gun owners and users how to use firearms in a safe and responsible manner.

LICENSE TO KILL

According to its Website, the NRA has more than 38,000 certified instructors teaching gun safety classes around the nation. Since 1988, the group has also spon-

sored the Eddie Eagle GunSafe program to educate children about gun safety.

In June, a Scripps Howard poll of Texas adults found that three-fourths of the respondents favored registration of all handguns in the state, a figure consistent with similar surveys conducted in other states

A poll of high school students released in August by Hamilton College found that 96 percent favored handgun registration.

At the same time, 81 percent supported the right of citizens to own firearms, showing that young Americans believe in a mixture of personal freedom and government regulation

Registering handguns is the first step. Making sure those registered firearms are used safely is the next step.

Licensing gun owners would no more infringe upon Second Amendment rights than licensing of automobile drivers prohibits the right to travel freely.

Car owners do not fear they are on a list that will be used by the government to single them out and seize their cars, but pro-gun lobbyists have been quick to foster that fear among the American public concerning firearm licensing.

The Second Amendment has been consistently upheld by courts across the country. Like any other right guaranteed by the Constitution, it should be exercised in a responsible manner.

The registration of guns and licensing of firearm owners may not end the problem of violence in the nation, but it is a common sense step whose time has come.

It is time state governments make owning a gun as big a responsibility as driving a car.

> n Nicholas Roznovsky is a senior political science major

Hungry students in the Commons Lobby did not have go without as the Food Service employ-

Fan in support of coach Slocum

I think it is time head football coach R.C. Slocum got a little respect from the student body.

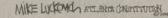
He is constantly criticized by the student body for being too conservative and a loser in the 'big" games.

But let's be honest here - if he calls a pass play, which falls incomplete, he is criticized for not running the ball.

If a running play is chosen, which falls short, he is criticized because he did not call a passing play. It seems that he just cannot appease the majority of footballguru students here.

The fact is that a coach with an average of nine wins per season is doing something right, and I am tired of hearing otherwise

I for one, tip my hat to Slocum



and greatly appreciated.

- Eric Dickens

- Mail Calland look forward to seeing him

back next season. Gig' Em!

Ryan Rosborough Class '02

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:

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WANT ME TO TAKE YOU TO THE POPULAR VOTE WINNER, OR THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE WINNER ?...