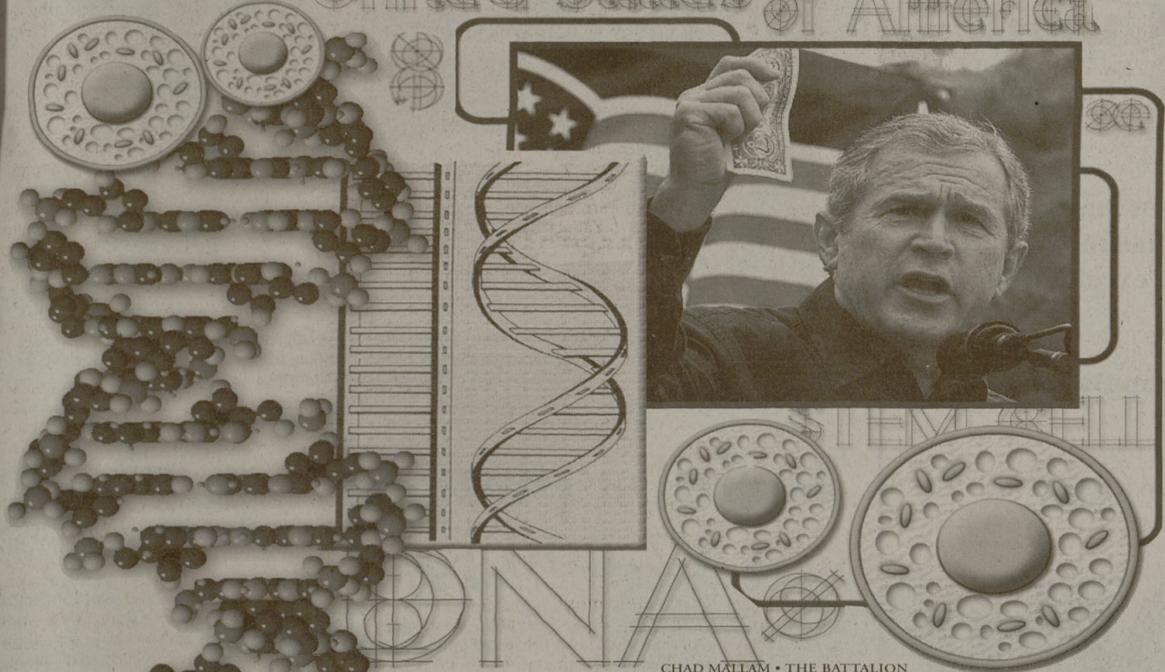


Cures on the horizon?

United States of America



CHAD MALLAM • THE BATTALION

Bush should encourage more stem cell research

Since Thanksgiving morning in 1999, 12-year-old Katy Lyon has awoken to a shot. Her days are carefully monitored. She was an active, young girl, showing no signs of illness until the age of 11. Then her parents began to notice a severe drop in weight, accompanied by complaints of fatigue and stomach pain.

Thanksgiving morning, the Lyons found their daughter lying in bed on the edge of consciousness. "She was very listless and barely able to lift her arms," said Maureen Lyon. "We rushed her to the doctor, where he ran a blood test and immediately sent her to the hospital." Hours later, the Lyon's would find out that their daughter, like almost one million other American youths, had nearly lapsed into a coma caused by juvenile diabetes. Katy's case has a happier ending than many. Now she enjoys an active life at Cain Middle school in Rockwall, Texas. The only hindrances to Katy's

activities are the glucometer and insulin that she must have available at all times. "However, promising new technology is now on the horizon that could potentially cure juvenile diabetes and many other illnesses, including Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease and spinal cord traumas.

Now, great benefits from stem cell research are within our grasp. The key lies in tiny cells formed inside a human embryo after about the sixth day of development. These cells are extracted and put in a Petri dish where they replicate, a process that destroys the embryo. These cells, called stem cells, harbor so much potential because they have the ability to develop into any of the more than 200 types of tissue found in the human body.

Stem cell research should be explored to its fullest extent. Many organs lack the ability to regenerate themselves after sustaining an injury, and stem cells potentially could be used to grow entire replacement organs or repair damaged ones. This new

breakthrough is seen by many as the greatest step in medical history since antibiotics. President George W. Bush recently made a decision to federally fund research on 60 stem cell lines available from different labs. This decision was one of the most important of Bush's young administration that promised not to fund any research into medical advances that would require the sacrifice of human embryos. He delicately sidestepped this pitfall by only funding research on already-created stem cell lines, stating that no funding would be given to newly created cell lines.

Critics from both sides have voiced their displeasure. "Some stem cell uses will require diversity greater than 60 cell lines," said Dr. Diane Krause of Yale University in response to Bush's decision. At the other extreme, the Roman Catholic Church issued a statement saying that any benefit gained from the destruction of human embryos is unacceptable. Embryos that are used for stem

cells are taken from fertility clinics where they have been held for parents decide whether to discard them. The unwanted embryos are then burned. Time magazine reports that hundreds of thousands of such embryos are slated for destruction — their medical potential to be simply tossed away.

President Bush should give these embryos over to research. Their fate is decided and the deed is all but done. Why not gain whatever benefit we can by plucking them from the fire to save the life of another or potentially improve the quality of life for all? In their destruction, we lose the opportunity to open the eyes of the blind, restore the minds of the insane and cure the problems of the sick. Opponents of this research would cast away this treasure chest before opening it to the world. While stem cells hold the key to curing many diseases and benefits beyond anything ever discovered, they will never be able to heal the eyes of those determined to keep them shut.

Tim Dyll is a senior electrical engineering major.

Yates support is misguided

The Houston chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) is rallying support for Andrea Yates, the Clear Lake woman who drowned her five children on June 20.

According to the *Houston Chronicle*, the group is forming the Andrea Pia Yates Support Coalition to raise money for her defense. A candlelight vigil will be held the night before a competency hearing on Sept. 12 to determine if she is fit to stand trial. NOW believes that her husband, Russell Yates, also should be held accountable for the murders because he knew she was mentally unstable. Yates faces capital murder charges in the deaths of three of her children — Noah, 7; John, 5 and Mary, 6 months. She is not yet charged in the deaths of Paul, 3 and Luke, 2. She has pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity.

However, it is NOW that has lost its mind. This irrelevant shell of an organization should condemn Yates just like any other murderer. Perhaps she was, as the organization contends, severely depressed as she held each child's head underwater in a bathtub. But depression is not an excuse for committing cold-blooded murder, and it is outrageous for feminists or anyone else to offer excuses for her.

The Houston chapter of NOW, as well as those who would support their efforts, do a grave disservice to justice and children everywhere. Shortly after the killings, columnist Anna Quindlen explained in the pages of *Newsweek* the reaction of some fellow feminists she had been discussed the murders with. She wrote of their reactions, "And the look says that at some forbidden level she understands. The look says that there are two very different kinds of horror here. There is the entirely imaginable idea of the killings. And then there is the unimaginable idea of going quietly bonkers in the house with five kids under the age of 7." She goes on to write of the "insidious cult of motherhood."

Imagine the response to a man, just after beating his wife beyond recognition, who tries to offer a similar excuse or explanation. Yates' lawyers claim she had a prolonged history of mental disease, including postpartum depression.

As a result, her supporters want her husband criminally prosecuted. A charge against Russell Yates is not likely because there is no evidence that she or the children were abused or neglected by him. Houston Attorney Brian Wice said in the *Houston Chronicle*, "He may be condemned, and rightfully so, in the court of public opinion, but there is no legal basis for him to stand trial in a court of law." He probably could have been more supporting at home. But the sad facts of Andrea Yates' actions remain, and her husband had no way to look into the future. Raising several young children at the same time is not an easy task.

But every year, thousands of parents across the nation work through the stress. They also reap the rewards of selflessness that only raising children can provide. There is no evidence of mental instability, and even the severest depression should not absolve guilt. Five children are dead, and she is responsible. Andrea Yates deserves no sympathy, and NOW only chips away at what little credibility they have left when defense funds are set up and vigils are held in her honor.

Harris County District Attorney Chuck Rosenthal has announced he is seeking the death penalty for Andrea Yates. Justice demands it; Yates deserves to die for her crimes. She held the heads of five children underwater until they drowned, methodically laying the bodies across a bed before bringing in the next child to its death. To offer aid and comfort to Andrea Yates is far more insane than Andrea Yates ever was. Her husband, who has lost his five children and his wife, is the one who deserves a support coalition.

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EDITORIAL

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A MATTER OF RESPONSIBILITY

Leadership involves accountability and the establishment of high standards. It is unfortunate when a student leader fails to meet the expectations of their position. President of the Memorial Student Center (MSC) Council is one of the most high-profile and important of these student-leader positions, as this individual oversees a budget that exceeds \$5 million.

For this reason, the allegations of improper conduct against MSC Council President Josh Rowan are troubling.

Dr. Bill Kibler, associate vice president for student affairs, has completed an investigation to determine if Rowan engaged in inappropriate conduct while on an overseas, University-sponsored trip. Yet the information has not been made public. Even worse, allegations have been made by credible sources that Rowan encouraged misconduct among the very freshmen to whom he was supposed to have been a model and mentor.

If the allegations are validated, the standards of accountability that should apply to all A&M student leaders must be enforced.

But the process by which MSC committees conduct such an inquiry is overly bureaucratic, secretive and rife with conflicts of interest. A special committee appointed by the MSC vice

president for human resources is only the first of three separate bodies that may review potential wrongdoing by Rowan.

The special committee will report its findings to the MSC executive committee, of which Rowan is a member. If this group deems it nec-

If the allegations are validated, the standards of accountability that should apply to A&M student leaders must be enforced.

essary, the matter will go before the full MSC Council. This entire process is conducted behind closed doors.

Even if Rowan is removed, no justification will be made public. Aggies deserve better than this. An unnecessarily inefficient and closed process is not conducive to finding the truth.

The dust has barely settled from the administration's last attempt to hide its examination of a student leader — Senior Yell Leader Boo Boo Davies, whose academic eligibility was ques-

tioned in May. Such elusive tactics must not be employed again.

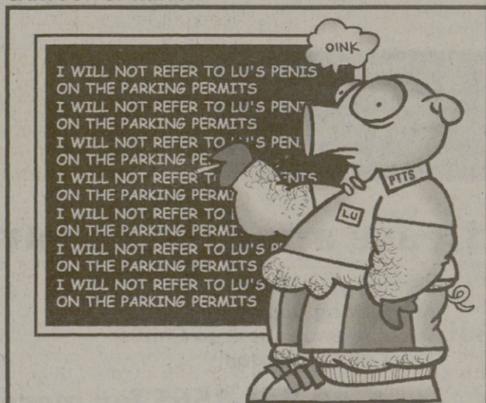
Rowan, like every other high-profile student leader who might act irresponsibly, owes the A&M community an explanation. Hiding behind a curtain of secretive procedures and bureaucratic processes is no way to embrace the responsibility necessary of the position.

He should speak publicly to the issue and acknowledge wrongdoing or categorically deny the specific allegations leveled against him. In addition, to maintain the credibility and integrity of his position and the process by which he is examined, Rowan must recuse himself from any deliberations on this matter by the MSC Executive Committee, of which he is a member.

Finally, the report and decision should be public record. A&M students have a right to examine the actions of those who are chosen to represent them. Rowan oversees one of the most important parts of this campus for the students. In many ways, the MSC really is their living room.

Aggies need to know about potential wrongdoing by their student leaders, and should be able to view the reports, whatever they find. After all, secrecy and a lack of accountability breed corruption.

CARTOON OF THE DAY



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