

## An immature selection process

Board of Regents behaved poorly in choosing A&M's next president

There exists a regime that drains its contributors of their wealth and gives them little say in return. It is an insulated oligarchy bent on social engineering and goes against the individual merit system. Its members are so despotic as to have no qualms in silencing their detractors. Its majority has overlooked the general welfare for personal politics and is rooted in a system destined to fail. This is not the Axis of Evil. The aloof Ivory Tower that has brought arrogance and stupidity down on other Universities for decades has surfaced in Aggieland, manifested in the recent presidential selection process. The group of Texas A&M System regents behind this trend has no place at A&M.



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and employee of the Texas taxpayer. Is there any wonder Gramm declined to publicly announce his candidacy?

The other side of the selection process, the selection committee, was a laughable excuse for a representative democracy. They made no secret that they would choose someone to carry on

President Ray M. Bowen's Vision 2020. Bold leadership other than the status quo was not wanted. Once revised to the point where integrity can be found in the selection committee composition and procedure, the Board of Regents must be more tightly bound by their decision.

However, this time that did not exist. Its single largest flaw was the over-reliance on faculty opinion. While faculty input is valuable, its utter dominance of the selection process made a mockery out of open consideration of all possible candidates. While Gates has agreed to champion Vision 2020, he has also vowed to increase faculty control of the University and increase pay raises. There is little wonder why when faculty outnumbered everyone else on the selection committee, 18-6. Any committee that could pass over interviewing the candidate most qualified academically, politically and emotionally is less "Blue Ribbon" and more "Bull Corn".

Those educators who claim a certain former candidate for the U.S. presidency would make a poor choice are practicing deceit on level with academic fraud. Some faculty have actively shown how high they carry their noses by expressing in the local media their contempt with alumni opinion.

Robert Gates, however, deserves the benefit of the doubt that Gramm was denied. Gates may be the very "agent of change" which he has been described as. If he proves himself unwilling to be anchored by his predecessor's tunnel vision or the group that selected him, a Gates statue may be the next erected on campus. He should be commended for the way he has conducted himself by not participating in the fray.

The real losers in this hullabaloo have been those that the system was created to serve — the students. As students graduate, they will remember how little former students were respected and will give less to the next generation of Aggies. The alumni must be valued for more than just their donations. And the asset of Phil Gramm, whose unabashed love for A&M was returned with partisan backstabbing, might be lost if the message sent by the regents is heeded.

The crimes of arrogance committed by the Board of Regents against those who employ them must not go unpunished. Those hiding in their Ivory Towers without the best interests of A&M in mind must go.

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RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION

## NY doctors should learn best abortion techniques available

The abortion debate has become one of the most controversial topics in present history. Recently, the argument over abortion has become even more heated in the wake of the New York City public hospital system's decision to expand upon its abortion training program. Despite the protests of pro-life advocates, this change in policy will merely allow those who choose to have abortions to do so in a safer and more accommodating manner. As long as abortion is a legal procedure which requires medical personnel, it is the responsibility of public hospitals to supply the public with doctors who can provide such services.



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acceptable practice. However, it is not the responsibility of the New York public hospital system to determine whether abortion should be legally offered to American citizens. That is the domain of the U.S. government.

In the meantime, it is the responsibility of the public hospitals to provide the public with all medical services they require, which often includes abortion. According to The Associated Press, about 1.3 million American women have abortions each year, making it one of the nation's most common surgical procedures. As a result of this demand, Americans must have a way to safely obtain these services from their local medical professionals.

Olivia Gans of the National Right to Life Committee criticized New York's plan because residents would have to opt out of the program instead of specifically requesting to be included. She said this policy placed pressure upon young doctors to separate themselves from the others. However, she underestimates the divisive nature of the abortion debate.

Virtually anyone who pays attention to current events realizes that the abortion debate is not one which will be resolved anytime soon. People on both sides of the issue feel strongly and have logical arguments to support their position. For a medical student to choose not to learn abortion techniques would not make them an outcast or a renegade, it would merely make them one of a large number of individuals who have moral or religious objections to abortions.

By making abortion training a part of their medical program, the New York public hospital system is providing the public with a larger number of doctors who are capable of fulfilling all their needs, including those for abortions. Other public hospital systems would be well advised to follow New York's suit. After all, the hospitals that train our future doctors have a responsibility to train their students in all the legal procedures their patients will need. Through the proper training of doctors, hospitals make it easier for women to gain access to these services.

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## New Harvard policy fails to properly protect women

Recently, the faculty at Harvard University approved a revision of the university's policies involving sexual misconduct, assault and rape allegations. The measure, believed to be the first of its kind in the United States, limits the number of claims the university looks into. The allegations that are not accompanied by either an eyewitness or physical evidence at the outset will not be investigated.

University officials say the new policy will result in the refusal to examine cases that are likely to end without resolution. Students will benefit from not having to go through the trying process of an investigation and the campus will save resources. If the administrative board does refuse to investigate, students can take their cases to the police as an alternative.

This attitude and change in policy could be the start of a dangerous trend. Refusing to look into claims just because they may not be resolved is a weak decision. The main goal of university investigations should not necessarily be resolution; another goal should be raising awareness.

The claim that the new policy will benefit students and relieve their frustration is ridiculous. Limiting involvement will only make the victims' feelings of shame and isolation worse, and due to Harvard's prominence, other colleges may follow their example and adopt a similar policy.

Rape is the most common violent offense committed in the United States; one-third of women will be raped in their lifetime, and over twenty percent of these women are raped between the ages of 20 and 24. Most rape cases go unreported due to the nature and attitudes surrounding the crime. Rape is about power and humiliation, and many victims undeservedly feel they are to blame for their attack or that they will not be believed.

Incidents on college campuses are particularly difficult due to the confined setting. Victims may be forced to see their attackers on a regular basis due to classes or common friendships. Almost half of the women attacked at college never tell anyone about the



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assault. During the 2000-2001 school year, Harvard University only had seven cases to investigate; declining to hear allegations that do not have an eyewitness or physical evidence will further discourage victims from reporting their cases. Instead of making it more difficult for young women to come forward, universities should encourage incident reports.

Universities should not simply defer their difficult cases to the police. The criminal justice system is a huge disappointment when handling sexual assault and rape cases. Only two percent of the women raped ever see their attacker spend a day in jail, and the average length of time between an attack and an arrest is 18 months. Hundreds of thousands of rape kits sit on police department shelves because authorities lack the funding to process them. Police investigations, due to limited resources, should not be the only option a victim has. Colleges must acknowledge the crimes committed on their campuses and do all they can to prevent them.

Some see the new policy as a way to bring fairness to the school judicial process, but it is forcing the burden of proof entirely onto the victim. When, according to the Justice Department, only two percent of reported rape cases are false, women who report their attacks deserve the benefit of the doubt. In fact, by the time the average rapist is arrested, has raped between eight and twelve women. Refusing to investigate all claims puts more women on campus at risk.

Universities have a unique opportunity to impact the attitudes about rape. Simply stating that sexual misconduct is against student rules is not enough. With a large portion of both victims and offenders attending college, campus officials must become more involved instead of backing away.

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