

Timid impotence plagues students

Last spring, when the campus landscaping plans were being finalized, The Battalion was trying to get pictures of the plans and student government leaders were making a last ditch attempt to change parts of the plans.

Several meetings were arranged for student leaders and Battalion reporters to view the plans in the office of General Alvin R. Luedecke, executive vice president in charge of planning and construction.

The landscaping package included the Northgate wall, dining patio, arches across the entrance to the Corps area and the north mall plans. Although it is often said that students work closely with the administration on campus plans and policies, the student leaders were surprised by what they saw. Some objected to the wall, others objected to the arches over the Corps area entrance and the landscaping in front of the Corps area.

Luedecke said he did not think major changes could be made, but the students should make their complaints formal in letter form. The letters were written—and no major changes were made.

During an argument with The Battalion over immediate release of the plans, President Jack K. Williams said it didn't really matter what the 18,000 students attending the university at that time thought of the plans because most of them would be gone in four years. The editorial board finally agreed to wait two weeks.

The Battalion was duped along with the student leaders who believed that the administration would heed their letters of protest.

The Battalion learned a lesson.

And it seems student leaders should have learned a lesson also: Student Government offers students a voice without power. There has to be a more effective structure. But the lesson was lost during the summer. Student Government is back whispering the will of students to a few friendly ears of the administration who in turn whisper requests to their superiors—and no major changes are made. The voice of the students is seldom raised for fear it might deafen or at least shock those ears so accustomed to the quiet manner of Texas A&M.

Student body President Steve Eberhard told the Battalion that his view of Student Government's relationship with the administration has changed. He no longer sees Student Government in an adversary role. He now thinks people are very cooperative.

"We're all working for the same thing," said Eberhard. "Just because the administration doesn't agree, doesn't mean it isn't listening. A lot of problems turn out to be non-problems when they're talked over. They're just differences in perspective. They respect us and trust us. When we disagree we can talk about things." He also says the administration has had an increasing tendency to accept Student Senate recommendations over the past five years.

Granted—Student Government has a good track record of accomplishing what Student Senate passes. But it is not because Student Senate is a body of power, rather because Student Senate confines its activities to those areas which it knows the administration will accept.

A timely example is the issue of liquor on campus. Resident Hall Association President Greg Magruder has asked to use Quonset huts owned by the university for student organization parties. He has also asked that liquor be allowed in the area. The plan cannot be approved until the current policy banning liquor from all university land is changed or modified. "Drinking, or having in possession, any alcoholic or intoxicating liquor on campus," is a violation of university regulations punishable by dismissal or suspension. Enforcement of the rule was dropped last year but the rule remains.

Student Government has refused to push the change because it doesn't want to back anyone into embarrassing positions. Specifically—administrators have asked student leaders to cool it until the Board of Directors is ready to accept the idea. The ever-cooperative Student leaders do not want to force their administrative buddies into a hotbox between the students and the Board. So the party area plans will have to wait.

The people that "respect us and trust us" so much aren't ready to grant us our rights under Texas constitutional law (assuming we are 18-years-old). And Student Government remains unwilling and powerless to advocate, yes, a major change.

Student Government as a viable channel of power for the students is a farce. It is merely a recommending body whose proposals follow the normal route of any recommendations through the university bureaucracy. Student Government should be re-structured to make it an effective recommending body with power—so next time the university is planning physical additions or policy changes, the president cannot ignore the opinions of the existing student body.

Here is a suggestion: Cut the senate in half and give all members voting rights on the highest policy-making body of the university—the Academic Council. Separate the senate from the executive branch so that it is not dominated by the president and the five vice presidents. Give the senate the power to pass resolutions representing the student body and charge the executive branch with moving those resolutions through the university bureaucracy and implementing them if they are passed.

The Battalion

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Your Man at Batt

By WILL ANDERSON

Six tickets for the TCU game withheld by "the girl in Window 3" prompted a graduate assistant to bring a question to The Battalion.

He was first in line Monday morning for the tickets allotted graduates and seniors. "When I got my tickets I found the ones for Seats 9 through 15 on Row 3 were missing.

"When I asked her about it she said she had not meant to save them; they had been put aside by mistake."

The next person in line was Dale Yarborough, a student in one of his classes. "I asked him to get the tickets so he could trade with me," the graduate said. "When he asked for them she acted like she didn't know what he was talking about and he couldn't get them."

It was possible she was saving them for someone, he said. "It could indicate that sleeping outside G. Rollie White Coliseum isn't worth it if all you need is a friend in the ticket window.

"All I want to know is what happened to those tickets."

"I don't know what she did with the tickets," said Yarborough, a senior zoology major. "I'm not complaining, anyway. It's the guys who got pushed back to Row 6 who really had a complaint."

A belated solution was offered Tuesday afternoon by Mrs. Euleta Miller, athletic ticket manager. "The fellow should have brought it to me or Mr. Groff (Wallace C. Groff, athletic business manager) right then. We're always available.

"We'd have gone out to that window with that person right then and everything would have been straightened out. It's too late four or six hours later."

Groff's and Miller's offices are inside the coliseum near the ticket windows.

Miller took me to Groff's office. Groff said he wanted to talk to the girl before he said anything. "If someone is saving tickets I need to know about it," he said.

Groff called the Battalion later.

"The girl claims she just put the six aside by mistake," he said. "I don't have any reason to doubt her word. She's not a student and neither is her husband so it's not likely she saved them for friends."

The girl in Window 3, Cindy Hounsell, spoke then. "You have to see my side," she said. "It was so early and I just made a mistake."

"I was upset about the mistake when the next student asked for his tickets and he didn't make himself clear enough."



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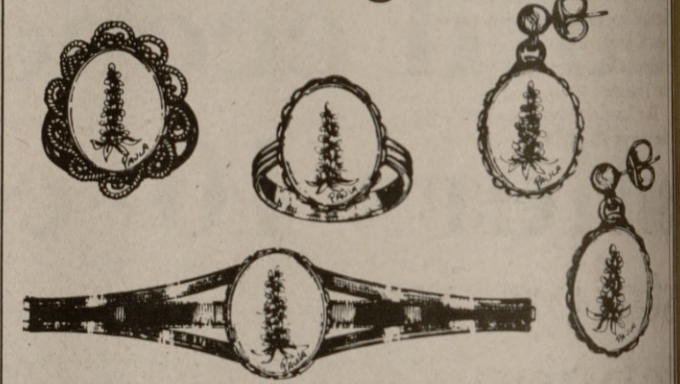
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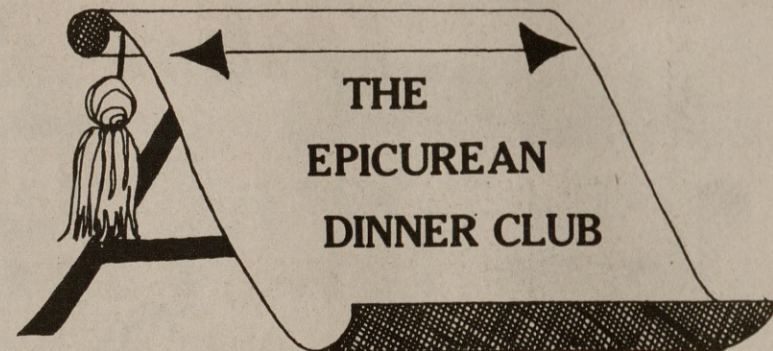
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