

Viewpoint

A cadet, a sword and a football game

SMU student admires devotion

To Dr. Frank Vandiver:

I am writing to you for I do not know how to get in touch with the Officer to the Day that was involved in the SMU cheerleader incident and was hoping you would forward this to "The Battalion."

Although I don't agree with the Officer of the Day unsheathing his sword, I would like him to know that I was impressed and moved by his devotion to his school, its traditions and his duty. (The ability to stand up for what one believes in is a quality that I sadly find lacking in today's society.) I wish that the student body at SMU would show one half the spirit that he showed. I would like to thank him for restoring some of my faith in mankind.

I would also like to apologize to the whole of TAMU for the rudeness shown to you by our cheerleaders. Lastly, I would appreciate the chance to say "Gig Em Ags. Beat the ever-livin', ever-lovin' h--- out of 'em."

Cathy Koeltz
Junior Biology Major
Southern Methodist University

Actions do not reflect true spirit

Editor:

In response to the letter of Mr. Imes concerning the saber incident in Saturday's game, I feel there are a few points to be made. First, I am the first to agree with Mr. Imes that there is an intangible bond among all Aggies. I cannot, however, accept the contention that Cadet Hood's behavior personifies this special spirit. The only thing I can think of that Hood's behavior personifies is the hair-brain mentality that will keep Texas A&M from being viewed as a progressive institution of higher education.

Second, the traditions of this school are deep-rooted and respected, but we must learn to discern between tradition and irrational actions. If upholding tradition meant shooting anyone who stepped on Kyle Field, I doubt if the tradition would be very respected.

Third, I feel that Mr. Imes is incorrect in his assumption that those who do not condone Hood's actions are two-percenters. If a survey was taken, we would most likely find Mr. Imes and Cadet Hood among an elite group dedicated to the preservation of Seanderthal behavior.

Lastly, I just want to remind all who support Hood's cause that our sacred traditions are intended to serve a purpose. They

should promote that intangible bond, unify us as a student body, and build character in us as individuals. They should not bring our school unneeded ridicule or embarrassment. If we cannot gain from the observation of Texas A&M's traditions, maybe we should re-evaluate them.

Brent Taber '83

Hood was just 'doing his job'

Editor:

In regard to Pete Glover's letter and Ritchie Priddy's article in the Nov. 2 Battalion, we don't see what all the fuss is about. These people seem to believe that Greg Hood drew his saber with intent to kill, which is surely not true. Hood was just doing his job.

It is obvious that in this case "please leave the field" would not have worked. After all, the SMU cheerleaders knocked the cadet to the ground, TWICE. Cheerleaders have not been allowed on the field in the past, and they knew they shouldn't have been there Saturday. Also, the danger was not the unsheathing of the sword in his hand. (This is evident in the picture on the front page of Monday's Battalion.) The cheerleader did tackle him so aggressively as to tear his uniform.

As for the megaphone incident, this was a harmless act similar to activities taking place at colleges and universities everywhere.

I commend the Corps of Cadets and Greg Hood for showing other schools just how important traditions are at Texas A&M.

Jim Tate '85
Davis-Gary

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by 59 other signatures.

Hood's last stand

Editor:

This is an open letter to Mr. Hood. As I read the account of "Hood's last stand" in the Eagle this weekend, a few questions were raised in my mind that perhaps you can answer.

Do you instinctively clear cafeteria lines that, in your opinion, don't move "fast enough"? Do you charge through crowded bookstores and classes with saber drawn?

I had always presumed that education was designed to raise people above the brutish, unthinking "instinct" stage. But, then again, looking at your expression in the Eagle photographs as you kicked the cheerleader, maybe not.

M. McLaughlin
Bryan

Cadet acted as an individual

On behalf of the Corps of Cadets, I would like to explain our feelings about the SMU incident and to correct a few errors made by Professor Dunning in his letter Tuesday.

I would like to offer an apology for Cadet Hood's actions and the embarrassment that Texas A&M has suffered because of the incident.

We are embarrassed and want everyone to realize that Greg acted as an individual and in no way do his actions reflect the attitudes of the Corps nor should the Corps be included in the sweeping generalizations of condemnation.

Greg acted rashly and realizes that his action will result in some form of University discipline. I hope that we all remember however, that Greg is still an Aggie and should be treated as such. I do not condone his actions, but neither do I wish to see him treated like some blood-thirsty killer who wants to turn Texas A&M into a Kent State.

Professor Dunning is a very gifted writer and there is a lot of merit to his letter that I accept with an open mind. It is true that we spend a lot of time and effort building the bonfire and that grades suf-

Kelly Castleberry Corps Commander

fer as a result of it. We are actively doing our best to solve this problem by limiting workers on the stack to mostly juniors and seniors.

There are, however, a few errors in his letter that I would like to correct with my comparatively feeble pen. The bonfire may seem meaningless at a first glance if one only considers the time and materials used to construct it. The bonfire has many intangible benefits that wouldn't be realized if it were not built.

Professor Dunning suggests that only the Corps participants in the building of the bonfire. The bonfire is a massive task that requires the cooperation of all Aggies, as the Corps is too small to build it alone. It is very common to see c.t.'s alongside guys from Puryear, Dunn,

Davis-Gary, Moses, etc. and OCA, wiring, hauling logs and building the bonfire together as an Aggie team. Through teamwork, we succeed in a task that neither group could accomplish on its own.

With regard to our mistakes, I admit that we are human and are sometimes going to slip and fall. But it was the rainy day Saturday that makes us appreciate today's sunshine, the flat plains of Texas that contrast the mountains of Colorado and the apathy of most school's students that makes me grateful for the spirit here at Texas A&M.

Our mistakes point out what is right, and cause us to appreciate a job well done. As you are well aware through your study of history, it is not the critic sitting in his lofty chair of judgement above the masses who counts. It is the man in the arena who struggles, sweats and knows both the bitter taste of defeat and the satisfaction of success that makes your history books worthy of attention.

As Aggies and members of the Corps of Cadets we strive to represent the best Texas A&M has to offer, realizing that we must continue to improve those areas in which we fall short.

Cheerleaders started violence

Editor:

First of all, I want to say we support Greg Hood not because he drew his saber, but because he is an Aggie. It may have been wrong for him to draw his saber, but we do not believe it was his intention to stab an SMU cheerleader. He appeared to be using it just as a cop would use a billy club to prod people out of the way. Also, it was not Greg Hood who started the violence, it was the SMU cheerleader! The lame excuse of one of the SMU cheerleaders, saying he looked up and saw boots and a sword coming at him, is a pretty weak reason to jump up off the field and attack Mr. Hood. If he is so easily frightened, then maybe he should not be a cheerleader standing in front of 60,000 people. He also did not seem to be too scared when he pushed Greg Hood down.

As to the remarks of Marcy Boyce and Ritchie Priddy, we only assumed that they know absolutely nothing of the fierce pride and honor the cadets have for Texas A&M traditions. We did not see Marcy or Ritchie try to remove the SMU cheerleaders from Kyle Field. Also, Ritchie stated that he did not want people to think of him that way. What way is that? As a bald, military, fight-in' Texas Aggie cadet? Well that's tough because the school came from the Corps of Cadets. Most of the students were in the

Corps for the first 80 years of the school's existence.

In the advice given to the students by Governor Coke, he stated to "stand by the right even to the sacrifice of life itself and learn that death is preferable to dishonor." Don't you think it was a dishonor to be pushed to the ground twice in front of all the Aggies? It does not matter if he is a c.t. or not. If SMU cheerleaders or anybody else think they can shove down and push around a Fightin' Texas Aggie in Kyle Field, then what they will get is a fight!

Thomas Burns '84

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by 16 other signatures.

Actions sign of immaturity

Editor:

Well Ags, what are we going to do? The eyes of the entire state and some of the nation will be closely watching Texas A&M to see just how we handle the situation that occurred on Saturday afternoon.

Texas A&M is an excellent university that is envied by many. This explains the

great attention we get every time we screw up, and screw up we did on Saturday. I don't blame Mr. Hood for his intentions to uphold tradition, however, the manner he chose to do so was totally uncalled for and a gross exhibition of immaturity. All I ever hear about is Aggie traditions and how they should be upheld and respected by all. That's fine Ags, but what about other schools, like SMU, and their traditions? How can we expect other schools to respect our traditions when we don't respect theirs? How many of you have tried to run onto the field of Memorial Stadium in Austin during a t.u. halftime performance? Come on Ags, it's 1981, let's not be hypocrites.

I hope that the Corps of Cadets does not condone Mr. Hood's behavior. I hope that this is not an example of the type of leadership the Corps instills in its membership.

This entire incident was unfortunate for A&M and Aggies everywhere. I feel Mr. Hood should be punished for his actions. If he is not, the entire Corps, as well as the rest of the University, will lose the respect we all have worked so hard to obtain. A military officer is supposed to be disciplined and his or her actions should be governed by appropriate military discipline.

Don't be shocked by SMU's reactions, rather be shocked by Mr. Hood's reaction. Try wearing the shoe on the other foot Ags, and see how you would feel.

Thomas J. Byrd '82

Saber editorials provoke criticism

What about the 98 percenters?

Editor:

I feel that the Battalion has poorly represented the 98 percenters here at Texas A&M in its coverage of the "saber incident" of Oct. 31. Cadet Greg Hood was berated by his hypercritical opposition, but we Hitler Youth who wholeheartedly support blind military action have received no room in the paper's columns for our stance.

I personally congratulate Greg. Not often in the career of a c.t. does he face the challenge of warding off savage cheerleaders armed only with a harmless sword. He responded honorably, drawing his Freudian symbol, waving it frantically, and letting the barbarians know who was boss. A triumph for the Corps of Cadets and all that for which they stand. Whatever that is. Furthermore, I believe that the administration should use the incident as a paradigm for future actions. Let's get back to the basics of yesteryear that made this college what it is today. Arm every c.t. with a blade. Hell, give 'em an M-16! Can you imagine the respect we'd gain from that? Then maybe we could annihilate those bastard two percenters and faggots!

Dave Spence
Sophomore English Major

Add compassion to vocabulary

Editor:

Concerning the article written by Marcy Boyce:

To begin with, we believe the cadet's actions last Saturday were wrong and that he deserves any and all disciplinary actions that result from them.

Your column however was totally out of line. The last thing he needs right now is for you or any one else to get up on their soap box and chastise him for his mistakes. He knows now that his actions were wrong and that he will have to take full responsibility for them.

What he does need is a little compassion from his fellow Aggies. For he is not the first one of us to make a stupid mistake, nor will he be the last.

Miss Boyce, in case the word compassion is not in your vocabulary, might we suggest that you look it up in a dictionary. We are sure that it will improve your vocabulary greatly.

James J. O'Connor '79

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by seven signatures.

Article is sword in Hood's back

Editor:

I wish to state that the column written by Marcy Boyce and printed last Monday was, in my opinion, extremely tacky to say the least. Her column showed all the tact and

grace of the cadet that she so cruelly crucified.

I am not saying that I support Hood's actions wholeheartedly, but I don't believe he deserved the vicious treatment that he received. It has come to my attention that whenever an author really plans to inflict damage upon an idea that he dislikes, the most brutal way that he can treat it is with sarcasm. The late James Thurber even called sarcasm the saber of literature. So Boyce appears to have thought the best way to show her disapproval of Hood's saber-wielding incident was to take her pen in hand and, literally, cut him down in his tracks. Her "holier than thou" attitude and total disregard for Hood's personal feelings made me want to dump my dinner all over her article. She showed her obviously superior maturity by not only making a laughing stock of Hood, but the Corps of Cadets (the repeated "Mr. Cadet" and "his flawlessly polished boots" - please!) and all of the respect and dignity deserved by a memorial like Kyle Field. So now that Boyce has shown everyone how mature and tactful she is, how much she cares for our Corps of Cadets and in fact, many of the traditions that this University is based upon, we, the ignorant peasants, may again rest at ease in the fact that another great wrong has been righted and another sinner repressed. And think Ags, while Hood is already facing so much adversity, it is a fellow Aggie who has twisted the saber in his back.

J. Norman Naylor
Lacy Hall

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by 85 signatures.

Editorials should not generalize

Editor:

I have just read the two editorials and one letter to the editor concerning the "saber incident" at the SMU game. And whereas I fully agree that the actions of the student in question were reprehensible, I would like to take exception with some of the implications made in those editorials. Time and again words like "soldier" and "Sir Cadet" were used in reference to the offending student. No mention was made of the fact he was from Dallas. (We all know Dallasites are hot-headed.) One reference even mentioned his "flawlessly polished boots."

It seemed as if they were rebuking the Cadet Corps and its traditions as much as the offending student. No credence was given to the fact that all his actions were contrary to his military training - instead it was made to appear as if his actions were all the result of his Corps membership. Broad generalizations and sweeping stereotypes of this kind are not very becoming of budding journalists.

The real tragedy here is that most of the people who read these editorials will now think that all journalism students are quick to generalize and ready to stereotype the members of a large group due to the actions of a few. The truth of it is that I know several journalism students who never generalize or stereotype. But, due to the hasty words of a few, the reputation of the Battalion and the entire Department of Communications will have to suffer.

Next time they should think before they pull their pens from their scabbards.

Pete Normand '71

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

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Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, show the address and phone number of the writer.

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