

# Warped is a 'state of mind'

by Ann Ramsbottom

Battalion Staff

"Creating cartoons can be both a fun and difficult job," said the author of Warped. "Your best guiding light is to keep yourself happy."

Scott McCullar, creator of the daily Battalion cartoon — Warped — said that the purpose of his cartoon was for his and others satisfaction and to provoke thought through editorial comments.

McCullar, now in his third year of producing Warped, admitted that he was very fortunate to be cartooning for the Battalion.

"Timing has played an important role in getting this position," McCullar said. "The opportunity just happened to open up."

"Working for the Battalion has been a tremendously valuable experience and an unusual one too. Not many papers support their own cartoonist," McCullar said. "In addition, we're unrestricted in the material we use."

McCullar said that he felt fortunate because he could enjoy more freedom drawing for The Battalion then with a syndicate.

"In a syndicated cartoon, you're so far removed from local happenings," he said. "In the Battalion it's mine completely. I can experiment with editorial, single panel, graphic design and artwork."

Cartooning is an important power, McCullar said. Editorial news and opinion are presented in an easily read form. "Readers get the point without even knowing it," he said. "It's eye-catching and you more readily read comments that you might otherwise overlook in a column."

It takes little effort for McCullar to come up with cartoon messages. "Ideas become habit," McCullar said. "There are so many things that happen ... I just single out the best. The idea must be good enough for me to go through the agony of drawing."

McCullar's cartoons usually take from one-and-a-half to two hours to draw. He still considers himself a developing artist and admits he is a little slow.

"My ideas are part fantasy, part dreams and neat ideas," McCullar said. "Things that spring out of bull sessions with friends."

"Not everyone has a knack for cartooning," he said. "A good idea can more than make up for a poor drawing, but a good drawing can't make up for a poor idea."

McCullar tries any number of characters with names and appearances taken from people he knows or would like to know.

"My cartoon mold is probably a combination of Garfield and Funky Winkerbean," McCullar said. "Warped describes a sense

of humour."

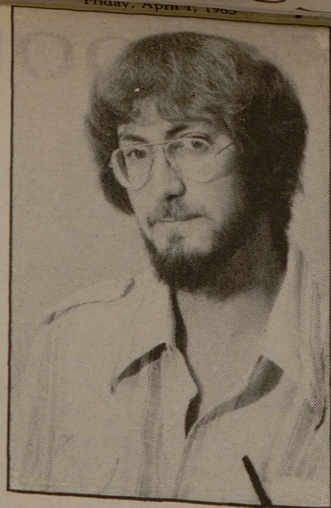
McCullar confessed that he had received some complaints but said that they helped keep him alive and humble.

"I have kept the critical letters-to-the-editor in my scrapbook," he said. "I don't get many compliments because cartooning is an anonymous trade."

Although McCullar gets some compliments from friends, associates and people on the staff,

the biggest compliment for him is to see his cartoon hanging on someone's bulletin board. It means they empathized enough with the cartoon that they shared his belief.

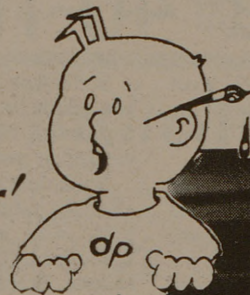
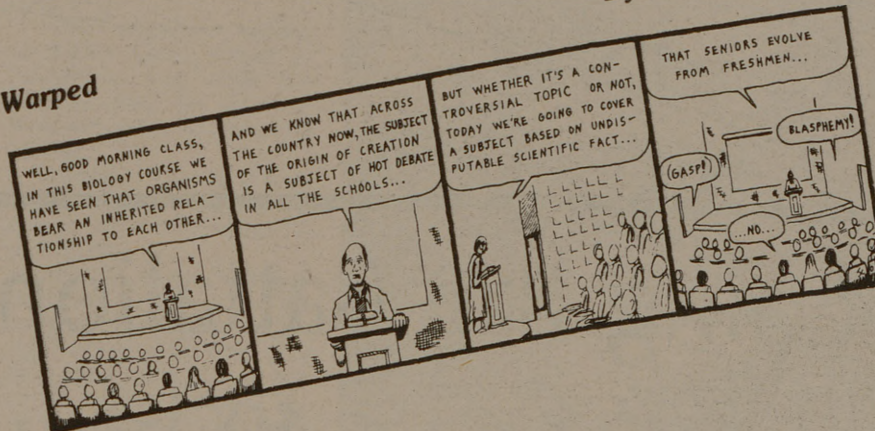
McCullar's first book — "The Vest of Warped" — a collection of his strips is now nearly a year old. The collection of the best of Warped was done primarily for the exposure not the profit, McCullar said.



Scott McCullar

By Scott McCullar

## Warped



# 'dp is the sixth yell leader'

by Ann Ramsbottom

Battalion Staff

"I attended Texas A&M over a hundred years ago and decided then that that I wanted to be a cartoonist, so I applied at the Battalion," said Don Powell, author of dp. "Jim Earl (Slouch) got the job, and I didn't."

Powell, director of business services at Texas A&M described his slow debut into cartooning in his ever-witty way.

Powell got his first cartoon into print as a student editor and cartoonist for "The Commentator", a University publication for the College of Arts and Sciences. He then unsuccessfully applied for a cartooning position on The Battalion and later reverted to one-shot cartoons in various publications.

It wasn't until 1977 that Powell began the dp series. His inspiration to do a sports cartoon came as a result of his strong support for Aggie sports and his feelings toward the sports cartoon that was being used at the time. Powell felt that the other cartoon was very poorly done.

Thus, dp was born. Though the character of dp was not to appear in all of Powell's cartoons, the cartoon series would run in The Battalion twice a week during football and basketball seasons.

Powell developed the four-fingered, short-limbed character whose initials are his own to

look like a cartoon-version of himself as a kid. But the rest of his characters have been greatly influenced by former Dallas Morning News sports cartoonist, Bill McClanahan.

McClanahan, designated the "father of the Southwest Conference cartoon mascots," illustrated the league and its teams in a refreshing style.

The character of dp has developed from Powell's own personal philosophy.

"We never lose," Powell said, "We just run out of time."

dp is most noted for his strong Aggie support. His primary purpose is to encourage Aggies to support Aggie athletes.

"dp is kind of an extra yell leader," Powell said, "maybe the 6th man on the yell leader squad."

"Athletics are very important to a major university," Powell said. "I'm really concerned that more people don't come to basketball or baseball games," he said "We're all family and need to be there, especially when the team is outsourced. I go to the games to help the team win — I'm a part of it."

Powell originally wrote his cartoon anonymously.

"I've always felt strongly that there's no telling how much good you can do if you don't care who gets the credit."

The biggest drawback with Powell's original lack of identity was that he never got any feed-

back. Still, today many people don't know who Don Powell really is.

"My secretary's major duty is to tell me what a cute cartoon dp is each week," Powell said.

Ideas for Powell's cartoon come rather easily.

"I usually reject more of my ideas than I use," Powell said. "As far as the art work, I can pretty much draw what anyone else can draw."

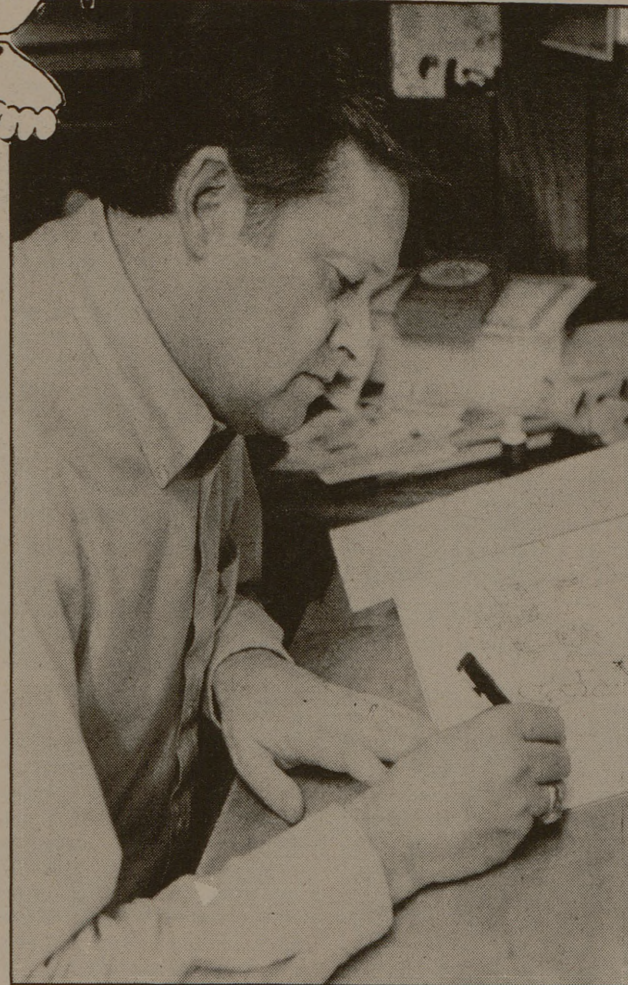
Powell explained the time his cartoon was censored because it portrayed an Aggie at a psychologist's booth, much like Lucy's booth in peanuts. The cartoon could not be used because it looked too much like Schultz's version.

Powell's favorite cartoon themes involve the explanations of how the Aggies can still win the the championship, no matter how far behind in the conference they are. Powell also enjoys doing cartoon series.

"Drawing the cartoons is basically hard and intense work," Powell said. "I wish I could do it all the time. In fact, I'd do it eight hours a day if I could."

Besides being a means of communicating ideas, cartooning has become a hobby for Powell. He explained that at home he had shelf after shelf of cartoon books.

"The most satisfaction I get out of cartooning, however, is



Don Powell

Frank L. Cristlieb

when someone says they enjoyed a cartoon and I made a good point." Powell said. "Especially when the comment is made by an athlete."

Powell concluded that he might someday put his cartoons into book form. The year that the Aggies had a championship football team — of course.