

# opinion

## Why don't students speak out anymore?

(Editor's note: Marc Rogers is a doctoral candidate in educational psychology at Texas A&M.)

by Marc Rogers

During these tumultuous times, when conflagrations are erupting throughout the world, America's college campuses

### reader's forum

are amazingly free of controversy and disputatious behavior.

Whatever happened to the deep soul-searching and penetrating insights that were (are?) the hallmark of a college education?

Being an "elder" statesman on campus (33 years young), I more often than not long for the anachronistic 1960s, where every day was emotionally and mentally charged and charging.

I am dumbfounded by the apathy and insularity that pervades American universities today. Are there no more Don Quixotes willing to venture forth and save the Dulcineas of the world from the miasmic and pernicious influences of avarice, hate and aggression that seem to have their icy-cold fingers around mankind's jugular, just waiting for the opportune moment to snuff out life on earth as we now know it?

This harangue was occasioned by a statement a friend expressed to me over dinner. Pondering on the events of the day and weekend past, she exclaimed, with more than a trace of obvious disgust, that Texas A&M students seemed more preoccupied with the score of the Dallas-L.A. Raiders football game than with the events that had recently transpired in Lebanon.

Instead of midnight vigils permeated by heated polemics and strained vocal cords, Texas A&M students proceeded to class, safe in the Panglossian view that "all is for the best in this best of possible worlds." How provincial, gauche and pathetic!

Texas A&M students seek to avoid controversy like Europeans in the Middle Ages sought to avoid the Bubonic plague. How can Texas A&M become a world university when it enters the fray long after the combatants have finished doing battle?

To be a leader means to enter the abyss of the unknown, not by re-acting but by en-acting. To cite just one example: American leathernecks are now conspicuous by their presence in Lebanon, El

Salvador, Honduras, Grenada and the Strait of Hormuz (gateway to 25 percent of the world's supply of oil).

The only hotspot in the world that is currently devoid of U.S. Marines on maneuvers is Southeast Asia, an interregnum that President Marcos of the Philippines is sure to fill in the imminent future.

But here at Texas A&M, our mettle is tested by those stalwarts who dare to do their traipsing on the MSC grass. For a school so steeped in military tradition and valor, the national holidays of Memorial Day and Veteran's Day pass with nary a whimper of discussion or reflection.

That (so-called) vaunted fighting Texas Aggie spirit seems to be confined to matters of a trivial and almost sophomoric nature, rearing its moribund head in the waning moments of a football game or at the "last call for alcohol" announcement at the Texas Hall of Fame.

I am not advocating a campus Putsch reminiscent of those that created such divisiveness in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

What I am optimally seeking, at a University-wide level, is some sort of meaningful dialogue that cuts across the different departments and majors on campus to form a coalition of opinions that can be promulgated to the world as the "voice of Texas A&M University," a voice whose proclamations and pronouncements on domestic and international issues and scenarios will bear heeding and responding to.

At an individual level, I support discussions and decisions achieved informally by the Socratic method, a method whose modus operandi is based on systematic questioning of another to reveal his/her hidden ignorance and/or bias in addition to eliciting a clear expression of a truth known by all who are present.

The former proposition will provide Texas A&M the manna it needs to pursue (and acquire) the cerebral giants (Nobel Prize winners in physics) it so avidly seeks, speaking to them on a level that they can understand and identify with (incisive intellect and intracollegial polemics), rather than at a level which they reject (offers of Money).

The latter proposition will serve a dual purpose, enabling the individual Aggie to be a citizen of the world while simultaneously keeping the prospectus particular to his/her persona.

Why, with any luck, the Aggies might even join the rest of the world in welcoming in the 21st century.

by Aggies is that they have so much integrity and esteem for their school and don't want its reputation ruined. Maybe you should go to t.u.

M. Weaver '84

### Originality needed

Editor:

I salute you! You are the first person in a few weeks that put anything original in the opinion section of The Battalion.

After a while I must say, it gets boring and even silly at how a one-sided opinion can draw replies, counter-replies, counter-counter-replies, etc., that are usually as equally one-sided and silly. More often than not, the only thing many of the replies have going for them is the fact that it is easy to criticize someone's personal opinion while they are not there to respond on the spot.

Letters should, maybe, reflect other points of view and be interesting to read — stimulating the natural thought process — not attacking another person's point of view. Be original in the future. Submit your own opinion and not an attack on someone else's. Everybody, after all, has the same right to a separate and different opinion. To attack a person's opinion and state opinions of that person — in my opinion — is not showing any degree of intelligence, but rather showing us that you are — in your opinion — superior to the rest of us.

Remember, this is a world class University. Let's let each other be entitled to his own opinion. How about replies being enlightening and equally as informative in the future?

Bob DuBuisson '87

## Letters

### Soviet trip defended

Editor:

I would like to respond to Forrest Jones' letter on Oct. 13, criticizing Dr. Betty Unterberger for attending a historical conference in Russia.

Since you submitted your opinion to the University newspaper, Mr. Jones, I assume you must have some vague notion of the value of academic thought. This may be presumptuous on my part, though. I would like to know just what you think would be achieved by Dr. Unterberger snubbing her invitation to the conference? In my humble opinion, absolutely nothing. The conference in question is one of historians. They will be discussing things never before broached with Americans, and therefore our participation is vital.

The KAL incident was tragic, and unforgivable. Believe it or not, Forrest Jones, those historians did not do the shooting. They, like Dr. Unterberger, have devoted their lives to peaceful pursuits. Let's not stop them from making this world just a little more civilized.

Ann Todd

### Gays reconsider

Editor:

I am writing this letter in reply to my feelings and perhaps the feelings of my fellow Aggies about the gays at Texas A&M.

I am sympathetic toward gays because it is true they may not have chosen their particular disposition, and thus are ridiculed frequently.

However, that is one of the consequences of being gay and if you feel uncomfortable you should seriously try to become a normal human being again and, then, becoming an Ag. There will always be talk behind your back. And instead of expending your energy trying to be accepted as you are, why don't you use your energy to become what God created you to be?

Perhaps the reason you are ridiculed



## The truth about Grenada

by Dick West

United Press International

WASHINGTON — Several music-lovers have asked if the Caribbean island of the United States invaded last week is the place the famous song was written about.

The answer is no. The island is Grenada, pronounced "gruh NAY duh." Note that its first vowel is an "e." And the accented middle syllable sounds like a negative vote or the noise a horse makes.

Although Grenada may be the title of all sorts of calypso, reggae and bossa nova tunes, the song in question is "Granada," pronounced "gruh NAH duh."

Geographically, Granada, whose first vowel is an "a," is a Spanish province, once a Moorish stronghold.

It is true that Christopher Columbus was sailing out of Spain when he discovered the island. Only he called it Concepcion.

The name Grenada was applied by post-Columbus Europeans, for reasons that escape me. Perhaps they were thinking of grenade, pronounced "gruh NAYD."

The shape of Grenada does vaguely resemble the configuration of a hand grenade. The islanders, however, are called Grenadians, not Grenadiers. And they mostly speak English.

More likely, Grenada was named for grenadine, a bar syrup flavored with pomegranates. As a matter of fact, it is the southern anchor of an island chain called the Grenadines.

If, however, any pomegranates are grown on Grenada, that fact was not mentioned in any of the reference books I consulted. Grenada's crops run mostly to bananas, cocoa, cotton, limes and sugar cane.

True, the island produces mace, which is the name of a weapon of sorts. But Grenada's mace is a spice made from nutmeg, which grows in abundance there. So let's not try to read too much into that.

Some Americans seemingly have gotten the impression that the storming of a golf club at Augusta, Ga., convinced President Reagan of the feasibility of the invasion.

If one man could take five hostages while the president was on the links, im-

agine what 2,000 Marines could do that line of reasoning goes.

The notion the Grenada is bigger than a golf course is however. And it has much to be hazarded.

The island measures 21 miles north to south and 12 miles from west at its widest point. Surely, you could cover its 133 square miles in a golf cart. But you can play more without going 21 miles. They play longer.

It has been said that some hole-in-one Augusta National course are the average player would have hitting the fairway with a rifle.

OK. So it also is a fact that U.S. carry rifles. But it might be more point to draw any conclusions from

More significant may be the president's golf score is being like it was a military secret.

Some day, we may know how the golf strokes the president took in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. Meanwhile, don't forget that like Reagan, is spelled with two "an" e's.

## Why is Joe taking 'nukee' course? I always thought French was fine

I saw an old Joe Radium the other day. He was hidden behind piles of dusty books in the library.

"Hey, Joe! You look pretty bad. What happened?"

He looked up from the books and replied that he had been up all night studying for a nuclear engineering test. That puzzled me, since last I had heard, he was a French major, so I questioned him.

"Why are you wasting your time with a nuke engineering class? It's one of those silly courses that only sissies and preweds take. Are you looking for your Mr.?"

"No," he replied sheepishly. "I just wanted to take something for me. Boy! You should have heard my dad yell when I told him I wanted to stay here an extra year."

"And my mom. Poor old mom just broke down and cried. She demanded to know why I was letting such a good career like French go down the tubes. I attempted vainly to explain, but she only she claimed down enough to tell me that if I just tried to enjoy French I would have a job after I graduated."

"Mom got really desperate and then pointed to the neighbor's house. 'Look at Tom,' she screamed. 'He got a computer science degree last year and he still can't

find a job. Do you want to end up like him?'"

I felt pity for poor Joe. It must have really torn him up, since his brother found a ludicrous job as a Russian major.

bonnie langford

Then I asked him how he ever managed to convince the people in his department to let him take nuclear engineering courses.

"That's another sad story," he replied, looking as if he was about to shed a few tears.

"I started sneaking a course here and there when I was a sophomore. I really thought nobody would notice what I was doing, but they did. My counselor sat me

down that spring and asked me what was going on.

"I explained the first six hours of my life and they bought that, for the end of my sophomore year they got suspicious. They demanded to know what all of the experimenting was and I knew I couldn't fool them any more and broke down."

"It was awful. They demanded either drop these 'nuke e' courses or I get out of French."

"That's when I knew what I had to do. I went to the 'nuke e' department and explained my situation. They understood. Why, they took me in and saved me. So now I'm a nuclear engineering major with a second degree in French."

This really astounded me. I had if he was worried about what would happen after he graduated with that attached to his degree.

"I'm not really worried. I'll be later. Right now I'm just trying to get an education I want."

### Slouch By Jim Earle



**The Battalion**

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