

opinion

Letters: Sign stealing 'worse' than lying

Editor:
This letter pertains to two articles in the Nov. 7 issue of The Battalion. The two were both on the front page. The first article was about "Buddy" Brown being tried for an honor violation. In this letter Preston Abbott said that "Brown hurt our image, but we'll get over that." I from the beginning thought the Brown incident was too blown out of proportion and perhaps it was a nice gesture of Abbott's part to say the above about Brown.

The next article I read was the four cadets getting arrested for stealing Austin signs. I think it is good to have such "decorations" on the bonfire, but until I read the third to the last paragraph my opinion was unchanged. In that paragraph good old Preston Abbott said, "The thought never even crossed my mind as to where (they) came from."

Now let's get this straight, it's not okay to tell a lie, but it is to steal signs — which carries a far more harsher punishment by the law than the later. It is quite convenient for ignorance to play a part when it comes to the Aggie bonfire, but when it comes to a person's reputation it (ignorance) is not even thought of.

David D. Driskell

Crime motives argued

Editor:
You realize of course this is utterly ridiculous. Clarence "Buddy" Brown lies to hide his mistake in judgement and Corps Commander Preston Abbott says Brown should be shot because a Corps member should not lie, steal, or cheat.

Last Friday four cadets were arrested for stealing Austin road signs for the bonfire. Preston Abbott was quoted as saying "the thought never even crossed my mind as to where (the signs) came from." With all the seriousness that his words deserve I respectfully submit that Preston Abbott should be shot for criminal stupidity.

Are we so hypocritical that we would ruin a person's reputation for one lie yet glorify four others for the "Aggie tradition" of stealing signs to decorate a transient bonfire? At least Brown's original motives were good. He thought he saw a rape in progress. On the other hand these other four cadets traveled a hundred miles for the express purpose of stealing.

The original controversy has been turned into a farce. Does the Corps have a double standard? Perhaps it is the rest of the student body that has a double standard because it encourages such acts. Maybe everyone concerned should just own up to what has been going on and ask for God's forgiveness. Then they could start all over again with a clean slate. Hopefully everyone will do better next time.

Bill Love

Idealism hurts world

Editor:
The naively liberal and overly idealistic attitude of Dr. Robertson (Nov. 4 Battalion) and others like him is the greatest threat to the free world today. Passive societies that have the means to resist but that rely upon the decency and kindness of their enemies are crushed (and rightfully so). Our recent efforts to check Soviet aggression are long overdue and far too few, but they're a step back in the right direction. Some people don't understand that you fight fire with fire — it may seem cold and cruel but it's a law of life.

Brad Neal

Racism needs a cure

Editor:
Last Thursday, I had the pleasure of being a part of Dr. Charles King's panel for his discussion on racism. When the discussion ended I felt good and yet disgusted at myself for what I had participated in. It was one of the most enlightening experiences of my entire life.

After I worked out my initial feelings of confusion, I must say that Chappelle Henderson's article missed the point of Dr. Charles King's discussion. Dr. King did not, as I had originally suspected, set out to show or display to anyone that those on the panel or in the audience were prejudiced. What he set out to do was to show that we are all prejudiced, and then to explain why. The "why" being the most important part.

He tried to give the panel and those in the audience, white and black alike, a first-hand lesson on manipulation and being manipulated. Not only did he show and teach us, but he also showed and taught the blacks on the panel and in the audience how they fall into the trap.

I remember Dr. King's lists of signs and how the lists so adequately applied to society and me. I remember the guilt, the shame, the disgust, and most of all the confusion I had felt when the discussion had ended. The guilt for being white and a part of the white society; the shame at seeing myself and my peers acting like we didn't know any better; and the disgust with myself for being an American. An American with all of the dreams and ideals stowed so neatly away in my head.

One of the most salient points made Thursday was made by a Puerto Rican woman in the audience. She said, "I never knew prejudice until I came to America."

There are places in this world where things are worse; but I don't live in those places, nor have I visited them. I live here, in the United States of America. From what I have been taught about my country I have discovered that it is sick! But it can be cured, and one day it will be cured.

The confusion I felt after the discus-

sion was incredible. But it had been solved during the discussion. The solution just took time to sink in, and it is still sinking in.

I had asked Dr. King a question, and he answered it by saying: when a man is being beaten, you don't ask him if he wants the beating to stop. You stop it!
Stephen Weiss '84

Frat names classical

Editor:
In the past semester here at Texas A&M, I couldn't help but be amused at the avalanche of letters in The Battalion. The same thing happens every semester, a person will write a letter and ten people will respond in kind. Therefore, I write this letter only to supply some timely information concerning . . . (Here comes one of our favorite topics) . . . fraternities.

I can speak with some conviction and accuracy about this topic because I have been on both sides of the fence. For two and a half years, I was an independent. I participated in MSC activities, and I was a Fish Camp Counselor twice. Then in my junior year, I pledged with a fraternity. Through the pledge education program, I began to see that a fraternity had more substance and meaning than I had originally expected.

At this point, I would like to give a short history of American College Fraternities. The fraternity system chose Greek letter names for their organizations not just to be different, but because the American College Curriculum in the 1800's stressed the classical studies: Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Literature, Mathematics, History, etc. Therefore, the College Students were influenced in their schoolwork by the Philosophy and thought of the first Western civilized nation, i.e. Ancient Greece.

The first Greek letter society was Phi Beta Kappa, founded in 1776 at William and Mary College in Virginia. A group of nine men founded this secret organization in order to govern their own affairs, away from the overbearing school administration. They wanted more freedom from the faculty to hold intellectual discussion, social events, and other activities. In later years, Phi Beta Kappa was changed from the secret fraternity to the honorary society it is today.

Following Phi Beta Kappa, the real growth of the fraternity system started in 1825 at Union College in New York, where at least six fraternities were founded. My fraternity, Delta Tau Delta, was founded in 1858 at Bethany College in West Virginia. It's also interesting to note that two fraternities, Alpha Tau Omega and Sigma Nu, were founded at the Virginia Military Institute.

Fraternities exist because they provide

brotherhood, camaraderie and friendship to college students. I hope I have shed some light onto the subject of Greeks at Texas A&M with this letter.

Murray E. Moore

Mascot picture noted

Editor:
Re: the front page picture of bonfire mascot Zippo and Scott Strom.

Mr. Strom, your mother would be ashamed of you! Didn't she ever tell you not to play with your food?

Larson Dunn

Greg Parsons

(Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by 11 signatures.)

Bonfire goals opposed

Editor:
I would like to take a few moments of your time to reflect upon one of the time-honored traditions here at Texas A&M. As Push Week for the Aggie bonfire approaches, I believe another perspective needs to be offered for consideration.

When I first came to Texas A&M last January, I had heard of the many traditions held sacred by Aggies. In the course of the past 10 months I have been able to witness many of these first-hand. However, never in my wildest imaginations did I envision the spectacle that is now taking place on Duncan Field.

I will admit that I had imagined a bonfire of large dimensions. However, it was one which involved somewhat of an area-wide service project where discarded lumber and accumulated brush from all over the countryside was gathered and sent "up-in-smoke" as a symbol not only of Texas A&M's "burning desire to beat the hell out of UT" but also the burning desire to serve its greater community in a high-spirited, well-organized clean-up effort.

This semester I have realized that my vision of the Aggie bonfire was inaccurate and naive. I must say that the Aggie bonfire and the immense waste that it represents deeply and truly saddens me. Even in the light of its status as a time-honored tradition, it appears to me to be a direct contradiction to Texas A&M's even greater tradition of dedicating itself to the wise use and conservation of our natural resources.

I submit that all of the hard work, spirit, and enthusiasm (which I acknowledge and respect) that is going toward the bonfire's construction could be directed toward worthier goals. Might this timber be cut, split, and donated or sold at a low cost as firewood to our area's residents, especially to those who depend

on wood to heat their homes? 1,000 house-warming fires throughout a cold winter serve as a symbol of Aggie spirit? I believe the answer is yes.

I submit this as food-for-thought. Hoping that, in the process of making traditions, they be constantly evaluated in the light of the changing needs of the world around us. Traditions and spirit aside, I feel that these times, we can ill afford to be wasteful of human energy and natural resources.

Jim

Mexican plays praised

Editor:
We are writing this letter to draw attention to the fine performance given by "La Compania de Teatro Bilingue" Nov. 8 sponsored by MSC CA (Committee for Awareness of Mexican American Culture). The bilingual group superbly performed three short skits written up in El Proceso, Mexican intellectual magazine; Los Verdes by Luis Valdez, El Espejo by Emilio Ballido and Schubert's Last Serenade by Julie Bovasso.

Although the attendance was disappointing, we have been informed these talented performers might be back next semester. Thus, we hope next performance will be well attended by not only Spanish students but Aggies who wish to expand their cultural horizons.

We congratulate the company Carlos Cavazos from MSC CAMA for making the cultural performance so enjoyable on this Texas A&M campus. Need More!

Ilija Ika

Jeffrey

Bus standers thanked

Editor:
To the gentlemen of Texas A&M who take it upon themselves to stand on others can sit on the shuttle buses. I want to say thank you very much for your very exhausting. Realizing that all the more admirable to see students make this small sacrifice. I know must be as tired as the ones you stand for and, believe me, that act of kindness noticed and much appreciated.

With all the problems going on in the world today, a little charity makes just that much easier to bear. Thank you.

Alison

Teens still want peer acceptance

Children's Express, a privately funded news service, is real world journalism reported entirely by children 13 years of age or under whose tape-recorded interviews, discussions, reports and commentary are edited by teenagers and adults.
By Children's Express

United Press International
NEW YORK — It's very confusing to see your best friend from last year become a drug addict. Or say there are three friends that were friends ever since they were really little and one of them changes. The rest want to be like that one and then everyone changes. It goes in circles.

It's not easy being a teenager. For teenage boys, you got to be macho, you got to have ego. And girls get self-conscious and you're always wound up. You're trying to do everything, trying to be all these different people, trying to fit into every social group.

Parents are trying to keep up, too. They think they know their kid like a book, even though they might not. They figure they've grown up with their kid for a number of years, so they must know them. But if you have a pre-planned attitude of "this is the way my kid's going to

be," you're going to set yourself up to fail. You have to know that.

"Teenagers are going through a lot of changes very fast and we in the adult world don't always appreciate that fully," Dr. James Gardener said recently.

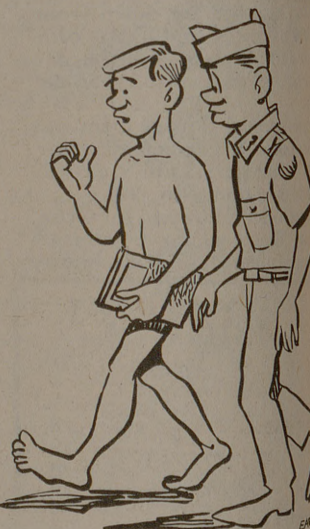
Dr. Gardener explained how adolescence is the period between when you're real young and when you become an adult. You've got to make adjustments. It's a time when you have a lot of pressure and you have to be strong.

The biggest thing is to be accepted, to be liked. Everybody thinks they have to belong to something. In every school there's a lot of that. They want to be in a group. Groups are always together and

A lot of things are happening to people we know — like cigarettes and drugs. It's kind of wierd, you know. You always contradict yourself. When we were in fourth grade, everyone was like, "Oh, I'm never going to smoke, I'm never going to drink, I can say 'no'."

It's harder for us to talk about it with our parents than with a friend. Parents aren't there, they don't see what's happening. They can understand as much as they can, but they can't understand completely unless they're in our shoes.

Slouch by Jim Egan



"I didn't want to align myself with a particular group because on what I wore, and at that time, I didn't want to offend them so this was the only way I could remain neutral."

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USPS 045 360
Member of Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Conference

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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.

Letters Policy
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 and show the address and telephone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials also are welcome, and are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone (409) 845-2611.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request. Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

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