

# opinion

## Letters: Racism all in the point of view

**Editor:**  
This letter concerns the recent letters written about the confederacy (with a little "c").

I have on occasion tried to make others understand my feelings and perceptions of the "old south", slave auctions, etc. However, it seems futile to try to make some people understand that those feelings and perceptions are as (if not more) sincere and legitimate than their own. So I will try not dwell too long on my perceptions (per se), nevertheless, I will venture to say yes, there were racists and slaveowners on both sides of the civil war. There were probably some abolitionists in the south who fought for the confederacy thinking that this would bring about freedom for all men including blacks. However, the existence of slavery in this country was primarily in the south. Thus, that region of the nation is often blamed for the institution which it supported. The confederate flag is obviously a symbol of the "old south" and the lifestyle associated with it; therefore when people look at the flag they may see the symbol of a "noble way of life and freedom" whereas others see the propagation of slavery and the oppression of a race.

It appears to be a matter of what side of the fence you are on. I know which side I would like to be on.

Additionally, it was stated that the institution was going to be done away with eventually by "the south" if "the south" had its way. 300 years give or take a century is quite a wait.

Kevin Johnson

## Undergrads needed too

**Editor:**  
In recent times this University has been calling for "World University: The Cambridge of the South." We want to become leaders in technology and re-

search. We want to discover things other people do not want to get into. But has anyone heard anything on leading the way in undergraduate programs? Has there been any news on hiring well known professors who set up great undergraduate programs? To make Texas A&M a World University do we need a certain percentage of professors who have come from foreign nations and can barely speak English? Dr. Arthur E. Martell came out and said, "We put too much emphasis on undergraduate programs and not enough on graduate programs," in *The Batt.* on Oct. 26.

Please do not misunderstand, research and graduate programs are an important part of a World University. Without well established people in these areas, the University would not do as well. But without a good, strong undergraduate program (which is the building block for graduate school) the people that continue their studies will have a harder time. People sometimes forget institutes of higher education only used to have undergraduate programs.

Joe Calao '86

## Team great despite record

**Editor:**  
Just a little note to say thanks for a hell of an exciting year! It's been a long time since we have been as excited about a football team as we were about you, the 1983 Aggies. No matter how well you do in the future — and we are sure you will do well (Cotton Pickin' Aggies) — we would like to congratulate you on this season. Whatever the record shows, you have proven to us that you are real winners and that you possess the abilities to stay that way. Looking forward to seeing you next year — Good Luck!

Ronnie, Vanessa, Jeff, Roger, Diane

Seniors '84

## Here and now briefs: Protests and politics

By Maxwell Glen and Cody Shearer

**WASHINGTON**--When 27 University of Michigan students occupied a campus radiation laboratory two weeks ago, they vowed to remain until the administration ceased its participation in military- and defense-related research. Just 48 hours later, the students ended their vigil voluntarily — and unsuccessfully.

Though the protest may have seemed a throwback to more turbulent times, it had a relevant purpose. Military-related research dollars comprise a growing share of campus research funds. In addition to discomfort about the ends of military research, students and faculty worry that institutions of higher education have adopted the Pentagon as their chief lifeline.

Of course, the Ann Arbor school's refusal to surrender to the "Progressive Student Network" was no surprise. In 1982 alone, the University of Michigan enjoyed more than \$4.09 million in contrasts with the Department of Defense.

But according to an annual Pentagon report, more than 250 colleges and universities received a total of \$1.5 billion in project money last year. Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and Boston's Massachusetts Institute of Technology topped the list by a wide margin, with contracts totaling \$235 million and \$216 million, respectively. Even small schools such as Ohio's Denison University were on the take (\$40,000).

Meanwhile, according to Stanford University President Donald Kennedy, non-defense research dollars, the vast majority of which come from Uncle Sam, have decreased 40 percent since 1968. Kennedy believes that the trend must be reversed for the sake of "hardheaded national interest."

One man's national security is another man's idea of economic shortsightedness. Have we rejiggered our research priorities at the expense of beneficial civilian programs?

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A private group, the Scientific Manpower Commission, flashed a warning recently to those who believe the nation's the lowest salaries among their peers.

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The current peace between the

Reagan administration and environmental groups is only a temporary cease-fire. Activists say they'll take aim in January at Richard Francis, the president's choice to lead the Solar Energy and Conservation Board, created in 1980 to help subsidize solar and energy conservation projects.

"It's the same old story," said Scott Sklar, political director of Solar Lobby, an interest group here. "The president nominates a man who wants to destroy the agency he's been hired to save."

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Judy Goldsmith's National Organization for Women has declared an all-out war on the Allstate Insurance Co. Charging that Allstate pays its female employees and agents less than their male counterparts, NOW announced a nationwide boycott of the Sears, Roebuck subsidiary. Picketing has already begun in Indiana.

Last year, NOW blamed defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment on insurance industry opposition and subsequently pledged to pass federal legislation banning sex-based insurance rates.

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**RIGHT OF WAY:** Everyone has a favorite story about Washington's absurdities. Here's ours: It was 21 years ago that local and federal governments opened Dulles Airport in Virginia, about 25 miles from downtown Washington. It is just this week that a direct road from downtown to the airport is being opened.

While airport customers can use the road at any time of the day, rush-hour commuters must travel in vehicles carrying three or more occupants; single-passenger autos must carry a special \$2 orange sticker; a computer at Dulles will monitor vehicles to distinguish commuters from travelers.

The saving grace? Both the Federal Aviation Administration, which owns the airport and the road, and the Virginia Highway Patrol say they lack the manpower to stop errant vehicles.

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Despite all the fanfare associated with his latest appointment, Interior Secretary William Clark may have some politicking to do at his new agency. When a visitor to Interior recently asked an employee for the whereabouts of Clark's office, the employee responded, "Secretary Clark? Why don't you try the seventh floor?" Clark's office is on the sixth floor.



## Musical messages inspire mad, subliminal shopping

By Art Buchwald

According to newspaper reports, subliminal messages are now being inserted into music played in retail stores to get people to buy things. Several companies are producing tapes for clients which have secret messages in them to attack the shopper's brain and unconsciously motivate him to buy a product he hadn't planned to purchase.

I was very skeptical about this information until I went to a shopping mall last Saturday. The music being piped into the mall was Christmas carols, intended to get the people in a holiday mood.

I stopped to buy a chocolate chip cookie, when suddenly something possessed me. While the loudspeaker blared out "We Wish you a Merry Christmas," I blurted out the word "Underwear." Everyone in the line looked at me. I grabbed the man behind me by the lapels and said, "I've got to have underwear."

He pushed my hands away, "So what are you standing in the chocolate chip cookie line for? Go to a men's shop."

I dashed down the mall and stopped a uniformed security guard. "Underwear!" I screamed at him. "Give me underwear." He wasn't sure whether to

arrest me or give me directions. Finally he pointed me to a large menswear store at the end of the mall.

Two salesmen were standing at the door smiling. One said to the other, "Here comes another one." Then he said, before I could speak, "Third counter to the left, but you have to take a number and wait your turn."

The underwear counter was jammed with people, all screaming and shouting. I said to a man next to me, "Maybe there won't be any left by the time my number is called. What am I going to do if I can't buy any underwear?"

"Do you need some that badly?" he asked.

"I didn't think so, but suddenly I got this craving for underwear while I was waiting to buy a chocolate chip cookie."

"I came into the mall to buy pizza and the same thing happened to me."

My number was called and I bought 50 jockey shorts and 50 undershirts. That's all they would sell me.

I walked out of the store and stopped to look at an artist doing charcoal sketches of children. While I was watching, someone was singing "Jingle Bells" over the loud speaker.

The word "Wok" lit up in my brain. My eyes became desperate and I started searching for a wok store. I rushed

lady at the information booth, but I could blurt it out she said, "Wok"

found in the basement of the department store at the end of the building.

"How did you know I wanted a wok?"

"Everyone wants a wok when they hear 'Jingle Bells.'"

"You mean you have a secret in 'Jingle Bells?'"

"Of course. Today it's woks, tomorrow it's wax for your floor."

"I don't need a wok," I said.

"Then put your hands over your eyes and you won't get a message." She

at her schedule. "White Christmas home computers."

"I don't need a home computer either."

"You don't think you do until Crosby sings it."

"Do I have time to buy a chocolate cookie?"

"It depends. After 'White Christmas' they're playing 'Silent Night' and going to be an awful crush for the knotted Chinese rugs at the end of the mall."

## Kids learn from risk taking

By Children's Express

United Press International

SALEM, Mass. — Project Adventure started to help people get more confidence in themselves. When you're doing it, you're building up something inside of you. You're building self-confidence and trying different things instead of doing the same things you've been doing.

"For example," said Karl Rohnke, the director of Project Adventure, "imagine standing by yourself on top of a 30-foot pole with not much to stand on and you have to dive for a trapeze that hangs out in front of you. There's a lot of decision-making that goes on inside. You look at it and you think, 'There's no way that I could make that. But then you try and you find out it's not quite as hard as it looks.'"

Project Adventure does activities based on a "survival school" called "Outward Bound." They do things like jumping off ropes and out of trees. It lasts for 26 days. Project Adventure is like that except they don't do it for 26 days constantly, living at the area. They do it at school.

"We're trying to get to a point in a physical education program where students come in and have no idea what we're going to present to them," Rohnke told us.

Some of the things Project Adventure has are "ropes, beams, and cross country skis — we've even used parachutes," Rohnke said. His favorite thing is the "tension traverse, which is walking across a cable, holding onto a rope and the cable's over mud. If you miss, there's a real consequence."

There are about 15 people in the groups. People have to spot each other and they have to encourage them. It also helps you build up confidence in other people.

We asked Rohnke what happens if a person makes fun of another person.

"Say you get somebody up on a high element," he replied. "He's having trouble making the decision to do something and one of the kids down below says, 'Come on, you chicken.' After the student

comes down we get the group together and talk about some of the things we're striving for, and point out that although the person who said the comment was probably trying to get the other person to do it, that if they were up there they wouldn't want to hear it. It's not supportive at all."

The students are not made to do anything. It's all their own will. If they want to do it, they can. "And some of the projects are just plain stunts," Rohnke

added. "It's important that people have fun as they're doing this project. You're up on a pole and being afraid every day, you're not going to come to class."

Project Adventure is a broad gym courses like basketball and baseball. It tries to get people to challenge themselves. "It allows you to overcome that you might think would be impossible to do," Rohnke said.

## The Battalion

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