

Ticket prices: just like everyone else

The distinguishing feature of Texas A&M is not an obsession with tradition, a history as a military school or a devotion to academic excellence. The thing that sets Aggies apart is pride. Stubborn, chin up, nose in the air, chip on the shoulder, "our school is better than anybody's" — that kind of pride.

Aggies seem to have a compulsive drive to be the best — or at least to be better than the University of Texas. That drive takes two forms.

The first is the resistance to change. If we continually insist that we already are the best, that the way we've always done things is the only way it can be done and that no one else can possibly understand our fine traditions, then we can convince ourselves that nothing needs improvement.

But conflicting with this idea is the second form. If we are going to be the best, then we need to look at the universities that are on top right now and pattern ourselves after them.

This approach is a bit more sensible than the first. It involves admitting our shortcomings and improving on them by looking for successful models.

The problem with this comes when enthusiastic administrators take the

idea of patterning ourselves after others to extremes.

Texas A&M is unique in many ways, but the things that set it apart from other universities can't be classified as all good or all bad. There has to be some way to separate the two, improve on the bad, and leave the good the same.

The recent increase in football ticket prices is a perfect example.

Prices for sideline bench seats at home games in 1984 will increase from \$12 to \$15. Student tickets will go from \$6 to \$7.50.

Now \$7.50 is not a steep price to pay for seeing a football game. And it would be easy for the Athletic Department to justify the jump in prices if it was needed to keep up with rising costs.

But the reason Athletic Director Jackie Sherrill gave for the price increases was "in order to be competitive with what other schools in the Southwest Conference and around the country are doing or have already done."

Are we competing on the football field, or at the cash registers?

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Students of Biology defend evolution

We graduate students of the Biology department feel an ethical responsibility to respond to the recent letters on creationism.

Creationist dogma is an attempt to reconcile fundamentalist Christian beliefs founded on a literal interpretation of the Bible with the ever-encroaching principles of natural science.

Creationists do not research their theories scientifically. Instead, they rummage through the arguments of legitimate biologists, geologists and anthropologists for scraps of unresolved questions that can be distorted to resemble evidence for special creation.

One example is the claim that the sudden appearance of invertebrate fossils at the base of the Cambrian somehow confounds evolutionists and supports creationism. On the contrary, were special creation over a period of six days actually true, we would expect to find birds, reptiles, and mammals in the same stratum, which of course we do not.

There is, of course, a great deal of evidence from the geologic record to support the contention that life did so evolve. There is no consistent evidence to contradict this theory. Many people apparently do not realize that Darwin's theory of evolution has survived 100 years of rapid scientific progress, including the advent of genetics and molecular biology.

What really bothers creationists, and what provides impetus for their movement, is the concept that man and ape are closely related and share a common ancestor. Unfortunately for creationists, the evolution of man is one of

the better paleontologically documented lines. Furthermore, the anatomical and physiological similarity between chimpanzee and man is so striking that some scientists have suggested that both species could logically be placed in the same genus. As Stephen Jay Gould says, if evolution is false, why do we use chimpanzees for drug studies?

reader's forum

Scientists, of which Darwin was one, attempt to explain phenomena in naturalistic terms and concede the explanations only as much validity as the available evidence warrants. Creationism constitutes religion, and, inasmuch as scientific findings should be taught in science classrooms, creation has no place.

The recent action of the Texas Board of Education to leave textbook publishers vulnerable to fundamentalist pressure is a serious academic lapse. To omit Darwin and the theory of evolution is to reinforce an already formidable ignorance in our public school children. As some of the recent letters show, this ignorance is spreading to our undergraduate ranks. The strong science and technological tradition of Texas A & M is one we need to preserve.

Mark Hulsey
Mitch Magee
Stewart Culbrows
John Scott
Graduate Students of Biology

Slouch

by Jim Earle



"Do you know what might be causing a loud grinding noise downstairs under your room?"

THE OREGONIAN
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Business battles media

By ART BUCHWALD

Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

More and more companies are now holding seminars on how executives should deal with the media. In the past, businesses (big business in particular) handed out press releases through their public affairs vice presidents and that was that. But as the press keeps badgering our nation's businessmen, they are finding themselves in front of cameras, blinking into bright lights and running the risk of losing control of their story.

There are hundreds of experts making large fortunes showing corporation big shots how to deal with the media.

"All right, gentlemen. I'm going to give you your first hypothetical case for this war game. Word gets out your company has produced a headache powder that causes convulsions, and also fillings to fall out. Mr. Chairman, what is the first thing you do?"

"I telephone my insurance company and find out if the product is adequately covered by my liability policy. If it is, then I call a press conference and announce we will continue manufacturing the powder."

"Fair enough. Now I'll make it harder on you. Mike Wallace shows up with a

crew from '60 Minutes' to find out what is going on. Do you let him in or not?"

"I let him in, but I don't talk to him. I turn him over to my research director, Dr. Rich."

"Right. OK, Dr. Rich. You are now on camera. Mike Wallace is holding a dead white hamster in his hand and says, 'Would it surprise you, Doctor, that this rat used your headache powder?' What's your answer?"

"I tell Mike we have no evidence to substantiate that the product, when used with caution, would damage anyone's health."

"Weak, Doctor, very weak. Mike Wallace pulls a report out of his briefcase, which he reads from: 'This FDA study, which I know you received eight years ago, indicates that almost everyone exposed to your powder was subject to catatonic convulsions. Why didn't you make this report available to your superiors?' How do you deal with Mike on that one, Doc?"

"I reply that I did turn the report over to management."

"No you don't, Dr. Rich."

"What do I do?"

"You get the hell off camera. Once Wallace confronts you with the FDA report, you can't fake it anymore, and you

refer him to the company lawyers. Where are the lawyers? All right, Wallace is knocking down the door and smells blood. Who's the head legal gl?"

"I am, sir. Timothy Wadlipp, IV."

"Okay, Wadlipp, Wallace shows the report and wants to know why your company is still making the stuff. Do you respond?"

"I say we will have no comment. We have a chance to study the data."

"Not good enough, Wallace. You've had the report for eight years. You have to give him some red meat."

"I appear shocked, and say we're sorry Dr. Rich for keeping the report in management, and we'll cooperate with the Justice Department if criminally established."

"Hey, wait a minute. I'm not going to take the rap because management made me stuff the FDA report in a drawer."

"Dr. Rich, we're just playing a game. This is a hypothetical case. It has nothing to do with our company."

"Oh yeah? If it's so hypothetical, am I going to prison?"

"Because people always feel so better toward a company when someone on '60 Minutes' goes to jail."

Letters:

Let's have more jazz

Editor:

Hurray! I would like to gratefully thank those responsible for bringing the Pat Metheny Group to Texas A&M. After suffering for what seems an eternity and passing up musical (?) events such as Cheap Trick and Anne Murray, I was about to give up hope of ever seeing a group like Pat Metheny's at Texas A&M.

Someone obviously realized that there is a significant number of people that would enjoy this progressive music. I don't deny that there is also a sizable audience for Cheap Trick and Anne Murray, but come on, let's have some variety. Perhaps a good showing at this week's concert will open more eyes and possibly put names such as Jean-Luc Ponty, Al DiMeola, Stanley Clarke, Todd Rundgren, Heart, Renaissance, and Santana on the list of possible future performers. All of these groups would sell their fair share of tickets and none demand the money that Cheap Trick asks. Only two would need the space of G. Rollier White Coliseum.

I'm sure I speak for a good percentage of people here (many of whom listen to the jazz show on Sunday nights) when I say let's get more progressive and jazz-oriented groups and musicians to perform here.

Tony Cerami

Regents' major priority money

Editor:

Something happened to me last Thursday which I found almost unbelievable.

After one of my chemical engineering labs had finished using an Instron testing machine used to test the tensile strengths of certain materials, our teaching assistant informed the class that we would all have to stay and copy

points off the four-foot long series of graphs in order to make the necessary calculations for the lab report. Due to a lack of funds in the department he could not make copies of the graphs for the students to take home and study.

If the officials that sit on the Board of Regents are really interested in the students, they would at the very least allocate enough money for a department to make xerox copies of necessary course materials.

No, I guess that is asking too much of the Board. After all, how can we stu-

dents expect them to allocate more money to benefit us when they have to pay a coach's salary, buy new cars for the ball players, and build a mansion for the Chancellor of the University System?

It's a little too obvious that the color the Board of Regents sees is green. If it doesn't turn a buck or fill their ready bulging pockets with millions, the members of the Board

Wind Bags do not want to have anything to do with it.

The Battalion

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography courses 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 long. 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 author. Columns and guest editorials also are welcome, but are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone (409) 845-2611.

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