

## No miracle cure for racial problems

Is Texas A&M a racist institution? It has one of the lowest percentages of minority students and faculty among major state universities in the United States.

Now, over a year after the President's Committee on Minority Conditions released its report, President Frank E. Vandiver has proposed a new \$1 million starter program to increase recruitment of minority students and faculty.

But there is something inherently wrong in having to recruit minorities.

Ideally, integration could be accomplished by merely opening a school's doors to qualified students of all colors. But because of our nation's past, and the symptoms of deep social problems that still persist, it has never been that easy.

Inner-city schools don't offer the quality of education available in suburban schools. Many blacks attend inner-city schools, so many black students are not adequately prepared for a college education and do not score well on college entrance exams.

Offering scholarships earmarked to

attract minority students to Texas A&M is not going to solve this problem.

There is only a limited pool of qualified minority students in the U.S., and universities trying to increase their minority percentages are all fighting over this pool.

They're missing the point. The ultimate aim should be to increase the size of the pool. And that can't be done at the university level.

When the minority problems in our public school systems show improvement, then the percentages in the universities will even themselves out.

Americans tend to think that throwing money at a problem will make it go away, but social inequalities in our school system will not disappear that easily.

Short-term remedies such as Vandiver's proposal definitely are needed, but correcting the inequalities brought about by dual school systems will take more than \$1 million worth of scholarships.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

## Put competition in perspective

If only more parents would tell their children, when they're still young and believe everything they hear, that winning isn't everything.

If only they would tell them that winners shouldn't be considered heroes just because they're winners and losers shouldn't be considered second-class citizens.

I've seen many little leaguers go home in tears after a loss and many small children give up completely — because they're "losers."

Unfortunately, a lot of parents not only let their children believe this, they encourage them to. They themselves believe that the primary goal of any sport or any game is not to play your best, to improve or to have fun, but to win, to be first, to be the best.

At least, it looked that way when television ratings showed that watchers abandoned the Olympic Games for the A-Team and Remington Steele — after the United States' hockey losses.

Some athletes have been able to recognize the rightful place competition should play in their lives — but not enough.

Olympic skier Bill Koch was a major contender in his cross-country event. He came in 21st, but in an interview with an ABC sportscaster shortly after the race, the happy competitor said, "I

guess many people are disappointed that we didn't win a medal, but I'm pleased. I made my best time under these near blizzard conditions."

In an interview taped before the race, Koch said, "If 100 people enter a race, that means there have to be 99 losers. The worst thing you can teach a child is that so many of them will be losers, because then they won't even try. And it's the striving, the attempting, the fight, that's the important thing."



lauri reese

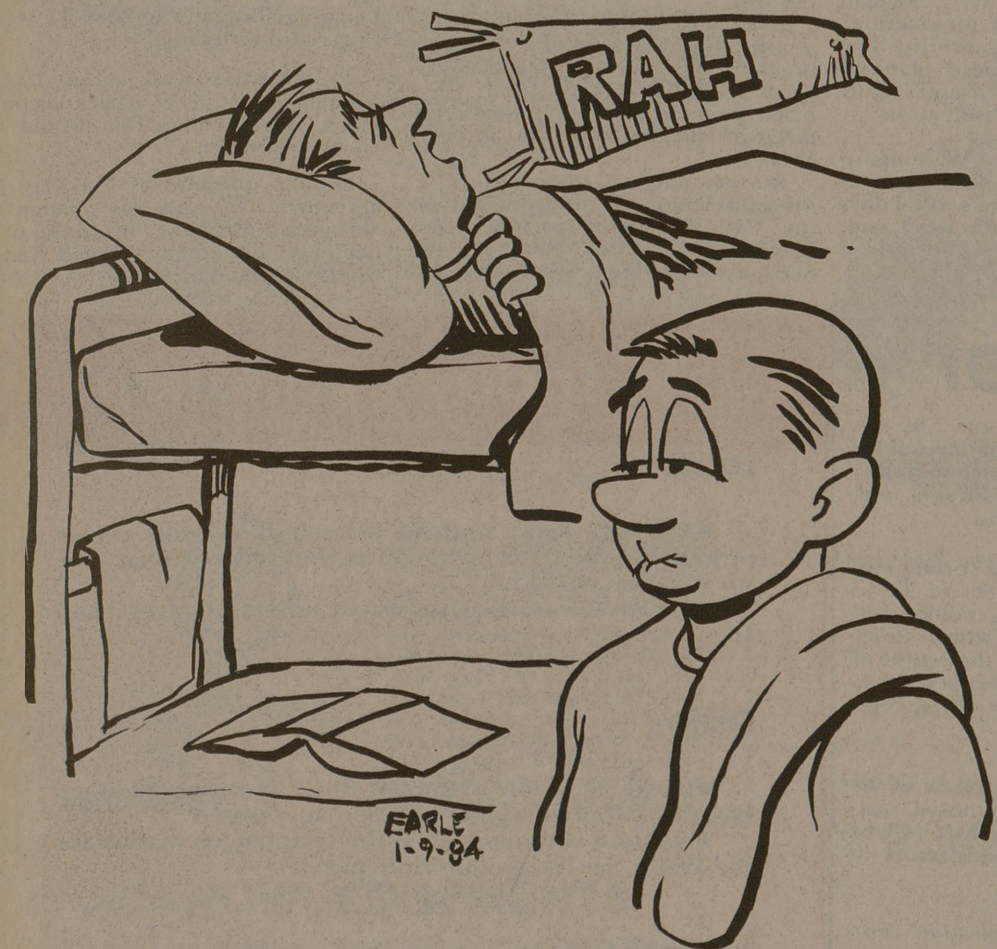
Think how much strife and ill-feeling between individuals, teams and even countries could be avoided if we were able to get rid of our obsession with winning.

Think how much could be accomplished and how self-satisfied we could be if we put competition in its proper perspective.

Competition enables us to hone our skills and measure our achievements. We can use it — as a tool.

Slouch

by Jim Earle



EARLE 1-9-84

"When you hate to get up and go to class, does that mean you've got the flu?"



OF COURSE IT'S A SUCCESS... I JUST WISH WE HAD PUT IT IN A LITTLE HIGHER ORBIT...

## Letters...

### Death penalty lowers value of life

**Editor:** We commend The Battalion Editorial Board for its stand against capital punishment (Feb. 10).

As members of Amnesty International, a human rights organization that opposes all forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, including the death penalty, we are familiar with the common justifications for its use. Retribution and "justice" are euphemisms for vengeance, and unacceptable basis for a penal system in a civilized society.

The death penalty has not been shown to be an effective deterrent to murder. It is even possible that the use of the death sentence actually promotes an attitude of violence and a disregard for the value of life in our society.

Some people claim that it is cheaper to execute a murderer than to maintain him in prison for the rest of his life. This rationale degrades human life by giving it a monetary value.

It has also been said that executing a criminal will prevent him from committing further crimes. While this is obviously true, our judicial system is, or could be equipped to keep dangerous criminals from returning to society and from committing further crimes while in prison, without killing them.

Capital punishment involves a great deal more than the question of what a criminal does or does not "deserve."

We must realize that how we deal with our criminals is a measure of our maturity and advancement as a people and a nation.

Juanita Heimann  
Margaret Lasater-Smith  
TAMU Amnesty International Campus Network

### Death penalty a humane procedure

**Editor:** I would like to correct an error in your editorial of Feb. 10. Death by injection does not involve the use of "poison," as you so melodramatically stated in your fatuous editorial. Instead, it involves a mix of compounds which acts as an anesthetic overdose.

Death is caused by a depression of the cardiac and respiratory centers of the brain. The procedure is almost identical to the procedure of euthanasia for animals. It is physically painless, relatively quick, and much less horrible than you have attempted to portray it. It is also a far better fate than these individuals deserve.

You refer to the "plight of the murderer," and you ask that he be allowed to live out his life in prison. Why should the citizens of his state pay for the welfare and comfort of a being who has demonstrated such bestiality?

Lucas, Moreno, and others of their ilk are worse than rabid animals, and everyone knows that rabid animals are killed to protect the community.

However, I think I have devised an alternative to the death penalty. Murderers should be sentenced to listen to the inanities and absurdities uttered by The Battalion Editorial Board. Anyone

constantly bombarded by such drivel would beg for the death penalty.

Anyone who pays lip service to the victims, and then slaps them in their faces by begging for murderer's life, has surely lost all contact with reality and common decency. If The Battalion Editorial Board was a food, Sbisla would use it as an emetic.

Steve Lovelace  
CLASS of 84

### Goosed in the park

**Editor:** I was distressed by Friday's front-page photo caption titled "Goosed in the Park."

I don't understand why The Battalion feels it is necessary to use off-color statements to attract readers. If I'm not mistaken, the purpose of The Battalion is to allow aspiring journalists a chance to write and to acquire a sense of professionalism.

As I mentally tick off some of our leading newspapers, I can't recall any of them resorting to such tactics to draw readers. Come on, if we desire professionalism, let's emulate The New York Times, not UT's Daily Texan.

Michael Larkin '84  
Journalism Major

### Senators need input

**Editor:** The freshmen senators would like to tell the Class of '87 that we are working hard to represent you in the best way we can.

All eight of us have the ability to improve Texas A&M in the ways that you see fit. However, our job is to represent you, not ourselves. We want to take only the kinds of action that you agree with. If there are any problems that you

would like to see corrected, or if you would just like to find out what we please call us. We would appreciate your input.

Carol Ellis  
Joe Less  
Jaimie Horn  
Clay B...  
Kevin White  
Lance Le...  
Chip P...  
Freshmen Senat...

### Rules and Regulation

**Editor:** I am a member of the Rules and Regulations Committee. A few days ago, The Battalion published the deadline recommending policy changes — 15.

Now is the time for you to think about changes that may be needed in our policies. Write a letter to the Rules and Regulations Committee — for anything! Tell us why you feel something should or shouldn't be changed. The committee members are here to voice the desires of the students.

Now is the time to do something about matters such as the recent finals controversy. Don't let things slip blindly past — do something about them.

Remember, you spend your money here under the policies of Texas A&M. These policies can be determined by you.

Gary L. Lee  
Student Representative  
Rules and Regulations Committee

USPS 045 360

Member of  
Texas Press Association  
Southwest Journalism Conference

- Editor.....Rebeca Zimmermann
- Managing Editor.....John Wagner
- City Editor.....Patrice Koranek
- Assistant City Editors.....Kathleen Hart, Stephanie Ross
- News Editor.....Tracey Taylor
- Assistant News Editors.....Susan Talbot, Brigid Brockman, Kelley Smith
- Editorial Page Editor.....Kathy Wiesepape
- Sports Editor.....Donn Friedman
- At Ease Editor.....Shelley Hoekstra
- Assistant At Ease Editor.....Angel Stokes
- Photo Editor.....John Makely
- Staff writers.....Ed Alanis, Robin Black, Bob Caster, Bonnie Langford, Christine Mallet, Kay Mallet, Sarah Oates, Michelle Powe, Lauri Reese, Dave Scott, Karen Wallace
- Photographers.....Michael Davis, Bill Hughes, Katherine Hurt, Eric Lee, Dean Saito

**Editorial Policy**  
The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M and Bryan-College Station. Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the Editorial Board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

**Letters Policy**  
Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. 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 be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

Reader's Forum columns and guest editorials are welcome. Address all inquiries to the editorial page editor.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters. Except for holiday and examination periods, subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.50 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed Donald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

United Press International is entitled exclusively to the use for reproduction of all news patches created to it. Rights of reproduction for all other matter herein reserved.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.