

## Spirit of the Games

The spirit of the Olympic Games is alive and well in Los Angeles. From opening ceremonies to the awarding of medals, all the the glitter and glory and sweat that make up the Olympics began Saturday, and the dire predictions of how meaningless the competition would be without the Soviets ring empty.

Scenes already are etched in memories from the opening ceremonies and the first events. Rafer Johnson, 1960 gold medal winner in the decathlon, running up the stairway to light the torch. The standing ovation for the Romanian team, which refused to join in the Soviet boycott. Two American women tying for a gold medal — in a swimming event of all things.

And it's gratifying to see the success of the American athletes who stuck it out four more years, after missing the 1980 Olympics because of President Jimmy Carter's boycott.

In the coming days, we will have Olympics coming out of our ears. ABC's Jim McKay and the other cheerleader-broadcasters will pall. But somehow the events are never boring. The athletes' heroics fill us with pride and, sometimes, reduce us to tears. They also provide hope. No matter how mushy it seems, the sporting event that happens once every four years always manages to inspire hope in those who watch.

And that's the beauty of the Olympics.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

## Check policy hurts

Life is about to get a little more difficult for Texas A&M students, faculty and staff — no more check cashing in the Coke Building after Aug. 17.

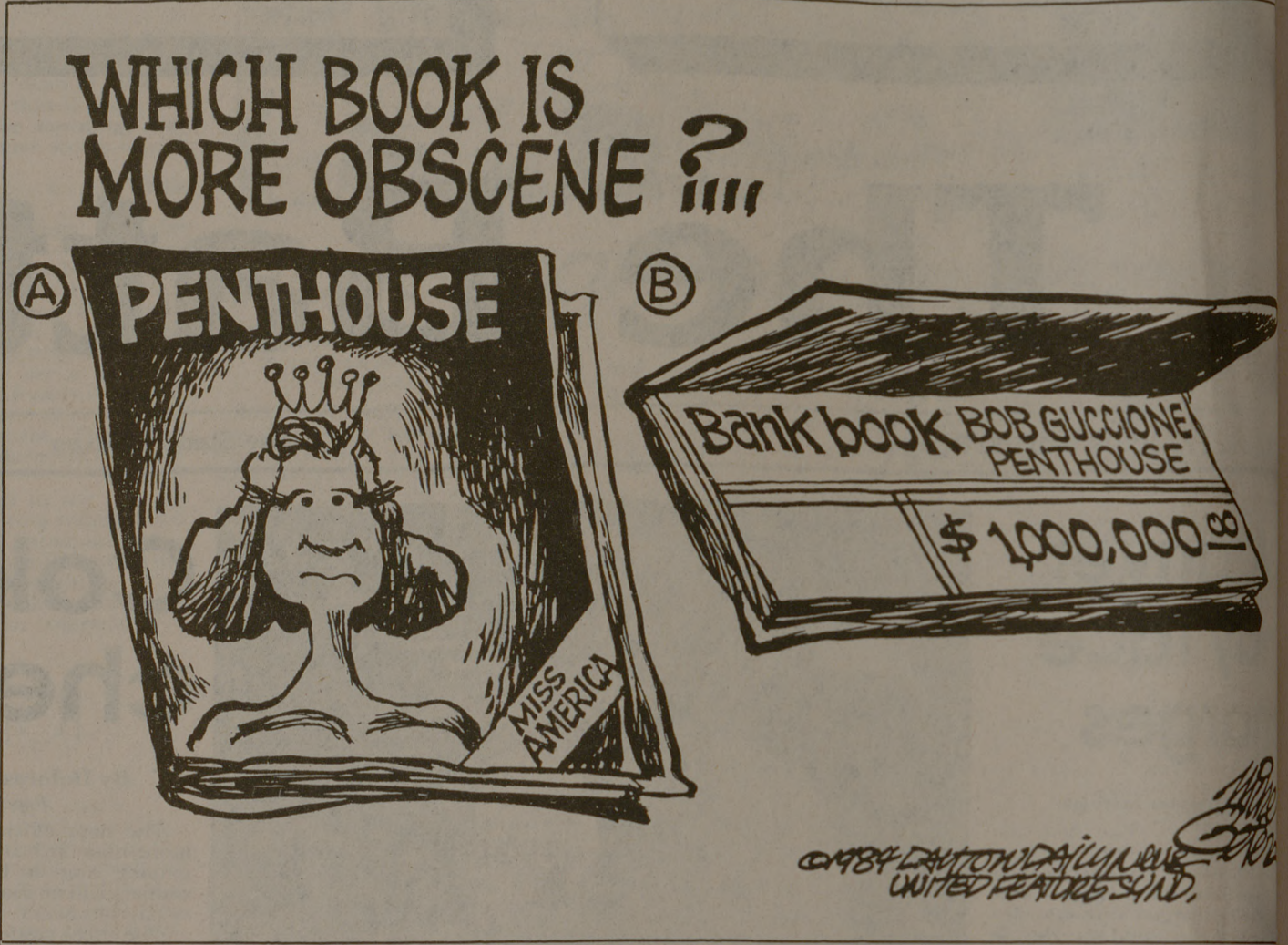
That includes university payroll checks.

The new policy will cause problems for students who don't use local banks

and many others will have to pay service charges for using Pulse or MPACT cards.

By instituting this policy, the fiscal department is imposing an undue hardship on the people it is supposed to serve.

— The Battalion Editorial Board



## New check policy a disservice to students, faculty

With the exception of paying my fees, I used to enjoy my transactions with the Texas A&M fiscal office.



Kari Fluegel

Whenever I went into the Coke Building it was usually to get money. Whether I wrote a personal check or cashed my payroll check, I came out with money.

No more. Effective Aug. 20, students, faculty and staff will no longer be able to cash payroll checks or personal checks in the Coke building.

Effective Aug. 20, the only way a person can get money on campus is to either cash a check at the Memorial Student Center or use the MPACT and Pulse machines outside the MSC.

Last time I cashed a payroll check, I

was handed a notice stating that the purpose for switching procedures is to cut down on lines in the Coke building. I'm all for cutting lines, but I don't believe the fiscal office has really investigated the problems which will arise from the policy change.

Last fall, I had three places to cash a check — the MSC, the fiscal office annex in Rudder Tower (which has since been closed) and the Coke Building. On Friday afternoons with all three locations open, when most students get their cash for the weekend, I had to wait at least a half an hour at any location. Now all those students will be packed into the MSC creating even longer lines.

Also, the maximum amount a student can cash a check for is \$25. Nowadays, \$25 isn't enough to get you through a weekend.

I'm not a spendthrift. But on any weekend, I can spend a lot more than \$25. Any guy with a half-way decent love-life can usually expect to spend twice that amount on a weekend.

Yes, I could run to the Pulse machine and get a few dollars, but a funny thing happened on the way to the bank. Pulse and MPACT machines only give you money, when you have money in the bank.

I have this nifty, little trick that many other students also use. When emergencies come up, I write a check to get the money and then call my parents and have them put money in my account at home to cover the check.

If I don't have enough money in the bank to cover the amount I need, the only thing the machine will give me is a piece of paper that says insufficient funds.

One more interesting little twist about automated tellers. You can only use them if your bank is on the system. There are many small town banks that don't have Pulse or MPACT computers. Students who bank at such banks are really restricted with the \$25 limit at the MSC.

Also, everytime I use my Pulse card, my bank charges me 50 cents. If I have

to use my Pulse card at least once a week because the fiscal office won't give me more than \$25 the new policy will end up costing me \$15 a school year.

I'm not going to say that the fiscal office should have consulted the students before making a decision. If the University administrators had to consult the students about every decision, Texas A&M would have dried up and blown away a long time ago.

Faculty and staff members also have a stake in this interest. Payroll checks will no longer be cashed on campus either. Those on payroll will have to get a bank to cash their checks or deposit their checks which also would leave them without money.

Student workers will be further restricted. Many do not get off work until after banks close which leaves them with the option of depositing the check or waiting until Monday to cash it. Also, some students do not have cars to get to the bank to cash their checks.

Those with accounts outside of Bryan-College Station area are confronted with the same problem that I have. To get my payroll check deposited, I have to mail it to my bank in Amarillo — it will not be credited to my account for another week.

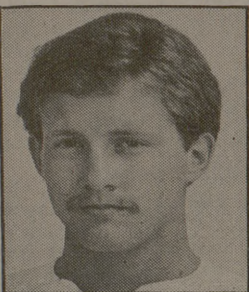
It seems really strange when an institution won't honor its own checks. There are solutions to the problem which will arise from the policy change. The maximum check limit could be raised to \$50. Payroll checks and only payroll checks, could be cashed every payday at the fiscal office annex in Rudder Tower.

Fiscal office administrators should have thought out the results of the actions more thoroughly. The problems can be solved, but this time they should consider more than lines in the Coke building.

(Kari Fluegel is a senior journalism major and a staff writer for The Battalion.)

## Emotions: Everybody's looking for a "quality cool"

I always envied Spock, the science officer on Star Trek. Nothing ever bothered him. He had ice-cube emotions; never worried, never nervous, never scared.



Steve Thomas

He also had pointed ears, so I didn't envy him that much.

The point is that in real life nobody is an ice cube. We all have those feelings of trepidation, anxiety and assorted other nail-biting nerve problems. And that's OK; that's the way we're made, though we often try to act differently.

A good measure of what is important to a person is what he or she gets upset about. If a little boy's doggie dies, he'll probably be heartbroken; much more so than if he breaks mommy's favorite vase.

As people grow older they work hard at controlling their emotions, structuring walls for protection and concealment, which is also OK because nothing is good without control. (Imagine a society of oversensitive, highly-emotional people. Now add nuclear bombs.)

Full-scale emotional wall-building starts in high school, where it's uncool to be uncool. Popular teenagers, with a few exceptions, seem to be the ones who are most adept at apathy. The cliques form and design unwritten rules of membership, usually based on looks, conversational abilities and cool.

The "don't care" attitude strikes everyone from neophyte freshman to student body president.

In college, people graduate to nonchalance. They tolerate other people's emotions more, but real vehemence is still viewed askance, as is heart-on-sleeve self-pity.

But one important lesson we learn in college is that emotions aren't taboo. On the contrary, they give us character. They schematically describe us by pinpointing our unapathetic areas, like a black and white snapshot shows where the light is and where it isn't.

University life is supposed to foster freedom of thought, speech and discussion, theoretically providing an atmosphere of individual development. A professor of mine once told me students learn two things from college: how to learn and how to screw up.

Sometimes I think I'm learning the latter too well.

But I think the prof's point was that college is a training ground where we are provided obstacles and given the opportunity of fighting our way through them. Those obstacles create emotional stress, and if you don't encounter and deal with emotional stress, you sit still, going nowhere, like a dirt clod.

In the words of the advertisement: no pain, no gain.

The highly successful people I've known have all had the unique ability of calmly expressing their most adamant feelings, but they didn't acquire the skill overnight, I'm sure.

Possibly what we are all looking for is this kind of "quality cool," some

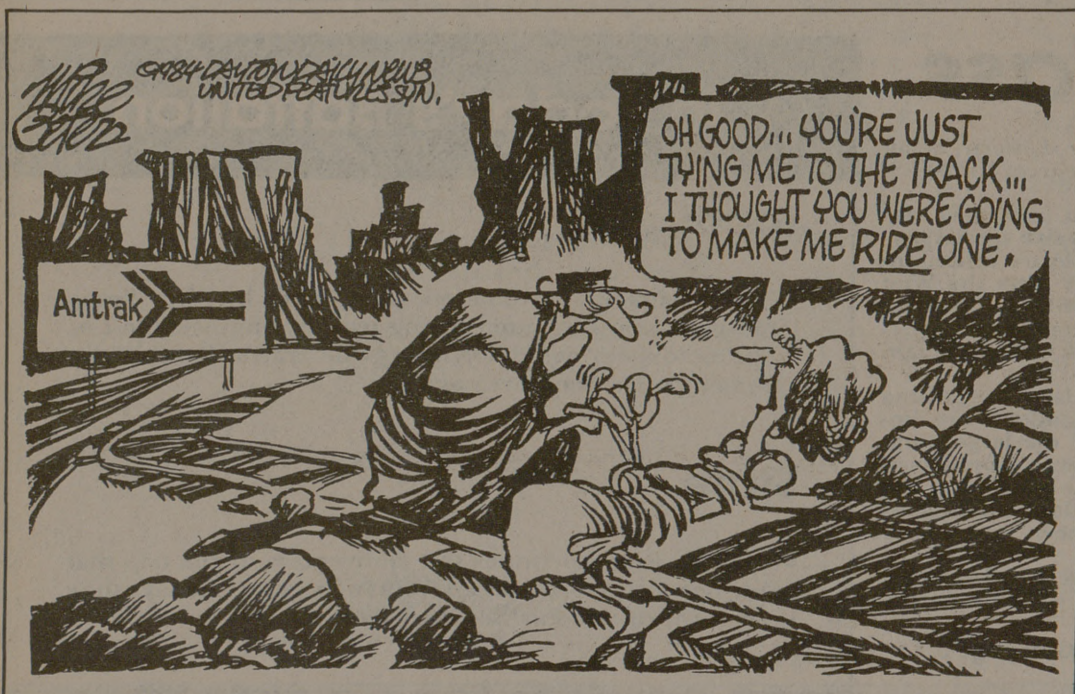
method of expressing deep-felt emotion while retaining a semblance of

dignity. I think it's an honorable goal worth striving for. But getting there may be a steep climb up a great mountain.

That's not a reason to quit. It's a reason to try harder. Facing emotion, thinking about them, trying to understand them, discovering the truth they reveal: all these lead to deeper self-understanding, more self-respect and inevitably, a better self.

After all, Spock couldn't be happy either.

(Steve Thomas is a senior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion.)



## Letter:

Prairie View articles praised by reader

Editor:

I would like to applaud Ms. Zimmermann for her series of articles (which ran July 18-20) concerning Prairie View A&M.

This series was both interesting and informative. I must agree that "a bell tower is an incredibly petty thing to have when the bricks could be used to fill holes in the walls at Prairie View."

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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.

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