

# Opinion

## Students invade College Station

The seasonal invasion of Aggies is underway again. In less than a week, this sleepy summer school of less than 14,000 students has been transformed into an overflowing mass of traffic jams and lines.

The bookstores, supermarkets, banks, restaurants, and clubs are greeting the 36,000-plus students, anxiously awaiting dollars not yet spent.

It's the time when students earnestly make beginning-of-the-semester resolutions to settle into steady study habits and to make a 4.0. For freshman it's time to learn what the freedom of going to college away from home and to pull out their maps to find their way.

While it's a beginning for many things on campus, the campus was not void of action during the summer months.

•First, a few days after the Spring semester ended, the senior finals issue was settled. Acting on the Faculty Senate's recommendation, President Frank E. Vandiver abolished the policy allowing graduating seniors to be exempt from their final exams. Present sophomores, juniors and seniors need not worry though, this year's freshmen class is the first that will start this new tradition.

•After a long court battle — that may well continue — the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Texas A&M University will have to recognize the Gay Student Services as an official University Organization.

•If you need cash, dig your PULSE or IMPACT cards out of your pockets or prepare to wait in an endless line at the Memorial Student Center to cash a check. The cashiers at the Coke Building will no longer cash personal or payroll checks.

The Battalion Editorial Board

## The English massacre: Language abused

I recently received a letter from my father.

"Dearest Sarah," he wrote. "I have basked in the refugence of the rufulence of that rarest of gems, a letter from you, since the missive arrived, much appreciated and much enjoyed."

For those of you who don't speak the language of sesquipedalian, that translates, "I got your letter and really enjoyed it."

But my father would never say it that way.

He is a doctor, not a writer, but his all-consuming passion is extravagant language. To him, language contains an infinitude of textures, shades, harmonies and nuances. He never tires of looking up new words.

To me, this love is paradoxical. Dad is



Sarah Oates

a stickler for absolute correctness in both the written and spoken word. It seems to me that someone who winces when he hears a mispronounced word, pales at misspellings and is hard put not to cry aloud at misuses of language would be equally obsessive about tightness and clarity. Not my Dad.

My philosophy is, if a word contains more than 10 syllables and no one has ever heard it, don't use it.

My father would argue that if it contains less than 10 syllables and can be found in just any old dictionary you have at hand, it should be avoided at all costs. After all, since when is he communicating to the dullards who rarely use a dictionary and probably don't even own one that is current and complete?

I think he chooses his words according to the "three D's": difficult to find, difficult to spell and difficult to pronounce.

He's very creative at working these \$10 words into a conversation. For example:

"Gee, Dad, I've never been there before."

"Well, darling, it stands to reason that if you've never been there, why, you certainly haven't been there before, don't you agree? Of course, dear, these little pleonasm just love to jump into conversation."

But I fooled him that time by smoothly replying, "Yeh, redundant, but not quite tautological."

I may gently poke fun at him, but my father's penchant for grandiloquence has made me increasingly aware that, as James Kilpatrick and William Safire (whose books are permanently enshrined in my father's bedside stand) have lamented, written language has been treated carelessly.

It's insidious.

A few weeks ago I horrified my father into a few more white hairs by misusing the word "hopefully." I said something along the lines of "Hopefully, I'll graduate by 1985." The old boy-did-I-catch-you-on-that-one twinkle came into Dad's eye. I immediately, but still too late, realized my error.

"I just know that you meant to say 'I hope,'" he said, wagging a finger at me. "God forbid, darling, it might creep into your writing."

Oh no, it won't. Since that episode I've become very aware of just how often that word is misused.

But when it comes right down to it, who really cares? Well, if you had lived with my father for all of those years, you'd care. Boy would you care.

Fancy words are fun to use when directed at the proper audience. Otherwise, their beauty is wasted. But my father gleefully tosses out his fancy words at everyone.

There is, I think a fine line separating pretentious language usage and outright language abuse. I mean, what's the point of writing something if it's so complicated that your audience can't understand you? And what's the point of writing something if you don't care whether it's written correctly?

Sarah Oates is a senior journalism major and reporter for The Battalion.

## WELCOME HOME AGGIES!



## Prayer bill opens new can of worms

by ART BUCHWALD

Columnist for the Los Angeles Times Syndicate

Just before going off to Texas the president signed one of his favorite bits of legislation, the one permitting students to use public schools after hours to hold prayer meetings and other religious activities.

The president was so excited to have such a law that he failed to read the small print in the bill. Any student organization can use the classrooms, when school is not in session, for extracurricular activities, religious or otherwise, without interference from the school board.

What started out as a victory for conservative prayer-in-school organizations has now become a can of worms for school officials.

Students have already lined up at the Gary Slaughter High School to book their rooms for the fall term.

The first one to apply for space after school was Timothy Higgins, president of the Friends of Jerry Falwell Bible Study Class.

The principal, now backed by the federal law, said, "You can have Room 167 from 3 to 6 every Thursday, Timothy."

"God bless you, sir."

"And God bless you, Timothy."

The next one to apply was Elvis Gregory, who said he represented the Disciples of Reverend Moon.

The principal became flustered. "Are you going to use our classroom for prayers?"

"I don't have to tell you what we're using the classroom for."

"All right, you can have Room 234, but no collecting money in the hall."

"The Reverend Moon blesses you."

"Get out of here."

The third student to apply was Marian Beechnut.

"My group would like a classroom after school."

The principal smiled. Marian was an outstanding student. "Of course. What group are you representing?"

"The Daughters of American Atheists," Marian replied. "There is no God and the sooner the students learn it the better off they will be."

"You're not going to use my classroom to preach atheism!" the principal shouted. "What kind of public school do you think this is?"

"Before you say no, I should warn you our lawyer is prepared to take you to court to see we get our room."

"You can have Lecture Hall B in the basement next to the boiler."

"It's pretty hot down there."

"So is hell, and you people might as well get used to it."

The principal knew he was in trouble when a student known as "Fidel the Fearless," dressed in Army fatigues, came in. "Buenos dias," Fidel said. "I

would like headquarters for my cell."

"What cell?"

"The First of May Teenagers for a Marxist Revolution, Cadre 189."

"I can't give a classroom to a Communist front organization."

"We're not a Communist front organization. We're Communists. We'd like a big classroom, as we expect to recruit from the downtrodden and persecuted students who have been corrupted by your American school system."

At the end of the day the principal called the school board president. "This place is a madhouse. I've had to give classrooms to atheists, Communists, Hell's Angels, Sons of the Ku Klux Klan and the Americans for Cheaper Marijuana Club. Do I have to go along with all this?"

"We have no choice. It's the only way Reagan could get prayer back in schools."

## Set ups: assumption of guilt

JOLLY — From the cardboard and plastic speaker on the dashboard I heard the news crackle in. After five months and 29 hours, auto magnate John Delorean had been found innocent on all eight counts involved with his arrest on cocaine trafficking charges.



Donn Friedman

It seems justice has been served. A victim of unfair entrapment had been found innocent of wrongdoing.

Were the government agents who had orchestrated the operation guilty of trying to drag a well-known jet-setter into the gutter for the sake of sport? Did the Federal Bureau of Investigation think Delorean was involved in something illegal, but couldn't quite get enough evidence to convict him?

Delorean, with his car manufacturing company situated in troubled Northern Ireland, could have been involved in many different things. He could have been gun-running to Northern Ireland, or maybe he refused an American intelligence sponsored plan to do as much.

Why not? They got Al Capone for paying his taxes.

The jury of six men and six women who acquitted Delorean were most likely not quite his peers. They were most likely representative of a much lower income bracket.

Yes, this case once again shows that a rich white man with the best lawyers can beat the rap. But what if Delorean had been Rufus, a black man who drove a Cadillac with white fur on the dash?

Rufus, and people in similar situations, should be able to receive the same protection in the courtroom as the auto magnate did. All persons charged with crime should receive the benefit of being innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Set-ups and sting operations deny this presumption of innocence.

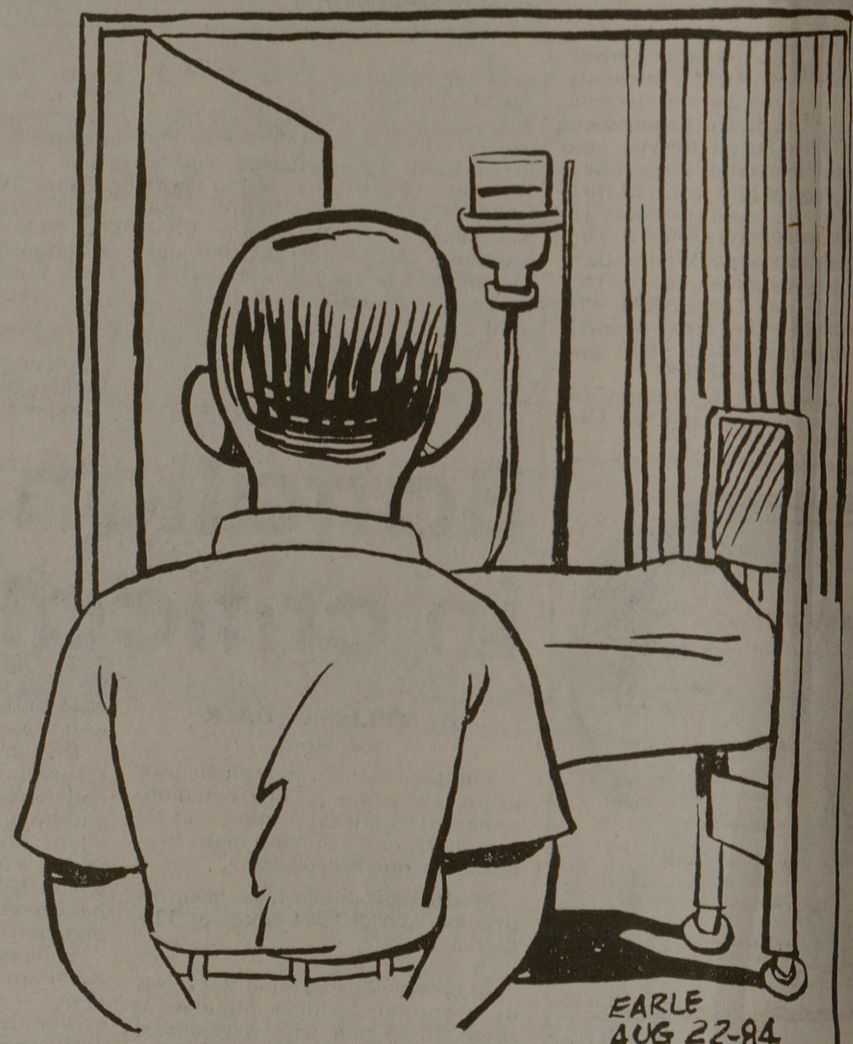
The kind of carrot-on-a-stick game used by the law enforcement agencies to trap Delorean is not an appropriate strategy for crime control. Enough crime is committed as it is, the kind of crime that allows no debate.

That kind of crime is the real thing. And that's what the law was intended to guard against — not staged pseudo-crimes.

Donn Friedman is a senior journalism major and staff columnist for The Battalion.

## Slouch

By Jim Earle



"We're pulling for you, Bill Robinson."

**The Battalion**  
USPS 045 360  
Member of  
Texas Press Association  
Southwest Journalism Conference

**The Battalion Editorial Board**

Bill Robinson, Editor  
Stephanie Ross, Managing Editor  
Shelley Hoekstra, City Editor  
Brigid Brockman, News Editor  
Kathy Wiesepape, Editorial Page Editor  
Kelley Smith, News Editor  
Ed Cassavoy, Sports Editor

**The Battalion Staff**

Assistant City Editors.....  
Melissa Adair, Michelle Powe  
Assistant News Editors.....  
Bonnie Langford, Kellie Dworaczek  
Senior Reporters.....  
Patrice Koranek, Robin Black  
Staff Writers.....  
Ed Alanis, Shawn Behlen,  
Dena Brown, Dainah Bullard,  
Leigh-Ellen Clark, Tony Cornett,  
Suzy Fisk, Patti Flint  
Kari Fluegel, Donn Friedman,  
Bob McGlohon, Karla Martin  
Kimberlee D. Norris, Sarah Oates  
Jan Perry, Lynn Rae Povec, James R. Walker  
Copy Writer.....  
Karen Bloch,  
Copy Editors.....  
Kathy Breard, Kaye Pahmeier  
Photographers.....  
John Makely, Peter Rocha,  
John Ryan, 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.

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

**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.

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. Editorial staff phone number: (409) 845-2630. Advertising: (409) 845-2611.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.