

All graduates deserve chairs

A posthumous degree — a final tribute to a dead student. This year's list of degree candidates includes Pamela Sue Reynolds, a physical education major from Valley Mills, and Bill Robinson, a journalism major from Round Rock. Both have died. Robinson was close to our staff, Reynolds was not. Both deserve this memorial, a posthumous degree.

Though gone, Robinson remained a spiritual part of The Battalion Editorial throughout the semester. He was selected to be The Battalion's Editor last spring.

This should have been Robinson's last day as Battalion Editor, but it wasn't. He died after an automobile accident before producing his first paper of the semester.

Robinson would have loved the excitement of this semester. He would have loved his job as Battalion Editor. He should have written the editorials. He should have handled the irate phone calls: the raving fundamentalists, the insulted Citizens for Decency, the angry anti-apathyists. Unfortunately, he was here only in spirit this semester. Those of us who are graduating would like to have him with us in spirit as we end our college careers; we wanted to save an empty seat for Bill.

The University says it cannot leave an empty seat for posthumous degree candidates when diplomas are handed out. The registrar says it's hard enough to organize 1,100 students. He says leaving an empty chair for posthumous graduates is out of the question. When degrees are handed out next week, one will bear the name of James William Robinson, the other, Pamela Sue Reynolds. But they deserve more.

There are two reasons the University should take the extra time to set up folding chairs for these students and for any students who are awarded posthumous degrees in the future.

First, as a reminder to each of us of how lucky we're to be alive. Second, out of respect for their parents and friends.

Posthumous degrees are a fine way to remember those Aggies who died just short of gaining a degree. An empty chair at graduation would be fine reminder. It seems the University could spare a chair.

Rehashing a semester

The semester is coming to a close and with the end of the semester comes a new Battalion staff and a new Editorial Board. For this, our last editorial, we offer a rehash of our opinions on local issues this semester:

1) The Goodrich death was not solely the fault of the cadets involved in the hazing incident. It is the fault of a system that has turned its head and said: "Boys will be boys," when confronted with hazing incidents through the years. The system must be kept in check; never again should administrators, students, faculty or staff treat hazing in that manner.

2) Texas A&M University should give into liberty and recognize the Gay Student Services organization. It's not a matter of approving of homosexuality. Instead, it is a matter of allowing a group of people the right to assemble, to meet and to post notice of meetings. Allow the GSS to be recognized and they will disappear into the myriad of over 500 campus organizations. Continued oppression of the GSS is a denial of basic rights given to all Americans.

3) The Student Government's decision to confront the GSS recognition dispute was a step in the right direction. The Student Senate's action should become a precedent. Student Government, if it is ever to be an adequate voice of the students, must take stands on important issues—even if people might not like them for their decisions.

4) Women should be allowed equal access to all campus organizations. It's time to end sexist traditions at Texas A&M — separate but equal was once a tradition, too.

5) Speaking of separate but equal, racism unfortunately continues to be a tradition at Texas A&M. Earlier this year, a black student was chased by a truck-driving bigot who yelled "nigger" at her. Thursday, a Rebel flag fluttered at the bonfire construction site. The university community must take steps to make Texas A&M a desirable place for students of any race, creed or color to attend.

6) Students need to realize that Aggie spirit doesn't come in a bottle. Too many Aggies have already died in alcohol related car wrecks. Over half of all Aggies remembered at Silver Taps ceremonies died in alcohol related accidents.

7) Something must be done about the train tracks which split the campus in two. The tracks are dangerous. Adequate markings aren't enough to avoid a train derailment. This isn't a subject that should be looked at in retrospect after a disaster by saying: if only...

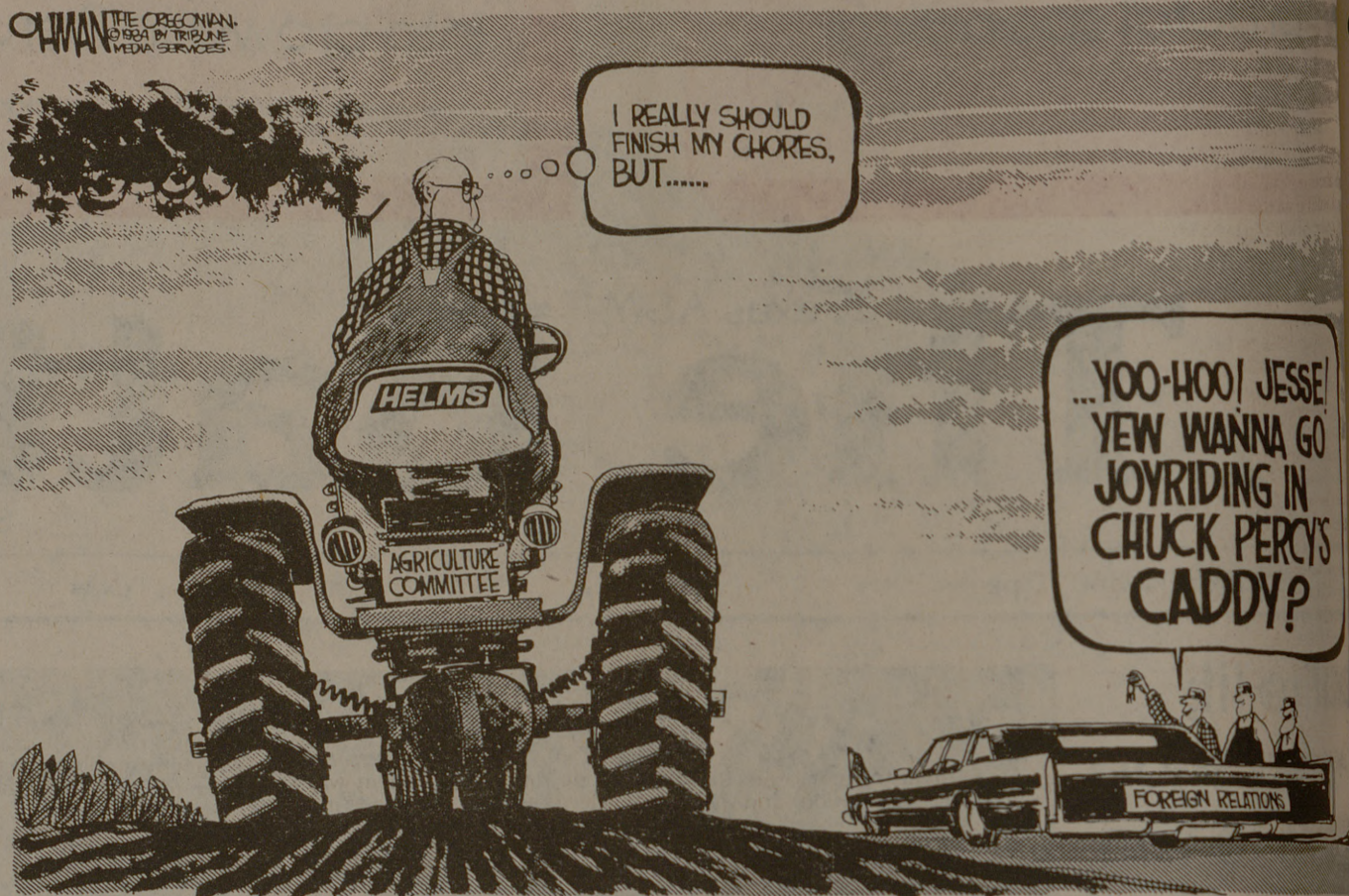
8) Traditions can be great things, but blind adherence to tradition is akin to ignorance. Blind disobedience is also akin to ignorance.

The members of The Battalion Editorial Board have no malice in their hearts toward any group. We seek only one thing, to make people reevaluate their position: to make people think.

Next week, a new editorial staff will take over the paper. Be sure to tune in. Same Batt time, same Batt station.

The Battalion Editorial Board

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- Ed Cassavoy, Sports Editor



Yale strike opens can of worms

Yale University is having a bit of trouble. Its secretarial union, Local No. such-and-such, has gone on strike, effectively shutting down the school of the boola-boo.



Robert McGlohon

Usually, this would be a small news item on the back pages for everybody but the New Haven Register. It's not, however. Yale, egalitarian institution that it is, has decided to share this experience with the rest of the world.

How? By turning a local wage dispute into a test case for "comparable pay for comparable work."

Now, this is not the same thing as "equal pay for equal work," which is something we're supposed to have today. The difference, you see, is the word "comparable."

Once you get past the rhetoric and the picket lines and the unionists and the anti-unionists, the whole crux of the Yale strike comes down to one thing: secretaries want to be paid as much as truck drivers.

Which is reasonable, really. Truck drivers are better paid.

However, things become unreasonable when the Yale local says why its members are paid less than truck drivers, and how it's going to go about changing that.

Basically, the secretaries say they're paid less because they're women. There's a grain of truth to this, but only

a grain. Secretaries historically have been women, except for a time back in the Roaring 20's when male secretaries were a short-lived fad. And because this role has fallen to women, secretarial positions have been low paying, just as have teaching and nursing jobs. After all, the reasoning went, women don't need high pay because their husbands support them.

But that's no longer the case. While sexism, like racism, is still with us, the day of rigid role models is no longer. If women want to be paid as much as truck drivers, they can be truck drivers.

The government's role in this process should be limited. It should outlaw the use of force, by either employer or employee, and attempt to secure honest and straight-forward negotiations.

The Yale secretaries, however, aren't limiting their tactics to striking and negotiating; they're trying to expand — more, drastically than they realize, I think — the government's role in employee/employer disputes. They would like, and have asked for, government intervention to enforce "comparable pay for comparable work."

Although fair and reasonable on the surface, this concept is misguided and, taken to its logical extreme, would undermine the entire American economic community.

It's been a popular pastime in America to refer to "liberals" and "socialists" in the same breath, distinguishing the two only by matter of degree. At the same time, usually, conservatives would

mutter darkly about the "liberal welfare state," and think chaotically about the spiracies and elitists and the pervence of the will of the American people.

Actually, however, socialism is precisely much of a dead beast — its performance in Asia and Europe accomplished. The radical left, in fact, is more closely related to fascism. (By radical left I don't mean liberalism, anymore — Bircher means conservative.)

In this, I'm using the original meanings of fascism and socialism. While socialism has come to connote liberalism gone wild, it denotes government ownership of industry. While fascism has come to connote fanatic nationalism, racism, it is more basically described as government control of industry.

And "comparable pay for comparable work" would bring us uncomfortably close to the brink of fascism. If accepted, it would put control of wages, all wages, not just those of secretaries and truck drivers — in the hands of government, taking it from the marketplace, and resulting in chaos.

Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not a member of the Phil Gramm Memorial Society for the Protection of the Free Market and Rich Peoples' Gold. I don't think the free market is the best and end all of the economy. I simply believe the free market is a good place to start, a place to work from.

The Yale secretaries, however, would bypass it altogether.

Bob McGlohon is a weekly columnist for The Battalion.

LETTERS:

Where else but Texas A&M?

If you don't think Texas A&M is a very unique institution, think again.

Where else could you pay over a million dollars for a football coach who produces a worse record than his much lower paid predecessor?

Where else could you find the world's largest bonfire and have signs in every cafeteria on campus stating to use one napkin and save a tree?

Where else could you find two weeks given to pre-registering 35,000 people for a regular semester and only five hours to registering 15,000 people for a summer semester?

Where else could you find a million dollars spent on a clock that does not keep accurate time?

Where else could you find people putting forth great effort to keep a gay organization from being officially recognized and then say women can't be in the band because the band members must sleep together in order to be good?

Where else could an institution's leader say letting women into a band will hurt our national defense during the time a woman is running for vice president of the United States?

Where else could you find fraternity hazing acceptable under the label of "motivational exercise"?

Where else could you find fraternities and sororities not officially recognized at the same time the area's largest fraternity and sorority lives on campus?

Where else could you find hundreds of students tramping through campus fountains on cold, windy days?

Where else could you find a student "service" committee spending one en-

tire semester studying the need for change machines and propose locating them all in the Corps area which services less than 10 percent of the student population?

Where else could you find thousands of students turning out to protect "sacred grass" and not bat an eye when a "sacred tree" is destroyed for an egotistical monument?

No where but TAMU, a very "unique" place to be.

John Kubenka
Class of '83

Don't bargain with Ags over turning off bonfire

EDITOR:

To K. Mathei and K. Wilks:

Where do you get off trying to "bargain" with Aggies in this way. I don't know if you have some strange passion for trees or if you think one (a tree) should be mailed to each poor family in Texas so they can heat their houses and apartments.

I can't understand why you think you are going to stop the Bonfire by showing your childish disrespect for a war memorial.

One other thing, this memorial, it seems to me, should be respected by all Americans since the Aggies it represents were killed fighting for the United States and Americans like you and me. That makes the grass yours to respect even if you are not an Aggie.

So pull your head out and think about what you say the next time you write a letter!

Bryan Jones
Class of '87

The Battalion

USPS 045 360
Member of
Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Conference
In memoriam
Bill Robinson, 1962-1984, Editor

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Editorial Policy

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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.

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 holidays and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$10.00 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$55 per year. Advertising rates furnished on request. Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McNeal Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843. Editorial staff phone number: (409) 845-2828. Advertising: (409) 845-2811. Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.