

OPINION

Final amen to GSS brouhaha

By now, the letters "GSS" in a headline cause most readers to skip to the next story. During the years of legal battles for recognition, especially this year, the GSS frequently found mention in The Battalion and other regional and state newspapers. This media saturation has left many people feeling generally apathetic about the plight of gay students at Texas A&M.

The Gay Student Services was finally recognized as a University-sanctioned organization Wednesday. At long last, the controversy and media hype are over. Amen.

The GSS has received the recognition it deserved 10 years ago. Now, the students of Texas A&M have received the break they deserve. The group will begin to function as an on-campus organization and probably will blend in with other campus-oriented groups.

Protestors of the GSS are still as common on campus as fleas on a stray mutt, but ten years of opposition was more than long enough. It's time to put the controversy to rest.

Let's allow the GSS to fade into well-deserved obscurity and do what the group set out to do originally — provide services for homosexual students.

The Battalion Editorial Board

Hugs are a daily health requirement

A group from Pepperdine University recommends you need a daily allowance of four a day to survive, eight for maintenance and 12 for growth.

Nancy Jumper
Guest Columnist

The magical formula suggested above consists of a simple hug from a friend.

A hug means to put ones arms around and hold closely, according to Webster's New World Dictionary.

My definition of a hug consists of just plain ole fun.

I have been a hug therapist, one who has developed the ability and techniques to hug, for three years. During this time, I have learned that you must be willing to receive hugs as well as give them.

Through my years of experience, I have found a hug is the warmest greeting you can give a person because you are sharing all of yourself with that person at one time.

A hug can stop an argument, console a friend and say something you just can't find the words to say.

Not only is a hug an old-fashioned way of greeting someone and saying "Howdy," but scientific research indicates that the theory of stimulation by touch is absolutely necessary for our physical as well as our emotional well-being.

How about that. I knew that all the time and I'm a journalism major.

Here are my helpful hints for hugging:

- Hug anybody, anytime, anywhere (exercise caution, fellas).
- You can do it any place, from the poorly lit breezeway of the Commons to the elbow-room at the Dixie Chicken. It requires no special setting although romantic places do exist on campus.
- It is necessary for me to remind you, hugging is not acceptable during a class lecture, while you are eating or trying to impress a new acquaintance that may have potential.
- Hugs can be spontaneous or planned. Sometimes the most fun are "just because or surprise" hugs.
- You must remember that not everyone enjoys a hug. They might value their space, so always ask permission first or indicate in advance that you plan to hug an individual.
- It is also fine to be the huggee instead of the hugger. Just ask.
- The extra added "pat" can mean several things. A note to all fellas: you "pat" your dog not your girl unless you are consoling her. Also, be careful where you "pat" — some females have a tough right-hook.
- Sometimes sound effects occur such as: "WHOOPI," "Thank you. I really needed that," (sigh) and "gosh, you smell good!"
- Always remember a hug is free. It doesn't even cost a quarter.
- Hug often and
- Hug well.

If you would like to join the fun and celebrate the third annual "Hug Holiday" on Saturday, June 15, here are several types of hugs according to "The Hug Therapy Book" for you to experiment with while you are stretching your arms around huggable people.

- The bear hug, my favorite, which occurs when one embraces another in a strong, powerful grip that will last 10 to 20 seconds or more. It creates a feeling of warmth, support and security. Be careful — sometimes if you squeeze too tight it will stop the breathing process.

- The A-frame hug which occurs when two people stand facing each other with their arms around the other's shoulders, sides of the head touching and bodies leaning forward with no touching below the shoulders.

- A cheek hug which is tender or gentle and expresses a spiritual quality. It can be experienced sitting, standing or while one is sitting and the other is standing, because full body contact is not required.

- A sandwich hug which is for three people. Usually one is in the middle and the other two are hugging that one individual.

- A grabber-squeezer hug, my runner-up favorite, happens when one hugger runs to the other, throwing the arms around him or her giving a quick squeeze. It usually occurs when one is in a hurry or in a playful mood.

- A group hug which is used by a group of friends participating in a project or activity. The group forms a circle with arms around each other and all squeeze at the same time.

- A back-to-front hug or the waist-grabber which occurs when one approaches the other from the back, wraps their arms around the waist and gives a squeeze.

- A heart-centered hug, everyone's favorite, is considered the highest form of hugging. It begins with direct eye contact, the arms of each are placed around the waist, shoulders or back. It may last several minutes because there is no time limit. The heart-centered hug represents care, tenderness and support for each of the huggers.

- A custom-tailored hug which represents any type of hug an individual requires at a particular time.

You should hug other than when you are at family reunions, when a buddy scores a point for the team or when you haven't seen a friend for a long, long time.

Please remember, hugging is fun and creates a feeling of worth for all those involved.

I am a huggable person. I must admit, I have been swung, dropped and squeezed. Even my knees have been weakened from a hug (it was a really good one).

These hazzards, treats and more adventures come from hugging. Good luck in discovering and perfecting the art of hugging.

Nancy Jumper is a senior journalism major.

Where did the original Doonesbury magic go?

One of the most popular books in my high school library was *Doonesbury: The Original Yale Cartoons*. The magic contained in those pages was incredible. Mike the Mix, Megaphone Mark, and B.D. seemed painfully real. The cartoons made a statement about life, but they also made the reader laugh.



Loren Steffy

Few comics strips have had the national impact that *Doonesbury* has. During the 1970s, Garry Trudeau's social satire graced the comic and editorial pages of numerous newspapers across the country. Zonker, Mike, Mark, B.D., Duke, and of course Jimmy Thud-pucker became national heroes.

Then in 1981, Trudeau took a leave of absence from the cartoon world. When *Doonesbury* returned, it had undergone a startling metamorphosis. Artistically, the strip hadn't changed. Zonker hadn't shaved or gotten a haircut. But the content had been updated. Mike had married, gotten a job with an ad agency and settled into Reagan's America.

The characters weren't the only ones

who changed. Garry Trudeau was also updated for the '80s. In the pre-sabbatical *Doonesbury* the primary objective was humor. Naturally, Trudeau stepped on some toes, but it was done with the goal of a good guffaw in mind. The strips frequently had no social or political undertones. They were just plain hilarious, such as the one where Zonker takes his huge submarine for a ride in the tiny pond near Walden.

Since his return, Trudeau has fallen victim to the "Gee, I'm a really great guy syndrome." Somewhere he figured out that he was one of the leading cartoonists in the business, and that he had a remarkable flair for social satire.

The neo-*Doonesbury* aims for social satire and hopes that it catches some humor along the way. The revised strip is strained, frequently going out of its way to abuse public figures, and the slick-witted humor of the old days is lost in the process.

Enter Frank Sinatra. This week's strips have dealt with Sinatra's alleged connections with the Mafia and the honorary doctorate recently awarded to him.

Obviously, Trudeau feels that Sinatra's recognition warrants a week's worth of abuse. But his scathing attack on Old Blue Eyes merely demonstrates

his desire to go to any lengths for social satire. It also shows his lack of regard for humor.

The subway vigilante spoof is funny. The USA for Africa spoof has its moments of humor. But the Sinatra abuse seems more like an expression of personal contempt. Why pick on Frank? With Reagan at the height of foot-in-mouth disease, Trudeau's tirades of Sinatra seem inappropriate.

I don't mind satire, even if it makes point at the expense of others, but where is the point to the anti-Frank campaign? The Sinatra strips fall well below Trudeau's par. They border on bad taste and come closer to being associations than humorous social satire.

I keep hoping Trudeau will refocus his lost wit. I long for the chance to return to Walden and watch Zonker at his submarine for a spin around the pond. I long for the days when *Doonesbury* was funny for funny's sake, not abusive for Garry Trudeau's ego's sake.

Trudeau should do what I used to do in high school — go to the library and check out *Doonesbury: The Original Yale Cartoons*. Maybe he, too, can discover the magic locked within the pages.

Loren Steffy is a junior journalism major and the Opinion Page editor for *The Battalion*.

LETTERS

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. Letters must be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

'Gay' denotes joy, happiness

EDITOR:

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Dear Editor,

We have an alarming problem in our country today in that a vast majority of people are defiling the use of the English language.

Since when does the word 'gay', which means merry, cheerful, and jolly, apply to homosexuality?

How can a word describing a happy and joyful life be descriptive of a lifestyle that is characterized by depression, anxiety, insecurity, pain, disease, and suicide? I liken it to the misuse of the word 'love.'

Love is not made in a night of sweat and passion under the sheets, but through a life of self-denial, giving and concern for the well being of others. Jesus Christ himself said, "Greater love has no man than one who lay down his life for a friend."

I would hope people, especially in the media, would use a far greater degree of wisdom in choosing their words. I am gay, but I'll never have to hide in a closet for it because I'm not a homosexual. I live a life of joy and fulfillment, and it comes from having a relationship with my Creator.

Jim McMann

The message behind 'Rambo'

EDITOR:

On Tuesday, June 11, The Battalion printed an editorial written by Karl Palmeyer. In this editorial Mr. Palmeyer commented on Sylvester Stallone's new movie "Rambo: First Blood Part II." He stated that the movie glorified war without portraying the negative aspects of war. That may be true, but "Rambo" is popular because it has touched America's newly revived patriotic feelings. The people in this country are now realizing that the brave men who fought in Vietnam deserve respect. One can argue about whether it was right for America to get involved in Vietnam, but one must acknowledge that the Vietnam

vets didn't deserve the scorn and ridicule that they received. They didn't deserve getting spit on as they returned home.

America is responding to "Rambo" because we are tired of being humiliated by terrorists in Iran, we are angered by East German thugs killing our military officers and we are tired of the consolidation of marxist Sandinista influence in Nicaragua.

One more thing about "Rambo." The bad guys who were Americans were not portrayed by uniformed military personnel. The bad guys were the white shirts and ties of the bureaucrat. Americans intuitively know that the bureaucrats lost the war in Vietnam and they now know that the Vietnam vets deserve our gratitude and thanks.

Murray E. Moore

Columnist shows compassion

EDITOR:

Bravo! to Loren Steffy's editorial on the plight of mentally retarded Texas citizens ("Homes won't ruin 'stable' community" — June 7, *The Battalion*).

Steffy's analysis of the housing issue for retarded Texans reflects both insight and compassion. Unfortunately, Gov. White "industrial areas" response to the problem reveals both ignorance of the issue and a callous attitude of shocking proportion.

Dan H. Robertson
College of Business Administration

'Better qualified' means better pay

EDITOR:

People can moan and groan until they are blue in the face about how present teachers are not doing their jobs or fulfilling their obligations to society to teach "Billy" to read. However, until our society realizes that, as with any other occupation, the promise of reward must be sufficient to make teaching a profitable profession, we will have to live with the fact that qualified potential teachers will seek jobs elsewhere (and I mean economical reward, not the "moral satis-

faction of a job well done"). We cannot expect excellence from actual volunteers. My brother, a spring computer science graduate of Texas A&M, earns the same amount today as my mother, a teacher with a master's degree and a decade of experience.

Where will the money to pay teachers come from? From the taxpayers, of course, and that is you and I. We have to make a choice: more money to attract better qualified teachers, or continued mediocrity. Appealing to the vague notions and buzzwords of "better education" or "qualified teachers" without financial commitment is just so much wind.

Incidentally, at least one industry is sinking money into education. Not surprisingly, it is the book publishing industry, out to save its own skin.

Ben Barnett
Class of '87

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Editorial Policy

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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.

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