

OPINION

Someone had to be the bad guy

The most controversial and disliked governmental figure since Richard Nixon announced he's packing his bags and leaving the Reagan administration for a career in private business. David Stockman is leaving Washington.

Stockman, the former director of the Office of Management and Budget, was known for his harsh proposals to control government spending.

He managed to offend just about every special interest group in the country, and even infuriated his own mother with his scathing attacks against government-supported farm recovery programs. Any political career Stockman had planned was virtually destroyed by his lack of popularity.

Yet it was for this same job of doing Reagan's budgetary dirty work that earned him respect. Stockman did what had to be done. No one likes having to face budget cuts, but, as The Battalion has learned this semester, sometimes they are necessary.

Stockman had the rotten job of pointing the finger at the groups that needed to tighten their belts. He did his job with admirable dedication. A known workaholic, Stockman frequently worked around the clock to try to iron out budget problems. His ability to withstand tidal waves of criticism and still attack his duties with dedication and determination was incredible.

Stockman will never win a popularity contest, but his methods of foregoing politics to get necessary results did win him respect. He took the budgetary bull by the horns. Such courageous acts are almost unheard of in the present administration.

True, Stockman did not completely stop the deficit from growing, but he did slow its growth. Following in his footsteps will require a big-footed successor.

The Battalion Editorial Board

Anticipating Live Aid; keeping fingers crossed

I'm optimistic. I hope that Live Aid will make a difference.



Karl Pallmeyer

In my part-time position as music reviewer for At Ease I am sometimes asked for my opinion on various bands. Sometimes my opinions will start an argument. I argue about the music the band makes. The others argue about the money the band makes. Critical discussions of the band's musical ability and examinations of the lyrics in their songs are often put aside with the remark: "Well, they make a lot of money." I believe that music is art, its purpose to entertain and enlighten. It's nice when an artist makes money so that he can support himself and continue creating, but he shouldn't create just so that he can make money. If an artist has talent he should use that talent to make the world a better place.

On Saturday a smorgasbord of artists are going to try to make the world a better place. Some of the most popular acts in pop and rock music will perform at two giant benefit concerts, one at London's Wembley Stadium and the other at Philadelphia's John F. Kennedy Stadium, designed to help the starving people of Ethiopia. These acts won't be getting paid for their performances. In fact these bands will spend quite a bit to cover the expense of setting up their own stage and sound equipment.

The London concert will begin at 6 a.m. (our time) and last until 4 p.m. The Philadelphia concert will begin at 11 a.m. and last until 10 p.m. Due to the

different starting times of the concerts, some bands will be able to play in both London and Philadelphia. Each band will play for about 30 minutes. There will be at least two stages at each stadium and the acts will be scheduled so that there will be as little time as possible between acts. Videotaped appeals for donations will be shown between acts. Appeals have been solicited from performers Dan Aykroyd, Prince and Joe Piscopo, and world leaders Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev. MTV and Houston's Channel 20 will broadcast live the entire concerts while ABC will show concert highlights later that night.

Yes, I'm looking forward to Live Aid. Some of my favorite performers, including Bob Dylan, Neil Young, Dire Straits, Paul McCartney, Eric Clapton, Elvis Costello, Paul Simon, Mick Jagger, Jeff Beck, David Bowie, The Pretenders, Sting, U2, The Cars, Julian Lennon, Tina Turner, Santana, Stevie Wonder and specially re-united versions of Led Zeppelin and The Who, are supposed to be there. But I am also apprehensive.

The size of the audience expected at Live Aid could cause problems. Rock festivals have often been scenes of death. At the Rolling Stones' Altamont concert in 1969, a young man named Meredith Hunter was brutally murdered by the Hell's Angels the Stones hired for security. Mick Jagger and the band watched helplessly as the Hell's Angels sliced Hunter into bits at the foot of the stage. Even at Woodstock, a celebration of peace, three people died.

Live Aid is not the first attempt at a benefit concert. In 1971 George Harrison organized the Concert for Bangladesh. The concert, which featured Har-

ison, Ringo Starr, Eric Clapton, Russell, Billy Preston and Bob Dylan brought in almost \$250,000. Due to production costs and legal hassles very little of the money actually reached Bangladesh. Paul McCartney's Concert for People of Kampuchea, which featured McCartney, The Pretenders, Elio e the Showmen, Queen, Rockpile, Robert Palmer, The Specials and The Who, met with similar problems.

Bob Geldof, organizer of Live Aid, has said that all money received from ticket sales, donations and sale of television rights will go to directly to Ethiopia. The bands will have to pay for their own equipment and transportation. Live Aid will not finance any "official" live album, videocassette or other paraphernalia. One of the major problems with the concerts for Bangladesh and Kampuchea was that the money was distributed through horribly inefficient United Nations organizations. Geldof and his organization will oversee the distribution of Live Aid funds in Ethiopia directly.

By now people are getting tired hearing about Ethiopia. After Live Aid, USA for Africa, Northern Light Hearing Aid, the Christian Artists Benefit Single, the Spanish Artists' Benefit Single, the German Artists' Benefit Single and Joe Bob Briggs' "We Are Weird," many people may wonder, "Can the Ethiopians still be starving?" The people of Ethiopia have been fed. They need help so that they may help themselves. The proceeds from Live Aid will be used to help the Ethiopians support themselves in the future. Maybe then, hopefully, we can go and help feed the rest of the world.

Karl Pallmeyer is a senior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion.

Mail Call

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.

GSS picture slap in the Corps' face

EDITOR:

It is evident, by the front page of Tuesday's (July 2, 1985) Battalion, that you and some members of your staff have absolutely no respect for the students, staff, faculty and especially alumni of Texas A&M University. True, the law states that we must accept the Gay Student Services at Texas A&M; that's not the part that bothers me or my colleagues. Are we going to be subjected to this type of "news reporting" from now on? Must we continually have our faces rubbed in this situation? I am quite sure there are other "news" pictures

that the University public would be more interested in.

This organization may have a marching band, but how can they associate themselves with "The Fighting Texas Aggie Band" comprised of CORPS CADETS that we are so proud of? This banner that was featured in the photograph is a slap in the face to the entire CORPS, especially the band.

By publishing this picture you have alienated many of your readers. I hope you are proud of that. You owe an apology to the CORPS and your readers.

Bryan McMurry
Graduate Student

'D and D' not the root of all evil

Reality isn't always pretty, and sometimes dealing with it can be harsh. When the checks start bouncing, the tests start piling up and the car won't start, it's nice to slip into another world, at least just for a little while.



Loren Steffy

Some people go to the theater and pretend they're a muscle-bound illiterate rescuing MIAs from Vietnam. Others select a tune that fits their mood and crank up the stereo. And still others may open a book or flip on the TV. But some play Dungeons and Dragons.

D and D is a role-playing game. Players create characters on paper and put them in a fantasy setting. They act out the role of their character, having wild adventures, battling hordes of monsters and generally pretending to be something they're not. In D and D four-eyed nerds can become muscle-bound charismatic heroes and vice versa.

Misconceptions about the game continue to grow. I've met people who think it's devil worship, and people who think it's the greatest escape ever invented.

The game can be played for an hour or a lifetime, which is where the problems arise. Many D and Ders, especially younger players, frequently spend hours or even days in this false environ-

ment without ever coming up for a gulp of reality. Obviously, the game is a magnet for every type of looney tune the world has ever known. But Rambo also attracted its share of crazies.

However, most Rambo viewers were playing with a full deck, just as most D and D players are. Naturally, a select bunch of less-than-full-deck players have to spoil it for everyone else.

Over the past few years, several crimes have been inadvertently linked to the game. A student who plays D and D shoots himself in the head and immediately the game is at fault.

Bothered About Dungeons and Dragons (BADD) is an organization formed by a mother who claims her son committed suicide because of the game.

The concern over the D and D-crime relationship is similar to the violent television-violent crime fear of the early 1970s. A woman was doused with gasoline and set on fire in the movie "Fuzz." The day after "Fuzz" aired on television, the incident was reproduced on the streets of Boston and Chicago. There was more to "Fuzz" than one violent incident, but critics immediately attacked one portion of the film as promoting violent crime, instead of judging the movie as a whole.

Mark Twain's classic "Huckleberry Finn" is frequently picked apart and labelled racist, while the over-all anti-racism message is ignored.

And now the anti-Dungeons and Dragons campaign is focusing on the "harmful" effects the game had on a se-

lect few, instead of considering the benefits as well.

Some people think Dungeons and Dragons is devil worship, black magic or just plain evil. Most of these misconceptions spring from ignorance. Parents know TV, they know movies and to an extent, they know music. But D and D is a new concept for them.

My mother never understood that all long hours I spent closeted in my room, I was stretching my imagination and creativity to its limit. She merely noticed the time I spent on it and wondered if such an activity was healthy.

I recently came across my D and D rule books when I was moving, and I realized what an influence the game had on me. I haven't played in several years, but some of the effects — the beneficial effects — still linger.

I opened the Players Handbook, a guide for how to create a character. Page one explains how characters have several attributes: Strength, Intelligence and Wisdom. Pretty simple, at age 12 I'd heard those words before. But they also had Constitution, Dexterity and Charisma, new and rather large words for a pre-teen.

By the time I was 14 the game had expanded my vocabulary two-fold and made me practice my floundering math skills (D and D first introduced me to bell curves). My senior English teacher exempted me from doing vocabulary words. The game had taught me words like "melee," "tome," "peity" and "avarice" long before school did.

The game introduced me to numerous authors including J.R.R. Tolkien, H.P. Lovecraft, Michael Moorcock, Fritz Leiber, Robert E. Howard, Lewis Carroll and Sir Thomas Malory.

If there was one force that kindled my creativity it was Dungeons and Dragons. And it was that creativity that encouraged me to be a writer.

Just like any good thing, Dungeons and Dragons can be abused. Sure, many D and D players have emotional problems. So do many television viewers and movie goers. Many do not.

D and D could be banned, and maybe a crazy kid in Wisconsin wouldn't have crawled through some steam tunnels and later killed himself, but the same could be said for every movie, song or TV show ever connected to a crime.

It's absurd to deprive everyone of television merely because one kid watches one program and sets an old lady on fire. If a kid can't tell what's real and what's "make believe," his problems started long before he encountered television or Dungeons and Dragons.

BADD will continue to try to blame the problems of the few mentally disturbed people on a game rather than face facts: the crimes they're trying to link to D and D were committed by mentally unstable people who were just waiting for something to push them over the edge. Unfortunately that something was Dungeons and Dragons.

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



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

The Battalion Editorial Board

Kellie Dworaczek, Editor
Kay Mallett, John Hallett, News Editor
Loren Steffy, Editorial Page Editor
Sarah Oates, City Editor
Travis Tingle, Sports Editor

The Battalion Staff

Assistant City Editor.....Katherine Har
Assistant News Editors.....Cathie Anderson, Trent Leops
Entertainment Editors.....Cathy Rieley, Walter S
Staff Writers.....Karen Bl
Ed Cassavoy, Jerry Oat
Brian Peas
Copy Editor.....Trent Leops
Make-up Editor.....Ed Cassavoy
Columnists.....Cheryl Clark
Karl Pallmeyer
Photographers.....Greg Ballew
Anthony Caspe

Editorial Policy
The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M University students in reporting, editing and photography at 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.

The Battalion is published Tuesday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday 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 McDaniel Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843. Editorial staff phone number: (409) 845-2031; advertising: (409) 845-2611.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.