

OPINION

Students, act now

Gripes can be heard all over campus concerning the new cable packages offered by McCaw Cablevision. Now A&M students have a chance to turn their gripes into action.

College Station is taking applications for a committee set up to monitor the actions of city franchises such as telephone, gas and cable television companies. College Station Mayor Pro Tem Robert Runnels said the committee will probably look at the cable television issue first.

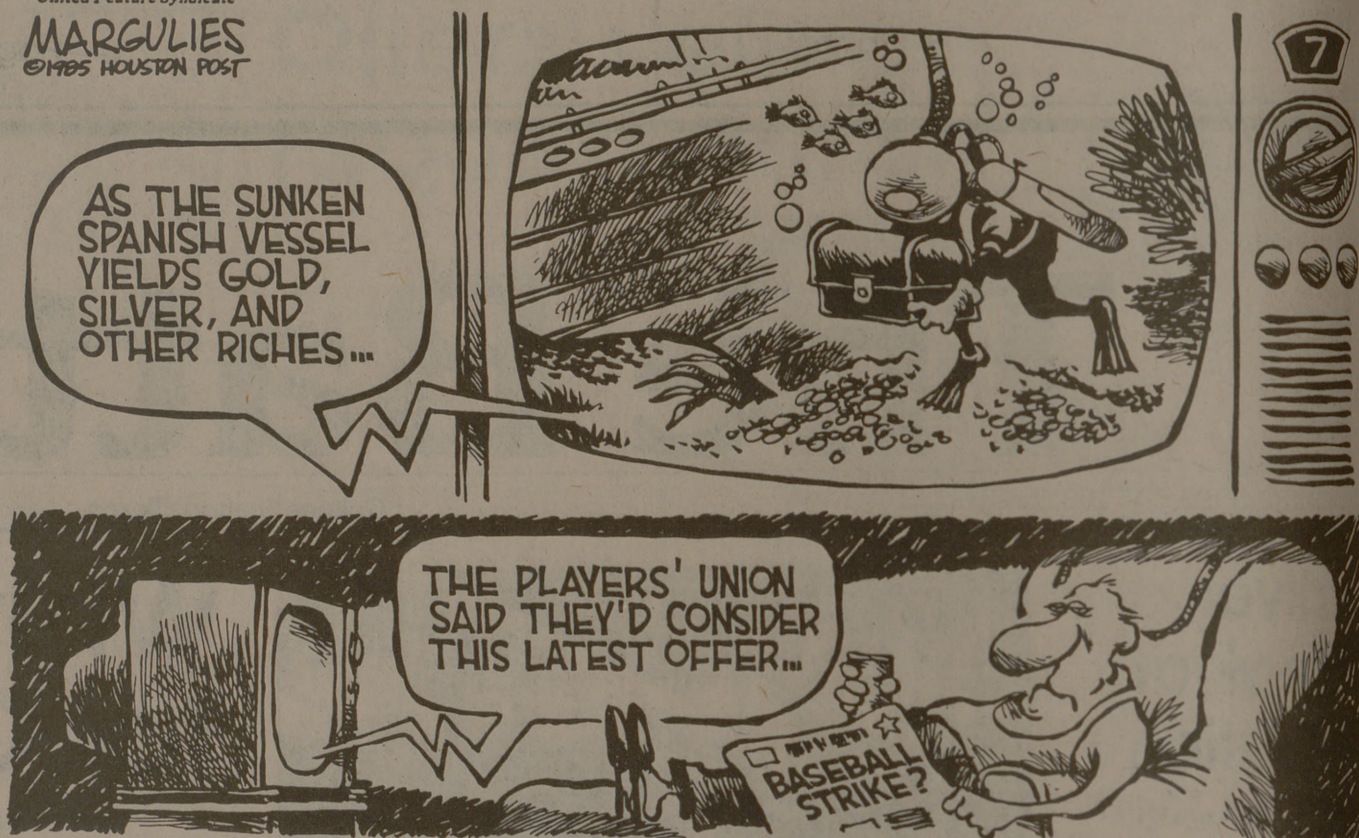
To gain a seat on the Franchise Advisory Committee, fill out an application from the College Station city hall. The applications will be given to city council, and it will select the committee. For more information call 764-3541.

Students account for a large part of McCaw's business, and therefore should voice their opinions. We hope city council will also recognize the need for student participation on the committee.

Cable television affects students directly, and if they don't seize this opportunity to be heard now, they will have no legitimate excuse for complaints about inadequate service later.

The Battalion Editorial Board

United Feature Syndicate
MARGULIES
©1985 HOUSTON POST



The mystery of creation: Genesis and geology

By understanding the first two verses of the Scripture, we can recognize that there is no contradiction between the Bible and geology. The attack against the Bible is merely beating the air.

Mark Lupo
&
Gary Barbee
Guest Columnists

In the original Hebrew, this initial verse of the first chapter of Genesis contains seven words which carry within themselves a sense of independence. These divinely revealed words do not say that in the beginning God "formed" or "made" the world out of certain raw materials.

No, the heavens and the earth were created. This word "created" is "bara" in the original. So that in the beginning God *bara* the heavens and the earth.

In the first two chapters of Genesis three different words are used for the act of creation:

(1) "bara" — calling into being without the aid of pre-existing material (Gen. 1:21,27; 2:3).

(2) "asah" — which signifies the making, fashioning, or preparing out of existing material. For instance, a carpenter can make a chair, but he cannot create one. The works of the Six Days in Genesis are mainly of the order of "asah".

(3) "yatsar" — which means to shape or mold as a potter does with clay. This word is used in Genesis 2:7 as follows: "And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground."

Interestingly, Isaiah 43:7 illustrates the meaning and connection of all three of these words: "every one that is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed, yea, whom I have made."

"Created" signifies a calling into being

out of nothing; "formed" denotes a fashioning into appointed form; and "made" means a preparing out of pre-existing material.

The words "In the beginning" reinforce the thought of God creating the heavens and the earth out of nothing. There is really no need to theorize. Since God has so spoken, let men simply believe. How absurd for finite minds to search out the works of God which He performed at the beginning! "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God" (Heb. 11:3). Who can answer God's challenge to Job concerning creation (see Job 38)?

To understand the first chapter of Genesis, it is of utmost importance that we distinguish the "earth" mentioned in verse 1 from the "earth" spoken of in verse 2. The condition of the earth referred to in verse 2 is not what God had created originally.

Now we know that "God is not a God of confusion" (1 Cor. 14:33). When the Bible states that in the beginning God created the earth, what He created was therefore perfect. The waste and void of the earth spoken of in verse 2 was not the original condition of the earth as God first created it. Would God ever create an earth whose primeval condition would be waste and void?

"Thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens, the God that formed the earth and made it, that established it and created it not a waste, that formed it to be inhabited: I am Jehovah; and there is none else" (Is. 45:18). How clear God's word is. The word "waste" here is "tohu" in Hebrew, which signifies "desolation" or "that which is desolate." It says here that the earth which God created was not a waste.

Why then does Genesis 1:2 state that

"the earth was waste"? This may be easily resolved. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1). At that time, the earth which God created was not a waste; but later on, in passing through a great catastrophe, the earth *did* become waste and void.

So that all which is mentioned from verse 3 onward does not refer to the original creation but to the restoration of the earth.

God created the heavens and the earth in the beginning, but He subsequently used the Six Days to remake the earth habitable. Genesis 1:1 was the original world, Genesis 1:3 onward is our present world, while Genesis 1:2 describes the desolate condition which was the earth's during the transitional period following its original creation and before our present world.

Over a hundred years ago, Dr. Chalmers pointed out that the words "the earth was waste" might be translated as "the earth became waste." Dr. I.M. Haldeman, G.H. Pember, and others showed that the Hebrew word for "was" here has been translated "became" in Genesis 19:26: "His wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." If this same Hebrew word can be translated in 19:26 as "became" why can it not be translated as "became" in 1:2?

The word "became" in 2:7 ("and man became a living soul") is the same word as is found in Genesis 1:2. So that it is not at all arbitrary for anyone to translate "was" as "became" here: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, (but) the earth became waste and void." The earth which God created originally was not waste, it only later became waste.

"In the beginning God created the

heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1) and "in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is" (Ex. 20:11).

Comparing these two verses, we can readily see that the world in Genesis 1:1 was quite different from the world that came after Genesis 1:3.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. In the Six Days God made the heaven and earth and sea. Who can measure the distance that exists between "created" and "made"?

The one is a calling into being things out of nothing, the other is a working on something already there. Man can make but cannot create; God can create as well as make.

Hence, Genesis records that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, but later on the earth had become waste and void due to a tremendous catastrophe, after which God commenced to remake the heaven, earth and sea and all the creatures in them.

Peter 3:5-7 expresses the same thought as well: the heavens and the earth in verse 5 are the original heavens and earth referred to in Genesis 1:1, the earth mentioned in verse 6 that was overflowed with water and which perished is the earth covered with water which became waste and void as mentioned in Genesis 1:2 and the heavens and the earth that now are as spoken of in verse 7 are the restored heavens and earth after Genesis 1:3.

The works of God during the Six Days are quite different from His creative work done in the beginning.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Note that there is no detailed description here. We therefore do not know whether the original heaven and earth were created

instantaneously or through many ages. Was it done in thousands of years? What shape and how large? We do not know that God created the heavens and the earth in the beginning.

We also do not know how many years elapsed between the time of the first verse and that of the second verse of Genesis 1. We do not know when God created the heavens and the earth, how long the period of desolation described in verse 2 lasted.

But we do believe that the original perfect creation must have passed through many, many years before it came waste and void. Such a long period would be enough to cover the so-called pre-historic age. All the years which geology demands and all the so-called geologic periods which it distributes among those years can fall into this time frame.

We do not know how long the earth underwent change nor how many changes there were before it became waste and void because the Scriptures do not tell us these things.

Yet we can affirm that the Bible states that the age of the earth is but a thousand years in length. It merely shows that the history of man is approximately six thousand years old.

We believe that this is the best interpretation of Genesis 1:1-2 because it is more consistent with the rest of the Bible and with the meanings of the Hebrew words. But the reason we wanted to present this argument here is that many have been needlessly frustrated by geological evidence from believing in the literal truth of the Bible.

The Bible was not intended as a science book, but to lead us to God Himself. Careful study shows that the Bible places no upper bound constraint on the age of the earth, therefore geologists places no constraint on the trustworthiness of the scriptures.

Mark Lupo is a graduate student in geophysics. Gary Barbee is a technician in the soil and crop sciences department. Both are members of the organization of Christians on Campus.

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.

Texas needs Bill back

EDITOR:

On Friday, July 26, the man who laid the foundation for the Republican Party in Texas announced his candidacy for Governor. Former Governor Bill Clements declared he wanted his old job back. He has good reason. Mark White has defaulted on many of his campaign promises: lower utilities — nowhere in Texas has this occurred; no taxes — Texas has seen the biggest tax increase in its 150 year history.

While Clements was Governor, he ran the state as an efficient business. He did not spend the state's money on frivolous expenses, such as Mark White's \$25,000 playroom for his children in the Governor's Mansion. Governor Clements also provided leadership while in office even though his was in the minority party.

Sen. Kent Caperton, D-Bryan said, "I think a governor has to lead. It was hard to get Mark White to do that this session. And it may be that he believed that we shouldn't have much legislative progress... If that's what he wanted, he accomplished that, because he was not much of a presence." (Bryan-College Station Eagle; May 30)

Over the past three years we have

seen our state government move into a big financial mess. We need a man in Austin who understands state government and business to get us back on track. The ideal candidate, the man who also laid the Republican foundation, has stepped forward. As Republicans and Texans we need Bill Clements.

Jennifer Hoyt
Class of '88

Mentally ill have right to higher education

EDITOR:

There seems to have been a somewhat pessimistic attitude toward the firefighters on campus for the TAMU Fire Fighting & Prevention School, concerning their lack of respect for time honored Aggie traditions.

I, for one, would like to hail my vote with the firefighters — having just had my application for graduate school rejected because I am afflicted by a mental illness — schizophrenia. Is that another staunch tradition of A&M, to deprive those less fortunate of the right to a proper education?

Have not the mentally deprived — we who have to devote far more effort and discipline to accomplish what the usual student does with ease — just as much a

right to attend the University? Are we not due some consideration for our needs? For that matter, why are homosexuals so openly publicized — even applauded — on campus given front page publicity in fact, when they are at least as ill mentally as a schizophrenic such as myself?

But no, the Board of Regents — whose policies Graduate Admissions no doubt follows — are supported in their prejudices against the less fortunate by none other than Gov. White and his cronies in Austin.

They have devoted considerable effort to legislate out of existence those state institutions which are charged with protecting the rights and privileges of the mentally ill, who have no other means to ensure their well-being. Legal action as was taken by the Gay Student Services; the mentally ill have no such rights.

William H. Clark, II
ex-Aggie

Persecutors as bad as two-percenters

EDITOR:

Every year there are many letters written to the editor from incensed "98 percenters" about "two-percenters" and visitors to our campus who are "disrespectful" of A&M traditions.

While a number of these people may truly be going against tradition intentionally, I'm sure the majority do so out of ignorance. It is my opinion that any Aggie who persecutes someone for being ignorant of tradition is as much a "two-percenter" as those who intentionally flout the traditions. And yes, persecution does occur.

My roommate (who transferred here last spring) has been treated very badly because she quite innocently asked what Muster was and why there was such a fuss about it. Don't expect anyone who has not gone through any orientation here to know every tradition on campus and don't assume that because someone is an upperclassman, they know as much about A&M as a freshman who just got out of Fish Camp.

Besides, are we here to better our education or show the world how petty and tactless we are when we persecute the ignorant?

Nancy Tanner
Class of '87

Pool should change policy

EDITOR:

For the past month, I have gone swimming each evening at the A&M outdoor pool. The two dollar admission fee (for myself and son) seemed a small enough payment for a relaxing swim after a long day of classes and studying.

This past Wednesday I had a very irritating experience when I paid our admission with two dollars worth of pennies, nickels, and dimes. The lifeguard collecting the money made me put the coins in groups of tens because I didn't bring any coin rolls. He said they don't take pennies without coin rolls.

If the pool staff is not able to handle loose change, they should post a notice stating so.

Eve Totin Escobedo
Class of '80

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

The Battalion Editorial Board
Kellie Dworaczky, Editor
Kay Mallett, John Hallett, News Editors
Loren Steffy, Opinion Page Editor
Sarah Oates, City Editor
Travis Tingle, Sports Editor

The Battalion Staff
Assistant City Editor Katherine Hunt
Assistant News Editors Cathie Anderson, Trent Leopold
Entertainment Editors Cathy Riely, Walter Smith
Copy Editor Trent Leopold
Make-up Editor Ed Casarov

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.

The Battalion is published Tuesday 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 McDaniel Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843. Editorial staff phone number: (409) 843-3316. 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, Texas 77843