

# Opinion

## Male chauvinism and recruiting: Two age-old Aggie traditions

A friend — I'll call him Rock — would like to be an athletic host. Unfortunately, one particular prerequisite presents an obstacle to an otherwise over-qualified candidate. He's male. For some incomprehensible reason the Athletic Department would like females to serve as athletic hostesses.



John Hallett

hance recruiting, but I recall something about players taking free excursions to houses of ill-repute from time to time."

"So do you think that A&M officials want young women to compromise themselves for the sake of A&M?" Rock asked.

"No, not really. But many students perceive it that way. Perhaps it's a misconception, but I think the women who have played such an important role in the recruitment of athletes have had a disservice done to them by this policy. To imply that men just can't do the job makes you wonder just what they expect of these women."

"It's a kind of reverse discrimination."

"No, it's not reverse discrimination, it's the continuation of the age-old Aggie tradition that refuses to die — male chauvinism. Women aren't discriminating against you — it's men. . . ."

"But they don't see it as discrimination. They take the traditional view that

women are better suited to entertaining and that it is their duty. Serving as an athletic hostess is one of the few activities in which a female can participate that doesn't have old Ags turning in their graves."

After Rock left, our conversation lingered in my mind.

Why female hostesses? The University doesn't feel they are necessary for recruiting National Merit Scholars or high school valedictorians, so why does the football team need them? It's a sad reflection on the University when the Athletic Department feels it must provide a dating service as part of its recruitment program. I don't believe that Athletic Department officials encourage the hostesses to do anything other than to serve as legitimate escorts for high school athletes during weekend visits to the University. But somehow, I doubt if they discourage overzealousness.

John Hallett is a senior political science major, a columnist and News Editor for The Battalion.

"I just don't understand why you have to be a female to show the recruits around," Rock said. "What can they do that I can't? (No, Rock's not gay. He's an enthusiastic Aggie who would like to do his part to help the football team.) I wonder what they did when this University was an all-male institution?"

"That's a good point," I responded. "I don't know what they did then to en-

## 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 intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

### Saturday Night Special is a person

EDITOR:

The Battalion's editorial opinion on Oct. 16, concerning Saturday Night Specials was yet another case of ignorance in print.

We have been told the Saturday Night Special is an inexpensive, poorly made, readily concealable, and readily available handgun. We are never told is that no one or combination of these factors makes it a tool of crime.

There really is no such gun as a Saturday Night Special. The Saturday Night Special is a person. The Saturday Night Special is a multiple offender. The perpetrator of not just two or three, but many crimes of violence. The Saturday Night Special is usually, but not always a male under 25 years of age. He could come from any financial, racial, or ethnic background in our society.

The Saturday Night Special has learned that threats of violence, particularly armed violence, can be quite profitable, take little time, and penalties if caught are often insignificant.

Saturday Night is the night of the victim. Entertainment and businesses are open late. Much of the population is away from home on full pay envelopes. On Saturday Night, money and victims are seen in greater quantity in every community than on any other night.

The word "Special" refers to a special code of criminal justice reserved for these Saturday Night Specialists and ignores the rights of innocent members of society.

With this definition, I, too, hate the Saturday Night Special.

However, a gun law that would restrict or ban any firearm is a presumption that if you own that particular firearm, you are likely to be guilty of doing something illegal with it. That is a presumption that is diametrically in conflict with the presumption of innocence in this country. It is a violation of the basic freedom which we possess as American citizens.

Jay Merkley

### Just doing their job

EDITOR:

Once and for all — STOP PICKING ON PALLMEYER. A regular column is supposed to express the opinions of the writer, and if you stepped on the column has served its purpose. Karl steps on lots of toes so he must be doing one helluva job. Hail Karl Pallmeyer, for telling the truth and like it should be.

And as for the writers and cartoonists who occasionally deride traditions at A&M, good for them. They don't do it often enough! So many Texas A&M traditions have become jokes over the years. WHOOP! You want tradition, I've got your tradition right here. . . .

Rob Roberts

### Confessions of an ice-thrower

EDITOR:

It has come to my attention that some people disapprove of certain antics at the Baylor-Texas A&M football game, namely ice-throwing and taunting. Well, Ags, I'm good 99 percent of the time, but I've grown tired of the rest of the SWC attitudes toward us. So, yes, Ags, I let out my frustrations by throwing things only because I was not close enough to get the field and deliver a personal message.

By the way, the girl that tapped me on the shoulder and told me I was a bad Ag screwed up my aim!

The reason I was engaging in such activity is because we had such terrific seats that we couldn't see anything else.

Craig Browning  
Class of '87

### The wrong kind of support

EDITOR:

After reading an article in a San Antonio paper a few weeks ago I realized that we probably have the most polite audience at our games, at home and away. Aggies are known around the nation for their enthusiastic support of the athletic teams with our Twelfth Man. I, however, have two complaints about our student body at this season's football games.

First, being a freshman this semester, I have the "privilege" of sitting on the third deck. At the past three home games I have been appalled at the behavior of several Ags regarding the tradition of "uncovering" removing hats during yells.

These "supporters" of the Aggie football team seem to take more pride in yelling, "UNCOVER!" than they do in yelling for the team. They are determined to embarrass the fans with hats on, many of whom are not familiar with our traditions. I distinctly remember the NLU game when a father of an Aggie was attending the game with his daughter. He naturally was unaware of our traditions, and when a student behind him yelled, "Take your damn hat off!" I wanted to yell, "BEAT THE HELL OUTTA YOU!" to the student who was so determined to uphold the traditions of Texas A&M University.

This Aggie parent had to suffer through this torture throughout the rest of the game when all he wanted to do was keep the sun from beating down on his head. Then I thought to myself that these students are men who are trying to show off at the game, either to impress their girlfriends or their buddies. But when I stood on the first deck for the Tulsa game just as many people were wearing hats, mainly to stay dry, and just many students were yelling, "UNCOVER!"

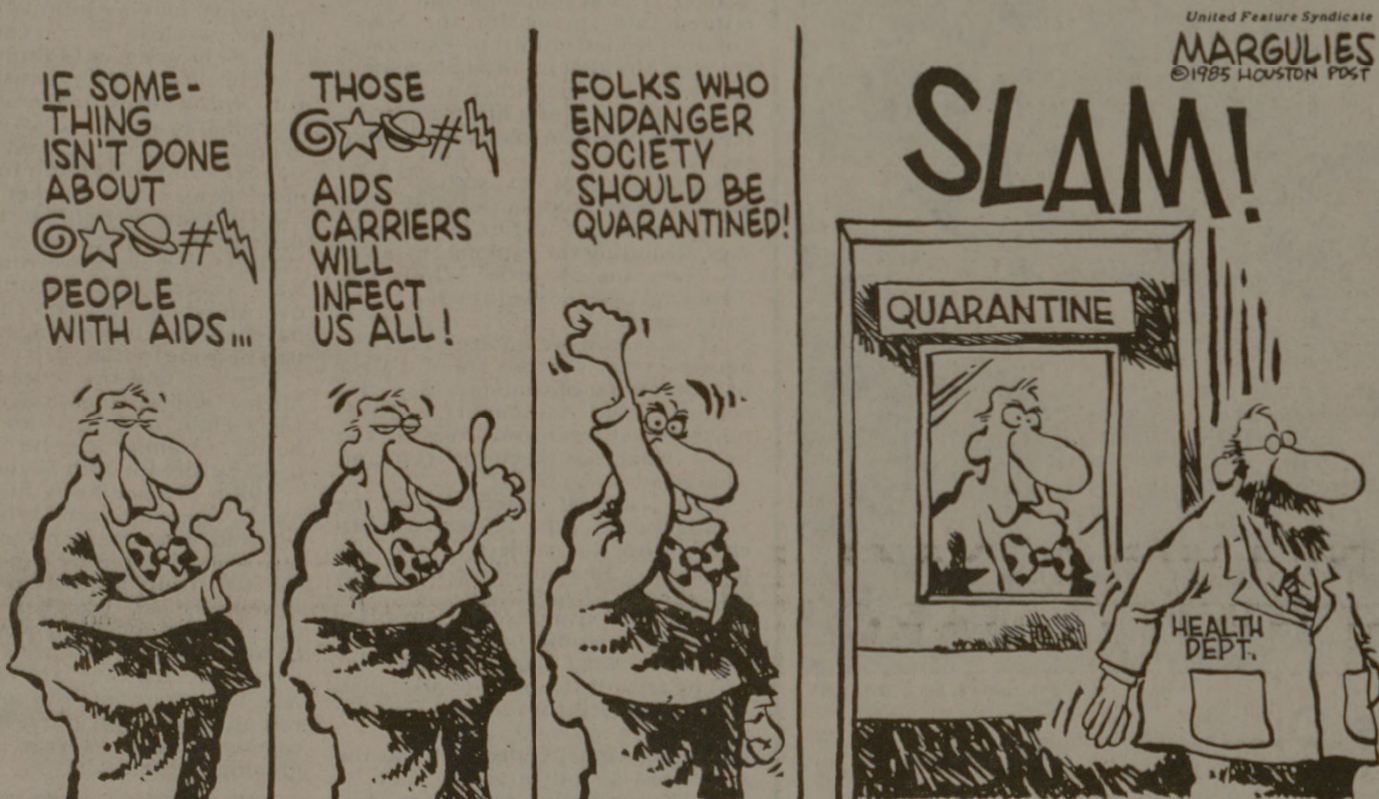
There was one "Good Ag" who later went up to the visitor at the game and apologized for the rude behavior of the student body and calmly explained the tradition of removing hats before yells.

Second, I was taught at Fish Camp and reassured at All-Union Night that Aggies DO NOT BOO, especially their own team. However, it seems that many Ags have forgotten this. With the recent problems we had with our field goal/extra point teams has come a decline in the keeping of this tradition.

I agree that the kicking game has not been up to par lately, but there is no reason to abandon our Twelfth Man spirit when what the team needs more is our encouragement and support. Nothing is more depressing and nerve-racking for a field goal kicker than to be booed when coming out on the field. If we can give the team our support, then they can pass our greatest expectations. Eric Franklin proved that he has the ability to perform: when he nailed a 42-yard field goal against Houston.

Come on, Ags, let's support our team in the true spirit of the Twelfth Man instead of stooping to the tactics of t.u.

Rob Henderson '89  
Trip Grant '89  
Scott Wonderly '89



## Journalists don't sacrifice their humanity for their jobs

The editorial board of The Battalion recently suggested that my accepting the role of president of the Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce is a breach of professional ethics (Oct. 11). They stated that Eagle readers will no longer be sure they are not receiving a sanitized version of local news. This suggestion, that my primary allegiance now will lie with the Chamber of Commerce rather than with the newspaper, deserves comment.

John Williams  
Guest Columnist

misunderstanding of the nature and sources of pressure to which the media are routinely subjected.

Divergent pressures upon publishers, editors and reporters are intense and constant, emanating from a number of different sources. I have had demands from advertisers to fire reporters or see their ads withheld from the newspaper. I have had requests from those in city government to refrain from intrusion. At least one judge criticized our reporting as an "orgy of coverage." Many people have asked that we not "air their dirty linen" in our pages — people from officials at Texas A&M, to school boards, to families whose members have had brushes with the law.

But these same reporters are still writing for the Eagle, our own personal losses in revenue notwithstanding, because I believe in the importance of the integrity, objectivity and fairness of news coverage.

I could list repeated examples of challenges, real or potential, to editorial integrity. A newspaper could easily and quietly bow to such pressures for short-term gain, but it would reap long-term disaster.

The growth of the Eagle circulation of about 40 percent in the five years I have been publisher suggests that the community finds the Eagle to be a credible source of information which is responsive to the needs of its readers.

Newspaper people, like all other citizens, should be involved in their community. Obviously, members of the media have some constraints upon the extent of that involvement. I should not run for elective office, for example, and though I have been invited, I choose not to serve on a bank board. But I do not live a monastic existence. I am a part of this community and many of its institutions: I live in Bryan, and my children attend school there; I belong to the First Baptist Church of College Station, the Rotary Club, the local chapter of C.P.A.'s; I serve on the boards of the United Way and Brazos Beautiful; I jog and scuba dive. Any of these involvements could potentially bias the coverage of the news, but they do not.

Before I accepted the job of Chamber of Commerce president for 1986, I met with the Eagle editorial department to emphasize that there would be no change in business of chamber coverage as a result of my election. I asked for their thoughts and concerns, and we came to a good understanding that in no way would the editorial integrity of the Eagle be compromised.

Again, I fully appreciate the concerns of The Battalion board and encourage them to continue to wrestle with the function and role of the newspaper in the community.

John Williams is publisher of the Bryan-College Station Eagle.

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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.  
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