

Opinion

Education should be highest priority at A&M, not tradition

Traditions. There is always a lot of talk about traditions at Texas A&M. A lot of the talk is about how Texas A&M was founded on traditions. A lot of the talk is about how traditions aren't what they used to be.



Karl Pallmeyer

Traditions are handed down from generation to generation. But the conditions under which those traditions are formed are not handed down from generation to generation. Sometimes traditions must change because times have changed.

When the Aggie Band was formed there were no women at Texas A&M. Now there are women at Texas A&M and they have the right to participate in all student activities. Texas A&M began as a military school and there was no need for fraternal organizations since every one belonged to a military outfit.

For years, fear and ignorance have led many people to discriminate against homosexuals. Now more people are becoming tolerant of those who are "different."

This year we have witnessed the evolution of several traditions. Traditionally women could not play in the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band. This year there are three women in the band. Traditionally fraternities and sororities were not recognized by the University. This year several fraternities and sororities have been recognized and several more are waiting for recognition. Traditionally Aggies would not tolerate homosexuals. This year the Gay Student Services organization has been recognized by the University.

These changes in traditions have not destroyed Texas A&M. People still stand at the football games and still do some of the things that Aggies have always done. This University has not crumbled and fallen into the bowels of the earth. In fact the University is becoming a better place because of the changes.

With the addition of three women, the Aggie Band is still as good, if not better, than it used to be. With the recognition of fraternities and sororities, students have a greater opportunity to be involved in student activities. With the recognition of the G.S.S., students have an opportunity to become better educated, and therefore less fearful, about a different lifestyle.

Change is important and necessary to Texas A&M. Those who mourn the death of "Old Army" should realize that

this school could not have survived as the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas. This school would have shriveled up and blown away if certain changes were not made. This school could not have survived as a military school. This school could not have survived without the admission of women.

Currently there are 35,701 students enrolled at Texas A&M. Ten years ago there were 24,876 students enrolled. Twenty years ago there were 9,429 students enrolled. Thirty years ago 6,837 students were enrolled. In thirty years a college of 6,837 students became a university of 35,701 students. This growth could not have been achieved without the changes that were made.

There are more changes that need to be made. To become a real university, Texas A&M should concentrate more on education. Multi-million dollar football teams, bell towers, former student buildings, bonfires and traditions need to take a backseat to education. The meat of any school is its education. At Texas A&M the meat is often put off in favor of the side dishes.

Some people oppose change and say that this school was founded on traditions. This school was not founded on traditions, this school was founded on education.

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.

Veterans' Day to be observed Monday

EDITOR:
Armistice/Veterans' Day observance will be Monday, Nov. 11 from 11:33 a.m. to 11:33 a.m. on Simpson Drill Field by the World War I monument. Please plan to attend this significant community-wide patriotic observance. Bring your family, friends and neighbors. Tell your classmates about it. For the second time since 1946, all of the veterans' organizations of our community are participating in this joint effort. We will commemorate the service of veterans and renew the celebration of patriotism in our community.

It is important to all of us to recognize our freedoms which are made possible through the efforts of our brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers, grandparents who have answered the call of service to our great country. Many have paid the supreme sacrifice in our behalf, others have distinguished themselves on the field of battle and live in our community. It is a community which has a bright history in our state and nation. Ours is a community of which we can be proud. The community is proud of its sons and daughters.

Eight individuals, all Aggies, have had bestowed upon them the Medal of Honor, our nation's highest honor. Join us in paying tribute to them and celebrate the individuals who are currently serving our country, as well as those veterans who live and work in our community. Our program will offer a view of the past with uniformed individuals in the Continental, Union, Confederate, Spanish American, World War I, World War II Armies and the uniforms of our active duty personnel.

The flag which has flown over the U.S. Capitol, Arlington National Cemetery, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Muese-Argonne, Pointe du Hoc, Manila American Cemetery and Memorial, National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific and is now in use for very special occasions at Texas A&M will be flown on the stage at our observance in memory of the contributions of those members of our community who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States. The recording of the Star-Spangled Banner by the Texas A&M Singing Cadets from last year's ceremony will be played while the colors are raised.

The traditional moment of silence will be observed at 11:11 a.m. (the moment when Armistice was signed to end World War I).

Echo Taps will be played by the Corps of Cadets, and the Confederate Air Force will do a flyover in the "Missing Man" formation at 11:13 a.m.

The speaker for the day will be Herb Odell, Commander, Department of Texas, The American Legion.

The Confederate Air Force Aggie Wing will provide a P51 Mustang, F4U Corsair, SNJ/AT6 Texan, P39 Aircobra, P63 King Cobra, T28 North American and a replica Japanese Zero. All planes will be on static display at Easternwood Field after the ceremony until 2 p.m. Monday.

The Aggie Salute Cannon will be fired 11 times by members of the Corps of Cadets as the concluding event in the observance.

Come and help us celebrate Armistice/Veterans Day on Monday, Nov. 11.

**Donald F. Simons
Chairman, Veterans' Day '85**

Highway 6 runs both ways (but not to Austin)

EDITOR:
We are writing in response to Mr. Karl Pallmeyer's column on tradition in the November 6 issue of The Battalion. One question comes to mind: Why did you come to A&M?

**Genny Martin '88
Leigh Anne Burrow '88
Vera Fletcher '88
Kathy Kane '88**

Bonfire cutting serves purpose

EDITOR:
Every year it's the same thing. Somebody who doesn't like the Fightin' Texas Aggie bonfire writes a letter to The Batt and says it is a waste of wood.

In Jim Nelson's letter (Nov. 6), he complains of the waste of a natural resource and the insanity of throwing it away. Sorry, Jim — you are wrong. The wood we are using this year is clearing the way for possibly a more important resource — food. You see, the bonfire folks are clearing land for a ranching corporation to create grazing land. Otherwise, the trees would have been bulldozed and burned in the fields.

In years past, Aggie bonfire has cleared land for another important resource — energy. Land was cleared to make way for a mining company to bring coal from the ground.

Besides that, there are a lot of Ags who enjoy working on bonfire and being a part of one of our greatest traditions. So next time you jump to a conclusion, Jim, do a little research before you write that "letter to The Batt."

Bruce Barcuch '86

Everyone has right to own opinion

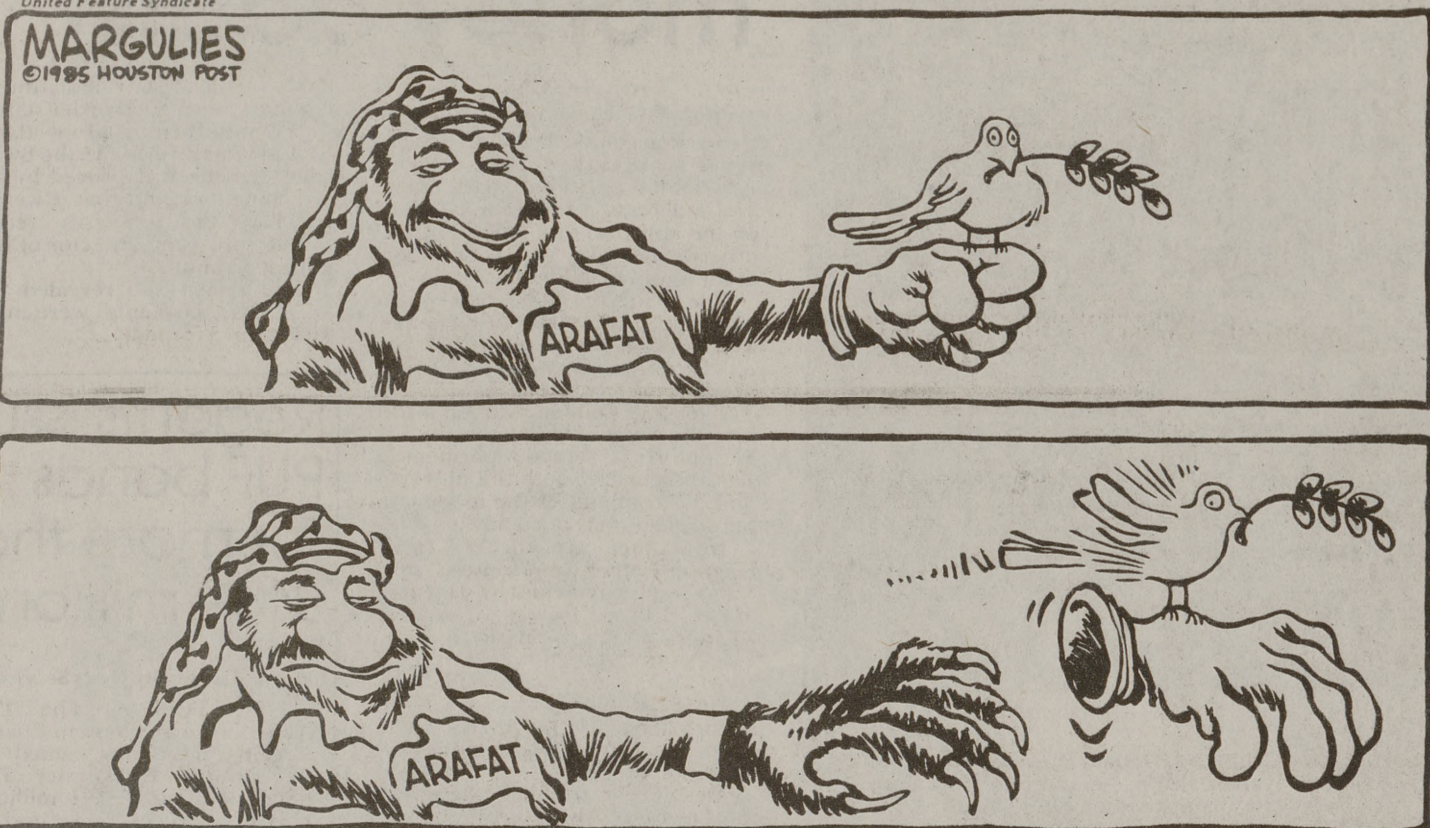
EDITOR:

Well, it's that time of the year again. Football games, beautiful weather, and Ron is preaching the "good word" behind the Academic Building. This is my eighth semester at Texas A&M, and Ags, it seems like we've got another short-sighted evangelist using The Battalion editorial section as a preaching ground again. I say this because of a most entertaining piece of rubbish I had the privilege to be insulted with on Nov. 5. I'm talking about a letter by Brian Frederick that reminded me of an earlier barrage of bickering that started over the parental notification law some three years ago in The Battalion. That too was ignited by a naive letter by Danette Heren. Let my first point be taken note of by all readers: I am not going to submit myself to bickering over moral issues because morality is subjective and is like politics: everyone's got an opinion and no one is totally correct. Also let me remind the readers that this is not an attack against Brian, but someone needs to wake this poor Ag up! Brian states that anyone supporting birth control supplied through A.F. Beutel Health Center is complaining and has "missed the point." Brian, it's guys like you that make men look chauvanistic. Brian, do you have to worry about unwanted pregnancy and abortion? Hell no, so it's easy for you to address something you obviously know nothing about. S. Ruby, an anthropology graduate student, had written a letter bringing out a good point. "It's easier to pay for birth control than pay for mother & child."

If Texas A&M ever wishes to be recognized as first class and its students as gifted individuals instead of "mere Aggies," then someone needs to blow the lid off this conservative stance that, "if a problem exists we'll just sweep under the rug and it'll disappear." This is hardly an appropriate response to a real problem. Brian, let me ask you a serious question. Have you ever known a woman who has had an abortion? Probably not. (Oh, I'm sorry, did I startle you with that word?) It's a traumatic experience never to be forgotten and one that is a real threat to sexually active women. Brian, let's also be realistic. A 16-year-old virgin is becoming rare. I'm not saying I advocate it, but Brian, be realistic, college virgins are the exception, not the rule. Now, what about married students, Brian? Oh, I bet that slipped your mind, eh? Do you deny them, too? Or maybe ask women for a marriage license before examination. By neglecting a much needed service, Texas A&M is not solving anything, but adding to the dilemma. As far as cost, I'm sure we can forego another "monument to the alumni" behind the jogging track for additional health care. Planned Parenthood cannot be haven for 5000-10,000 Texas A&M women!

Oh, by the way, Brian, I've been happily engaged for five months.

Steve Patti '86



Discord over arms control disrupting summit planning

WASHINGTON
— President Reagan finds himself hamstrung by new discord over his arms control strategy as he heads into the Geneva summit conference with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

**R. Gregory Nokes
AP News Analyst**

He denies it, but experts both in and out of government say there is considerable disagreement on strategy, especially over "Star Wars," and that it is complicating planning for the Nov. 19-20 summit and beyond it to the Geneva arms control talks.

According to a number of official sources, the State Department and the Pentagon have resumed their bureaucratic warfare over arms control, with the Pentagon opting for an uncompromising stand while the State Department argues for flexibility.

The State Department has won several key battles — including a decision by Reagan to announce a new arms control proposal in advance of the summit. A senior Pentagon official acknowledged on Wednesday that Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, who objected to the timing, had been overruled.

Weinberger also had been overruled on his recommendation against extending the unratified SALT II treaty for another year and in pushing for a new interpretation of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty that would permit testing and development of a Star Wars system.

But the Pentagon is so far winning another key battle — a refusal by Reagan to compromise on his Strategic Defense Initiative plan, commonly known as Star Wars.

State Department and arms control officials say Secretary of State George P. Shultz and chief arms control adviser Paul Nitze favor finding a compromise on Star Wars to make possible an

agreement with Moscow on sharp reductions in offensive weapons.

But Shultz apparently was unable to indicate any flexibility on the American side in his meeting with Gorbachev in Moscow this week, and the talks went badly, according to senior officials on the trip.

President Reagan may have contributed to the image of disarray in last week's interview with Soviet journalists. On three occasions in the interview, he said a Star Wars anti-missile defense shield wouldn't be deployed until after both sides had abolished all their missiles. He said he would make this point to Gorbachev at the summit.

But in an interview with news services Wednesday he said he hadn't meant to say that at all. He said the United States "would go ahead with deployment" if it couldn't get an agreement from the Soviets to eliminate their nuclear weapons.

Reagan may have cause to regret something else. He said in Wednesday's interview that if the United States deployed a missile defense while keeping its offensive weapons it would "open us up to the charge of achieving the capacity for a first strike."

The Soviets have attacked the program from the beginning on the grounds it could give the United States a first-strike capability — to attack the Soviet Union with its offensive weapons while remaining protected from Soviet counterattack by its defensive system.

Paul Warnke, the chief negotiator for the SALT II treaty, predicted to reporters Wednesday that Moscow would never reduce its offensive missiles as long as the United States was developing a comprehensive missile defense.

R. Gregory Nokes writes on diplomatic issues for The Associated Press and will be covering the Geneva summit.

The Battalion
USPS 045 360

Member of
Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Conference

The Battalion Editorial Board

Rhonda Snider, Editor
Michelle Payne, Managing Editor
Loren Steffy, Opinion Page Editor
Karen Bloch, City Editor
John Hallett, Kay Mallett, News Editors
Travis Tingle, Sports Editor

The Battalion Staff

Assistant City Editors.....Kirsten Dietz,
Jerry Oslin
Assistant News Editors.....Cathie Anderson,
Jan Perry
Assistant Sports Editor.....Charean Williams
Entertainment Editors.....
Cathy Riely, Walter Smith
Staff Writers.....Tamara Bell, Meg Cadigan,
Mary Cox, Cindy Gay,
Doug Hall, Paul Herndon,
Wendy Johnson, Tammy Kirk,
Jens Koepke, June Pang,
Tricia Parker, Brian Pearson,
Craig Renfro, Marybeth Rohsner,
Frank Smith, Kenneth Sury,
Scott Sutherland
Copy Editors.....Rebecca Adair,
Mike Davis, Sarah Oates,
Brad Whitten
Make-up Editor.....Ed Cassavoy
Columnists.....Camille Brown, John Hallett,
Karl Pallmeyer
Art Director.....Wayne Graben
Photographers.....Greg Bailey,
Jon P. Karp, Anthony Casper,
Frank Hada, John Makely,
Michael Sanchez

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 Monday 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 McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843. Editorial staff phone number: (409) 845-3316. 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.