

Opinion

Education — one way or another

Education is supposed to be a process of cultivating the mind — growth through exposure to new ideas. A school — be it a college, high school or elementary school — should be an avenue for this exposure.

When A&M Consolidated High School Principal Sandra Parker canceled a mock interracial marriage in the school's home and family living class, she not only abridged this exposure process, her actions implied that students should not deviate from established social norms.

Parker reversed her ban at the last minute and the wedding was allowed to go on. But her initial reaction is disturbing. Shoving nebulous community standards down their throats does not encourage students to examine social values for themselves.

For five years, students taking the course have planned and staged mock weddings as part of the course. This year, students planned a wedding with a black bride and white groom. Parker vetoed the ceremony, claiming it was not representative of accepted community behavior.

"The community looks at the school to illustrate and to model," Parker said. Perhaps, but the students look at the school as a means of learning about life. Interracial marriages are a part of life, one which the class textbook includes.

Parker suggested the students have two weddings — one black couple and one white couple — rather than a "mixed" one. This type of reasoning went out with "separate but equal" restrooms and drinking fountains.

Ironically, Parker's cancellation did enlighten students to one aspect of social behavior: the prejudices and social condemnation associated with activities such as interracial marriages that fail to conform with popular mores.

The Battalion Editorial Board

Old 'spirits' of Aggieland could use a little 'exorcise'

I don't believe in ghosts but I feel that Texas A&M is haunted. The spirits of rich, old Ags linger on at this school long after they've gone.



Karl Pallmeyer

I can remember a time when the Blocker Building was known as the A&A Building, the Read Building was known as East Kyle, the Simpson Drill Field was known as the Main Drill Field and the Peterson Building was known as the Plant Sciences Building.

It's amazing how many things get a new name once some rich, old Ag gives this school a lot of money. It's even more amazing when another rich, old Ag can have an entire bell tower built in his honor. It's even more amazing still when there's a huge building for rich, old Ags being built across from a TV station where journalism students used to get practice experience until its budget was axed resulting in the elimination of its news department.

Right across from the street from KAMU-TV is the future home of the International Rich, Old Ags' Headquarters. The \$7 million going into that building could keep KAMU's news department on the air for 70 years.

Despite efforts by the rich, old Ags, Texas A&M is not a military school. After World War II many servicemen, my father included, came to the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas to complete the education that had been cut short by the war.

Mandatory enrollment in the Corps was dropped since it was foolish to expect men who have spent the past four years of their lives defending this country to bow to the whims of younger men who have spent the past four years of their lives getting out of high school and getting into college. Although my father did not complete his degree until 1948, he was included in with the Class of '44, the year he would have graduated had it not been for the war.

Considering that less than 2,000 out of 35,701 students are in the Corps, and that not all of those 2,000 are seeking a career in military, it is foolish to believe that Texas A&M is still a military school.

Despite this it's hard to step two feet on campus without having some reminder of war being thrust at you. The MSC and other memorials are important since we need to remember those men who have sacrificed their lives in service of our country, but why do we need Military Walk? Military Walk, between the Rudder Complex and Sbsa Dining Hall, is the path the Corps used to take to its daily meals. Admittedly the food at Sbsa is pretty bad but the sacrifice involved doesn't rate a monument.

This summer at my roommate's graduation ceremony, Board of Regents Chairman David Eller gave the graduation address. Eller said that the new group of graduates had a duty to support their school financially now that

they have become former students. Eller did everything but pass the plate.

It is true that Texas A&M has an impressively supportive alumni but it would be nice if their money would be used for education instead of bell towers, renaming old buildings, buying gifts for the football team and building new buildings that the students will never get to use until they are no longer students.

There is a lot of room for improvement at Texas A&M. Money from rich, old Ags could be used to buy more books for the library, provide scholarships, build classrooms or do a number of things that would benefit the students currently going to Texas A&M.

We have no right to tell the rich, old Ags how they should spend their money. If they want to give Texas A&M money then they should be allowed to. But most of their gifts have been like the gifts that you get from your eccentric old aunt at Christmas. You have to say "thank you" even though the gift isn't worth a damn.

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

Mail Call

Thanks for nothing

EDITOR:

This is an official thank-you note to the management at the Manor House Inn. Thanks to you and your recent policy changes, you've managed to make my last memories here in Aggieland bad ones.

I'm graduating on Dec. 13 and had made reservations with your hotel back at the beginning of September for my family. I reserved two rooms for one night with no indications from your staff that any changes would be made. Now, upon confirmation of the reservations, my parents were told of a new policy your hotel has of a two-night minimum charge. Or in other words, doubling the price of a room for what most people would call a one-night stay — Aggie graduation.

My parents also learned that this new policy, initiated in mid-September, after I had made my reservations, would still apply to their reservations. And despite my parents' arguments with your management, you refused to honor our early reservations.

I can't speak for the rest of the Texas A&M students, but my family cannot afford to pay double the price for a room, especially under these circumstances. We were forced to cancel our reservations.

I made the reservations back in September to make sure my family would have a place to stay for graduation. Everyone knows the horror stories of trying to find a hotel at the last minute. The College Station Chamber of Commerce said two-night minimum charges were not uncommon for football weekends, but they were surprised to hear that some hotels had this policy for graduation.

The two-night minimum policy of yours and any other hotel in the area has no place in Aggieland, an area that prides itself on its helpfulness and fairness. Yes, thank you Manor House Inn for your

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.

greed and inconsiderate attitude, for forcing my family, and probably several others, to look for more reasonable rates and management elsewhere.

Wayne L. Grabein
Class of '85

Of 'nice' and 'others'

EDITOR:

The letter of Elaine Pahmeyer and Angie Buechler raised a fairly interesting question in my mind. That is, what is the difference between a "nice" car and an "other" car? They listed Cutlasses, Jeeps and Camaros as "nice" cars, and Toyotas (except Supras), Volkswagens and Tempos as "other" cars. Can a Jeep really be considered a car? Most of the ones I've seen don't even have doors or a roof.

Could it be a high sticker price that constitutes a "nice" car? A quick check at a local Toyota dealer reveals that the Supra (a "nice" car) and the Cressida (an "other" car) have about the same sticker price. Perhaps the ladies meant to write "... Toyotas (except Supras and Cressidas)"?

A few years ago, a man had his \$80,000 Ferrari crushed into a three-foot cube and made into a coffee table after he wrecked it. Is this a "nice" car, or just an expensive coffee table?

Maybe it's the styling of the car that becomes the fine line between the two types of cars. The Mercedes 190 and Ford Tempo are

amazingly similar in appearance. Of course, the Mercedes was not on the "nice" car list, but I am assuming this was only because it was an abbreviated list. The Jeep's styling has changed very little since its introduction in WWII.

Of course, it could be the gas mileage that a car gets that denotes it as a "nice" car. All the cars on this list are gas guzzlers, relatively speaking. Maybe owning a gas guzzler is a sort of status symbol, implying that its owner must be financially well-off to afford quenching its thirst for gasoline. Maybe the vandalism is the work of environmentalists, trying to send a message to the owners of "nice" cars which can use up to twice the amount of gasoline to go to the same distance as some "other" cars.

Who knows? Who cares? Not me, I'm just bored.

Frank Irwin
Graduate Student

Wastes of time

EDITOR:

What is really the biggest waste of time, energy and wood? The Texas Aggie bonfire or The Battalion?

You print an awful lot of anti-Aggie material, by not printing this, you will show that The Battalion is as one-sided and close-minded as the conservatives and traditionalists that you are constantly putting down.

Rob Farrell '86

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