

Opinion

Harvard, Smarvard

350 years of 'experience' and snobbism

Do you ever get the feeling that because you didn't go to Harvard, you are less than a complete person, an intellectual sweat-hog in comparison to those who did go to Harvard?

Lewis Grizzard

There is this Harvard "experience" they talk about, and most of the people who went to school there don't say, "Harvard," they say, "Hahvahd," and jut out their jaws in an expression of snobbism.

I've been following the celebration of fair Harvard's 350th birthday. It was such a big deal that they had to get the prince of Wales, the future king of England, to come over and help out with the party.

Why did they want him over here? Wasn't there somebody in this country good enough for Harvard? Was Willie Nelson already booked?

I've been trying to ask myself if it is just sour grapes on my part that all this Harvard business has been getting on my nerves.

Needless to say, I didn't go to Harvard. I didn't even apply to Harvard. I figured I would just get turned down anyway. Even if my grades had been good enough — which I doubt they were — I am not from the quality stock that is necessary for the Harvard, well, experience.

None of my ancestry had anything to do with the founding of the country, with the possible exception of the infamous Archibald (Slick) Grizzard, who introduced certain games of chance and various strains of venereal disease during his trip over on the Mayflower.

As soon as the Pilgrims finished stepping on Plymouth Rock, they hanged Uncle Slick.

I have a friend who went to Harvard. He lives in New York. He is a dear friend until he decides he wants to make certain you remember he went to Harvard.

"When I was at Harvard . . ." is how he often begins conversations.

Or there is, "I was talking to an old school chum from Harvard, and . . ."

Or my favorite, "Over drinks at the Harvard Club last evening . . ."

Harvard, Smarvard. Let me ask these questions:

— Why did Benjamin Franklin once say the only thing Harvard men were interested in was their appearance?

— What kind of school would have an organization known as the "Hasty Pudding Club"?

— If Harvard is such a great school, how did Teddy Kennedy get a degree from there?

— And when was the last time the Harvard football team went to a bowl game?

So Harvard is 350 years old. Big deal. I enjoyed Johnny Carson's line: "Harvard is so old, scribbled on the men's room wall is, 'For a good time, call Betsy Ross.'"

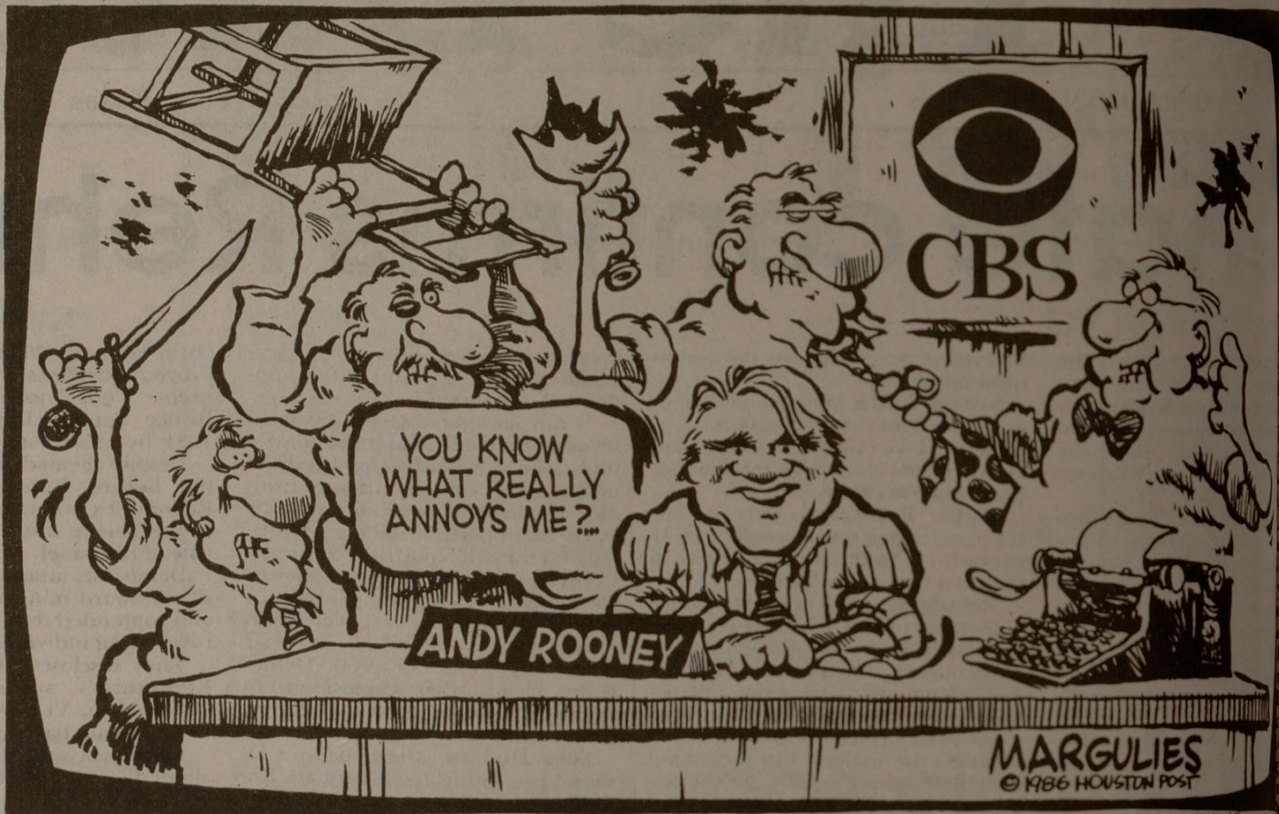
I like this old story, too: A Georgia graduate is visiting Harvard. He is trying to locate the library. He asks a student, "Could you tell me where the library is at?"

The student replies, "Here at fair Harvard, sir, we never end a sentence with a preposition."

Replied the Georgia man, "Then, allow me to rephrase the question. 'Where is the library at, jerk?'"

Even when you clean that one up, it makes its point.

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If Sunday is a day for rest, why do football players work

It's been more than a year since the Texas blue laws were repealed on Sept. 1, 1985. Some consumers enjoy being able to buy almost anything they want any day of the week. Some merchants enjoy the added revenues brought in on Sunday. But not all consumers and merchants are that happy.



Karl Pallmeyer

According to the Bible, the King James Bible, Exodus 20:8-10:

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates."

Almost everyone knows that verse — it's one of the Top Ten Commandments. Many Christians will say that the Bible forbids work on Sunday. Actually the Sabbath is Saturday, but that doesn't matter in today's world. Sunday is the day for rest.

But Texas' blue laws, at least the last version of them, were not based in religion. They were designed to help smaller businesses that couldn't afford to be open seven days a week by making

sure one day a week was kept free of competition. When the blue laws were struck down, there were protests for both business and religious reasons.

Some businesses feel they can't afford to pay employees to work seven days a week. Others feel it's morally wrong to be open on Sundays.

Since last September, there has been a steady stream of letters to editors complaining about businesses being open on Sundays. Although there is no law stating a business has to be open on Sundays, after the blue laws' repeal some shopping malls required that all their stores be open to justify the mall being open. Some stores fought and won the right to be closed on Sundays. Other stores have been petitioning for that right.

It doesn't matter much to me whether a store is open on Sunday. I would like the opportunity to shop on any day of the week, but it's not up to me if certain stores want to close. It's their loss, not mine.

I do object, however, when people try to pressure me into signing petitions, citing morality as the sole reason for their decision to close on Sundays.

I was in a store recently, on a weekday, and the owner pulled out a petition while I was paying for my purchase. He cited Bible verses and expressed righteous indignation at the heathen mall owners who wanted him to stay open on Sundays. It was obvious that he felt it was a mortal sin to work on "the Sabbath."

This man looked like a typical American watching football games on Sunday. It's a sin against God to work on Sunday, why is football so popular?

Football players work hard on game days, many of which fall on Sundays. Not only do they work hard, they get paid thousands of dollars for working on Sundays. So do coaches and referees.

If it weren't for cameramen, editors, technical directors, audio and videotape editors and numerous television people working on Sunday, we wouldn't be able to watch these ball players and coaches breaking the Ten Commandments.

I come from a town where the teacher will find himself looking for another job if he doesn't let the competition out before noon on days when Cowboys are playing. I guess he needs to get home in time to wash his sinners.

The state of Texas may have some people when it decided to repeal the blue laws and turn every day into a day for work. It's not a football player or television worker into sinners, but the liquor stores in Texas open until after noon on Sundays. The way the heathens who don't go to church won't get a head start on sinning before the game.

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

Aggies' windshields attractive to tickets

There's the law of gravity, the law of inertia, the law of centrifugal force, Murphy's law, the law of the land, the law of Moses, Harvard law, the law of the jungle, law and order and the long arm of the law.

Jeff L. Brady
Guest Columnist

Today, however, I propose the acceptance of a new law in the wonderful world of physics: the gravitational pull of parking tickets toward Aggies' windshields.

I think it has something to do with the property stating that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Or, when you find a convenient spot to park anywhere in Brazos County, you will get a ticket — every time. What better way to end a long, hot, sticky day of unexpected tests and dust-filled post office boxes?

I am a chronic offender. Last week I picked up a record 18 tickets, and Tuesday was even worse. My profile, mugshot and DPS serial number probably are hanging in post offices from Montgomery to Dimebox.

This week the Campus Police are handing out the real things — no vehicles spared, no spots unchecked.

Why is it I always think, "Oh, I'll just be a minute. There's no WAY they'll track me down in less than an hour . . .?" Oh, me of little faith . . .

They have crack troops that circumnavigate the campus every five minutes. I can see them now, grouped around a crowded, smoke-filled briefing room just before dawn.

"Armstrong, you take Olsen Field today. And remember not to cut those former students with their mobile homes any slack. I don't care how many buildings they've donated.

"Burns, you hit Zachry. Granite should be your middle name. Pregnant women, kids unloading projects and senior citizens have to hunt down a spot just like everyone else.

"Douglas, you handle the mopeds today. Ignorance and mini skirts may go hand in hand, but they're still no excuse.

"Madge, you'll man the front desk. Keep a lot o' Kleenex handy and charge 'em five extra if they hold you up too long."

They have to be tough. The parking offenders on this campus are the most wanted criminals — and for good reason. We are the most cunning, the most daring, the most desperate, the most ingenious and the most dangerous of all offenders.

I knew a guy last year who kept one of those spiffy, canvas, form-fitted covers in his trunk just for those occasions when he knew he was parking out of bounds. They caught up with him in January. I haven't seen him since.

Another guy had three different license plates he rotated on his truck from month to month. Now he's doing five to 10 at Huntsville. His last letter said he was learning to print up a whole new set of phony plates.

Someone else bought a white Nissan mini truck, spray-painted the University logo on the doors and drove to class each morning — not to campus, I mean DROVE TO CLASS. He'd park right outside the Academic Building, next to the bike rack, go to class, drive to the Commons, drive to his P.E. class in G. Rollie and on and on. He just let his beard grow, wore green cotton trousers, and no one looked twice. The last I heard he was rooming with Chuck Manson and headed for solitary in San Quentin. The KKs don't mess around.

Of course, this is a bad season to park illegally. The University budget is threatened, funding hangs in the balance and our beloved Permanent University Fund is on the chopping block. Revenue has to be sucked in from someone's pocket, right?

Of course. So the next time you find a little yellow card on your windshield after a particularly demanding day, relax with the understanding you're helping to keep the University out of hock.

Gotta go. I'm parked in the staff lot outside.

Jeff Brady is a senior journalism major.

Mail Call

Protection and service?

EDITOR:

I am writing this letter with regard to recent actions taken by the University Police Department. Last December, during exam week, I was stopped on my bike and given a ticket for a moving violation.

The ticket was a mere \$4, but out of principle, I argued and tried to appeal. Three separate bikers committed the same infraction (running a stop sign) and drove right past me as I was interrogated for more than 20 precious minutes. This raises the question, "Is the law biased and prejudiced or is it simply unenforceable?"

Because of this question and my desire to learn about bike laws which apply to this campus, I tried to appeal the ticket and talk it out with someone. After waiting in line for almost two hours, I was told I would be unable to appeal unless I came back the next semester and waited all over again. I was never told when to come back, just sometime next semester. . . . I'm glad UPD is so specific about their deadlines. What a barbaric and unorganized system!

I thought the police motto was to protect and serve. Well, as for the protection of my rights, I question the appeal procedure at the UPD. The Constitution provides everyone the right to a fair and speedy trial. I tried to set up an appeal date, but to no avail. What does it take? It shouldn't be so timely and inconvenient to set up such a session.

In fact, the whole procedure is just not worth it. Like a dictator, the UPD forced me to pay the fine without argument or regard for my side of the story. Surely, one wouldn't think of this as totalitarian. It's worse — a complete disregard for a citizen's rights.

Service is a joke as well. After being stopped initially for so long, and then having to wait at the police station for so long without results, my temper was at its limit. Can't the UPD get themselves organized to be at least somewhat efficient?

Recently, I spoke to a Sgt. Dunlap about this issue. Though she clarified my questions regarding the bicycle laws, she was unable to do anything about the ticket or the extra "processing-late fee," which was tacked on to my original ticket, thereby more than doubling the original

COST.

Hence, not only was I penalized once for my ticket, but again because the UPD wouldn't set my appeal before the deadline to pay. This disgusting and aggravating series of events has lowered my respect for the UPD and their operations on campus in general. Though they need to enforce the law, they need to protect the rights of students, faculty and all citizens in general without tedious delays and uncalled-for hassles. Unfortunately, this doesn't seem to be a priority at the UPD.

Paul Janish

Rest in peace

EDITOR:

This is perhaps the most difficult letter I have ever chosen to write. Like many, I was a friend of Brennan Meyer and had known him since my freshman year. I would like to say something that will stand apart from the rest of the letters, but a tragedy such as this is unexplainable.

Brennan loved life, and he brought so much happiness to all his friends. He was a very devoted person to his family and friends. I talked to him last week, and he was telling me of all the plans for his future.

It just makes me sick that for no reason someone has come along and wiped away his life and dreams. Satan is alive and well on this earth. It comforts me to know that Janet and Brennan are living in eternal peace, while we men here on earth will suffer for eternity. There is just no sense to this needless tragedy. I would like to leave this message for Brennan and Janet's families in this time of grief. I, as well as others here at A&M, grieve with them. . . . they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. Isaiah 40:31

Suzanne Hall
Class of '86

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The 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.

The Battalion

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