

Opinion

The Battalion

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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 Journalism.

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Spare no students

By taking group disciplinary action reminiscent of a sixth-grade physical education class against the residents of Walton Hall's ramp E, the Texas A&M administration has revealed an interesting attitude — when the going gets tough, administer punishment based on area of residence, throw out all concern of fairness and call the solution "creative."

Because some University officials say their attempts have failed to turn up the persons responsible for damage to a Walton Hall drinking fountain and other acts of vandalism, they kicked out all 32 of the ramp E residents Saturday.

They said breaking up the ramp was the "creative" way to solve a problem that has cost A&M \$718 in clean-up charges.

The solution was creative — it created more problems than it solved. It also was expensive and unfair, and it reflects a complete lack of concern for dorm residents.

In light of the recent approval of a policy that will require students to sign dorm leases for at least two semesters to cut down on A&M's expense for vacant dorms during spring semesters, the intelligence of the University's solution is questionable. The housing department has created an instant revenue loss by vacating an entire ramp in mid-semester.

Ron Sasse, despite being director of student affairs, said the administration's decision was just, explaining that "we're just trying to solve problems." With Sasse's passive representation of student interests, it's no wonder the administration got away with its grade-school "solution."

Understandably, at least half of the students from ramp E have decided to move off campus. The cost of refunding rent for students choosing to leave campus — \$234.35 per student — will only add to the costs of the vandalism.

Though University officials say the decision was made because nobody had come forward claiming responsibility for any of the damage, North Area Coordinator Jay Lemons stressed that the action was not disciplinary.

Lemons said that the action was taken because the University felt the environment wasn't conducive to the student's academic success, though residents claim 10 students living on ramp E had grade-point ratios of 3.0 or better. If this is A&M's rationale for evicting the students of ramp E, all dorm residents could be in danger of eviction. By their very nature, dorms are not conducive to academic success.

If Lemons' assertion is true, it seems that attrition would have been a much cheaper solution to the problem.

Instead, the students who had nothing to do with the problems were forced from their homes in the middle of the semester and slapped with unexpected expenses if they chose to move off campus.

We do not condone vandalism, but we do believe that at a university with such extensive resources there must have been a better way to deal with a problem affecting innocent and guilty alike.

Perhaps University officials could have worked with the campus police and increased patrolling of Walton Hall. Surely, the campus police could have stopped any vandalism while sparing the welfare of uninvolved students.

But fairness is not a concern of the housing department. Instead, it sought — and got — a quick-fix to what it perceived to be a desperate situation. It was willing to have the University pay any price to solve the troubles in Walton — even if the solution inevitably will cost A&M far more than the problem itself.

We only can wonder what other examples of "creativity" the administration has in store. If students are caught drawing on desks, will they have to clean all the desks in the room? Or will they simply be kept in from recess?



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LITERARY CRITICISM, EAST AND WEST

Some call it entertainment

Unfortunately, I don't have anything as exciting as skydiving to write about this week. All I can offer you is my Friday night experience with McCaw Cablevision. Due to circumstances beyond my control, I was without a car that night, so I had a good excuse to stay home and study. Heaven knows it couldn't hurt me. With three tests and a project due this week, it seemed to be the appropriate thing to do.



Paula Vogrin

So I got myself all set up. I spread my books out around me, made some microwave popcorn and poured a big glass of ice water. I got rolling and put in a good hour's worth of bookwork. Then I got fidgety. You know how it is. You're at home alone, studying diligently, when all of a sudden the long arm of the TV reaches out and grabs you. There is no escape.

I pulled the remote control out from under my books and pushed the button. "I'll just see what's on for a minute," I thought. But I was fooling myself. There would be no more studying for me that night — I had passed the point of no return and was glued to the TV for the rest of the evening.

My 8 p.m. viewing selection was *Miami Vice*. I've never been a big *Vice* fan, but it was the lesser of the 20-odd evils on the other channels. I got more than I bargained for, too. The show is so good, they aired it twice Friday night — two solid hours of Crockett and Tubbs driving expensive cars, wearing expensive suits and solving bizarre crimes. I watched for a happy ending, or even one that made sense, but, true to form, the *Vice* left me hanging.

I watched the local news at 10 o'clock and counted the mistakes the anchors made. It was a slow night — there were only five errors. The weekend crews are always better for foul-ups, bleeps and blunders anyway. After the news, I turned to the Channel 31 station guide

to see what was on. I just missed the 10:30 p.m. listing, and had to watch the rest of the programming crawl by at a snail's pace. I became so frustrated waiting for 10:30 p.m. to roll around again I gave up and began switching channels.

I put my remote control through a strenuous workout in my struggle to find something, anything, worth watching. I was lost in a vast wasteland of old, bad movies, Mary Tyler Moore reruns, Bon Jovi videos, detective show repeats, kick boxing and the scrambled signals of the movie channels.

I tried HBO for a while. If you squint your eyes, you can watch the movie on Channel 14 (but it's necessary to mute the volume to alleviate the earsplitting beeping noises), and switch to Channel 18 every few seconds to hear what's going on. I watched *Wild Cats* for five minutes, but the strain on my remote control finger was too much. I opted for other programming.

I started with Channel 36, MTV, and decided to work my way down from there. I was wondering who I would see first: Bon Jovi, Phil Collins, Madonna or Journey.

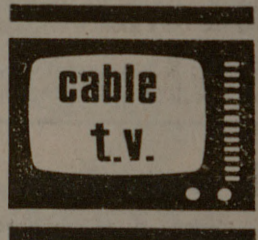
Not surprisingly, I was accosted by the head-tossing members of Bon Jovi singing their latest teen anthem. Click, next channel.

At Channel 35, I was greeted by Paul and Jan Crouch, the TV evangelist and his wife who reign supreme as the religious personalities with the worst taste in clothing. Paul's toupee clashes with Jan's pink-tinted hair, and everything clashes with the lace, bows, beads, fur and sequins that decorate every article of clothing in Jan's wardrobe. What a fashion disaster.

Channels 34 and 33 didn't have much to offer. Bon Jovi tossed their heads at me from 34, and *Magnum P.I.* was trying to corral a psycho transvestite who was killing TV celebrities on 33. I passed on both. ESPN featured kick boxing and track and field events from somewhere, and I watched those until

my trigger finger started itching again. I passed over a stupid-looking movie about a C.B. enthusiast on Channel 26 and stopped just long enough on Channel 29 to see Bon Jovi in action. Another stupid-looking movie about a preacher's daughter was on Channel 27. I skipped Country Music Television together. The search was still on.

McNeil and Lehrer bored me on Channel 26, and Maude was being and abrasive on 25. I couldn't get my heads or tails out of the program and color bars decorated the screen. Channel 23. I skipped the screen Disney Channel and watched the ish station for a few minutes. As far as I could make out, it was a show about some tough female prison inmates were trying to force Milk Duds down the throat of the cell weakling. I flipped Channel 19, Black Entertainment Television, watched a few videos and went on.



I skipped Channel 15 (there's nothing going on there), and mixed it up to watch *Clam* or *Cave Bear* on HBO. I also watched an old Rick Pryor flick on Channel 11, the Burns and Allen Show on Channel 10. I paused to watch news on Channel 9, passed up *Clam* and the Weather Channel, and Channel 6 right in time for Bon Jovi again.

Channels 5 and 4 were off the air. Sherlock Holmes was solving crimes in black and white on Channel 3. Channel 2 offered a Carol Burnett Show and Channel 1, the Discovery Channel was airing a Soviet art documentary rated in Russian.

By this time it was almost 1 a.m. I gave up and went to bed. I think the next time I stay home on a Friday night to study, I'll go to the library. The time soaps are better there anyway.

Paula Vogrin is a senior journalism major and a columnist for *The Battalion*.

Mail Call

Disgusting?

EDITOR:

I agree with Paula Vogrin's general attitudes toward racial violence, but I think she needs to face the facts and not be ashamed of any race. I'm sorry that seeing the facts "struck you hard." It's too bad you weren't aware that racial relations and equality have not been perfected and prejudice and violence are still existent.

You were disgusted at the events in Cummings? I was also, but at ALL the people involved. What do you think the marchers expected? Those people marched with "pro-black" signs into a southern white-majority populated area. What do you think their intentions were? Don't you know that Americans are too free-spirited to have attitudes pounded into them? Stirring trouble is not the best way to promote ideas nor peace.

What do you think would happen if you got some people together (white majority) and walked into Harlem? Do you think black people are any less prejudiced than white or other people? Your own racial prejudice, or categorization, is evident when you admit you are "ashamed of your race." Don't be ashamed of a race or disapprove of individual actions. Understand that attitudes are hard to change in a short time.

You say you went to parties, restaurants and movies "together." Did you ever date any blacks? Just because you didn't experience any racial violence doesn't make me believe everyone lacked prejudice.

For several years while I attended a Houston public junior high school, students as well as teachers rarely socialized outside their race, and qualified "majority" students were denied entry into accelerated courses due to quotas, even though "minorities" were making F's. I think no one should be given unfair advantages or disadvantages. Ambition and perspiration is what made America come so far. My parents, who came here with \$50, proved that responsible, motivated people can do well, even if they are not accepted at first. So what do you mean by the "United States taking a giant step backward," the immature Klan-bashing marchers, or the hypocrite marchers provoking violence?

Paul Svacina '87

High praise

EDITOR:

The Texas A&M Singing Cadets are to be commended. Not only did the Singing Cadets spread their joyful message in a concert on Feb. 12, they did it as a benefit to the Muscular Dystrophy Association. These young men, under the direction of Robert Boone, shared their unparalleled talent and donated the door proceeds to fight muscular dystrophy. The concert was dedicated to Jason Boles, a senior psychology major at A&M, who has muscular dystrophy.

Once again, a very special thank you to each and every one of the Singing Cadets, and especially their outstanding leader,

Boone. Aggies, you should be proud!
Nettie Helmick, District Director

Altered states

EDITOR:

In response to Brian Koontz's *Farmers Write!* column on financial aid, I would like to make a few comments. First, Koontz you question the Legislature's authority to "deform the Texas Constitution according to their whims." Any realistic look at Texas history will reveal the Texas Constitution is already deformed and has been subject to many whims in its long history. Your use of "suddenly" in this context seems inappropriate.

In addition, you fail to mention where the funds will come from to subsidize "education for all." In a time of huge deficits, like most who complain of financial aid policy, you failed to answer this issue. Finally, the next time you write an article, I suggest you avoid numerous question marks and parenthetical quips.

David V. Wilson '90

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 classification, address and telephone number of the writer.