

# Opinion

## Mail Call

"WHY, CERTAINLY I HEARD WHAT YOU SAID, DEAR... I THINK THE MAUVE SILK ORGANZA WOULD BE PERFECT FOR THE STATE DINNER..."



## The suffering is still there

**Editor's note:** The following is the last in a three-part series. It is the true story of a friend of the author. For various reasons, the author wishes his friend's name to remain anonymous.

**Thanh Cong Nguyen**  
Guest Columnist

I used to cherish, almost worship, the sunset. When I was young I remember how my sister and I used to walk side by side along the Mekong river. When the sun began to set, we knelt down facing the river, looking towards the colorful clouds and prayed that the God of the Sun would lighten up the river so that we could search for a floating body. When we did see a floating object, we prayed and prayed that it would not be our Daddy's body. (He went fishing one day wearing his usual kakkhi shirt and never returned.)

God did answer our prayers, for we never found Daddy. We searched and searched, day after day, night after night, along the river, under the bridges, in the ditches. On we went, calling, "Daddy, Daddy," in those silent nights; only a few dead leaves answered each footstep we took.

The world had taken our Mom away

before, on one violent night — a cold night with rolling thunder, explosions and fire.

At least in my heart. My sister's heart, however, was glued to the beautiful doll "made in USA" which she saw in the window of a store. "If Daddy were here, he would give me this doll," she cried. She was only seven. She had no little sister to hold or to dress. She had no mother who loved her and combed her hair each night. She had lost the Daddy who would give her the doll she wanted.

For that doll, I sold many newspapers and polished many shoes for many months. But when the doll was hers, she took it back and used the money to buy food to place as an offering at our mother's grave.

Day after day, we sold papers and searched for Daddy. Each time we saw a person wearing a khaki shirt and holding a fishing rod, we rushed over wanting to call Daddy, but we could only ask if he liked to buy a paper. The search went on until sunset. We sat at the river watching the colorful clouds, feeling the warmth into our hearts and made us proud for surviving another day without Daddy, and gave us hope that tomorrow our Daddy would be found.

Somehow, today, the warmth of the setting sun doesn't illuminate the coldness in my heart. It's been different since we left Vietnam. My little sister is not little anymore. She has grown to be

a beautiful woman and is not concerned with dolls. Instead, she sits at home and melts in the arms of her beloved husband. Every moment, she cherishes her new life. She needs no little sister, since her children are there for to hold. She needs no mother, since she herself is a mother. She needs no Daddy to give her a doll "made in USA" since her husband is American.

Watching the sunset today is like watching a darkness about to overshadow my life. Watching the sun go down, sinking into the deep sea, is like watching my last loved one melting into the coldness. Where is my Daddy? Where is my Mommy? Where is my little sister? Where did they go? What did I do to deserve this? Where is my home? Burned down? Who burned my home? No, no... my home is still there, a beautiful home, an empty home, waiting for me to return, and my Mommy and Daddy... Oh, cold, cold. The coldness of hell. I could feel it, the coldness of the silent night, as I waded into the breath of the reckless sea. No, no it's not cold. It's warm. I could feel it, the warmth of seeing my Dad waving at me on the other side and Mommy cooking a tasty meal for me. I could feel it, warmer and warmer, as I waded my way home farther and farther into the coldest sea...

**Thanh Cong Nguyen is a senior petroleum engineering major.**

## Who could part with his Master's tickets?

The most difficult tickets to obtain in all of sport are those which allow the holder to walk upon the sacred grounds of Augusta National during the Masters golf tournament.

**Lewis Grizzard**

There are no sales to the general public. Those who have tickets either inherited them or got on the list for the privilege of buying them years ago.

Jack, a guy from Columbus, Ga., first began buying tickets 23 years ago.

"They were just \$15 back then," he said, "but they went up to 70."

"My wife didn't like me going to the Masters or playing golf or fishing or running with my buddies. I was on a leash.

"I was a salesman and my territory was the Southeast. On Friday afternoons on my way home, I enjoyed

stopping by the Elks Club and having a few beers with my buddies."

"And you wife didn't like that?"

"Of course not. She'd start yelling at me the minute I got home, 'Jack, you stopped by the Elks Club, didn't you? How many beers did you have?'"

"I always said, 'Two.' I usually had 27. She'd say, 'Why do you always say two?' and I'd say, 'What difference does it make what I tell you? You don't believe anything I say anyway.'"

"One day she got so mad at me she went to my closet and took out all my clothes and then she got my golf clubs and went out on the deck and covered them with charcoal lighter and set them on fire."

"But what about the Masters tickets?"

"My wife had gotten herself a job at the courthouse and she started thinking she was pretty high and mighty and she wanted to be seen in all the right places. So she began going to the Masters with me just to be seen, but she never wanted to stay over an hour."

"One thing led to another and we fi-

nally got a divorce. I was so sick and tired of everything I wanted it to be over as fast as possible.

"When the lawyers came to me I told them my wife could have everything — the house included.

"I signed the papers without really looking at them.

"And do you know what she had put in those papers?"

"Don't tell me...?"

"Yep, She had them put in that she got my two Masters tickets and she doesn't even like golf. She did it out of spite."

"That's one of the saddest stories I've ever heard," I said.

"To have once had Masters tickets and then to have lost them to an ex-wife. Have you ever tried to get them back from her?"

"I'm afraid to," said Jack. "A woman who'll take your Masters tickets would kill you if she got half the chance."

I heard that, too.

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### You heathens

EDITOR:

With each passing semester my pride in A&M grows and grows. I know that I could never regret a minute I spend here nor would I be ashamed to admit my association with any other fellow Ags. Until now, I've had no reason. Until now? That's right! My feathers are ruffled and I'm damn mad.

Call me naive, but I was under the assumption that because we all have reached this level of education, we have also gained some degree of maturity along with it. Well, you know what happens when you assume...

I'm referring to the disrespectful South-Side Ags who must think they are blessing the rest of us with their presence. Why else would they vandalize our beloved Commons and act like slobby 10-year-olds? Have they reserved their respect for the MSC? Couldn't there be just a little bit left over for South Side and the rest of the campus? Show some Aggie pride or at least some fellowship. You may not care about our school but plenty of us do. I hope Austin is looking for a new Sanitation Superintendent. Maybe some of our bad Ags should pick up an application!!

Suzanne Strauser '90

### What an attitude problem

EDITOR:

I would like to express my opinion of an operation manager who works for the ECS (Engineering Computing Services). I first encountered this employee when I went to her office to find out why my computer account was taken away. As I tried to inquire more about the situation from the ECS employee, I was informed that I was suspected of some kind of computer security breach. Then I was rudely accused and yelled at by the operation manager without any proof or reasoning. I can understand to a certain degree that my computer account was cut off, but I do not comprehend the rule and obnoxious behavior. I feel that my constitutional rights were violated because I was treated as guilty until proven innocent, and I know that I am innocent of her alleged accusations.

The ECS employee is former "Aggie" herself and should know better about conducting herself in any kind of business-like environment as well as how to treat others with respect.

At first I thought the ECS employee was just mad at me, but I also discovered that she treated another student the same way. I also witnessed the employee loudly reprimanding a fellow ECS worker in public and heard various complaints from other ECS employees against the operation manager.

Finally, I feel that this type of attitude is unnecessary and uncalled-for. I think that the operation manager should learn to control her manners and that her actions should properly be investigated by the appropriate officials. This problem is not corrected I feel that the operation manager should be replaced by a more civilized and competent worker.

Scott Wong '88

### No more noise!

EDITOR:

What a wonderful group of folks we have in the SAA! Always on the lookout for the oppressed, the unfortunate and the despised. Are we returning to the 1960s? Allowing ourselves to have a true sense of awareness and human compassion? *The Batt* reports their every move, every construction project and every reconstruction project. They have become the focal point of many a conversation throughout the campus. The talk of the town is their will. The editorial pages of the past few weeks have given rise to countless accusations of who is the most ignorant.

But why, of all the current events in our community, state and national levels, does the plight of non-whites in South Africa produce such a rash comment from both supporters and opponents. Do we really have to travel 5,000 miles to find seemingly unjust actions? Heaven forbid that our country could produce the impoverished. Why is there such a romantic idea that the best help that can be given is via long distances?

We have poor. Drive into those sections of town that best exemplify the term poverty. We all know where they are. But we avoid them. Why is it that we cannot produce the same enthusiasm for our fellow Americans, Texas Bryan-College Station residents that we do for Anti-Apartheid.

Until the blacks of South Africa unify, no amount of pressure by the outside world will change the status quo. I for one will be thankful that the status and its abundant controversy will be gone this week. How about it, SAA, something worth while for your next construction project. Make a difference, not just a bunch of noise!

Doug Oliver

### It is society's fault

EDITOR:

Something is wrong. When a crime has been committed everyone looks to the criminal. The criminal has made a decision and forfeited his right to a place in society. He has failed at the greatest test — life. In our society the punishment of a criminal is the solution. Unfortunately, the punishment of criminals is never equal to the losses of the victims. But who made the decision to commit the crime — who has truly failed?

A person, any person, is no more than the influences and experiences of their life. We all start the same and are shaped into who we are. The only conclusion then, is that society has failed — WE have failed, not THEY. The attention, however, is not given to the cause but to the effect. The problem is ultimately the answer, rests not with the one criminal but with society as a whole. As the numbers of criminals and cost of crime increase, we must look past the short-term answer of imprisonment and execution. Today victims' rights are being recognized as much as criminals' rights. Will we eventually lock them up also?

The potential lies not with the courts and juries we delegate to redress our failures but in the values and actions of all. We must recognize the losses of the many victims and criminals and each change a little to produce even greater loss. We must look past the criminals to the society that has produced them — that society is you and me. There is no simple answer to the problem as complicated as our society itself.

John Isenberg '90

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit 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.

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