

# Opinion

## The secret of education rests in the individual

We're all fairly smart. The mean I.Q. at A&M is 20 points above average. The admission requirements are higher here than at a lot of other places. None of us has to be ashamed to say we graduated from A&M. When we leave, most of us will be bright young people who know theories and equations and facts. But because of the anti-intellectual atmosphere, most of us will not be given a fair opportunity to be well educated.



Jill Webb

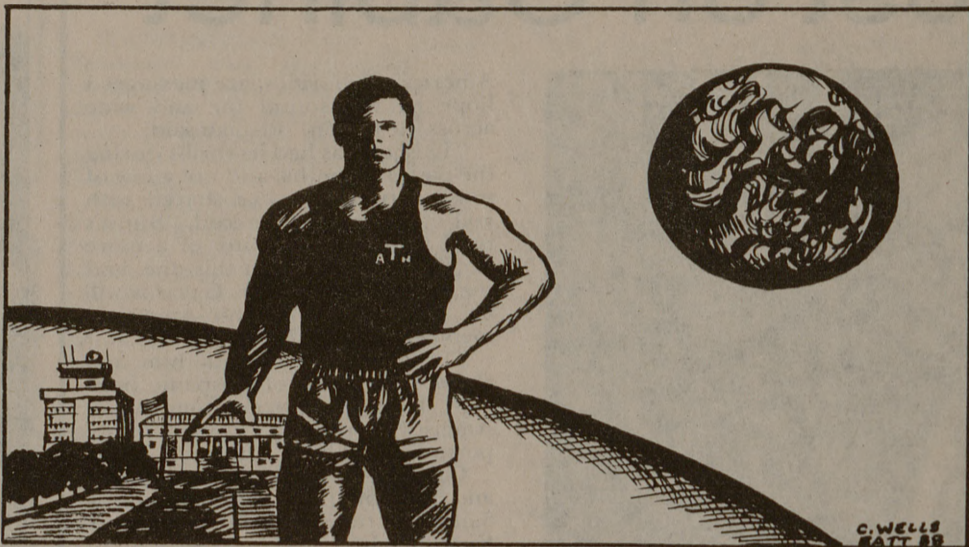
There are three important purposes of education that A&M does not adequately provide for: 1) to challenge the beliefs, the values, stereotypes and the minds of the students, 2) to find out what is wrong with our society and come up with ways to fix it, 3) to turn out caring, worthwhile, productive members of our society. Exploration is a key in education. Not only exploration of the bottom of the ocean, or of atoms and molecules, but also the exploration of the human condition. We have many fine professors who have much to share about why we treat each other the way we do, about unfairness, justice, forms of courage, integrity, truth, other cultures, other times, other religions and philosophies. But the atmosphere here does not encourage students to explore these areas. Our emphasis on tradition and stereotypes and the automatic rejection of anything but traditional values does not foster an atmosphere of

discussion, but suppression.

In college, "because my mamma said so," or "because I was raised that way," or "because my church believes it" are not good enough reasons for our behavior. Unless we challenge our beliefs and make rational decisions about them, they are not reasons at all, they are excuses not to think. If, after looking at all the opinions and evidence, we return to our original values, then that is fine.

But to avoid looking and to discourage analysis is to say that our values will not hold up under scrutiny. It is to say that our values are worthless, but we hold on to them out of fear. Educated people can give reasons for the way they behave and believe. They have looked at the options, given it thought, and decided for themselves. Educated people can say, "I have decided that this is right because it is logical, compassionate, effective or responsible." Uneducated people say "this is what I believe because I have not thought about it any other way."

Here at A&M we like the uneducated. We not only encourage it, we revel in it,



glorify it, think that we are superior because of our uneducatedness. Ags don't think, they believe. Those who do think are dismissed as minority "two percenters." Liberal Arts majors are laughed at even today. Studying other people's experiences, fears, strengths, hopes, and wisdom is seen as unnecessary. Such things confuse the uneducated, the narrow-minded. The attitude here discourages even listening and discussing.

We also have a strange way of preparing students to solve the problems our society faces. The atmosphere at A&M implies, "have a problem? Ignore it!" Scandles with the football team, the

showing emotion is called "real." A real man is a piece of ice cold granite, never bending under pressure, sharp, always ready with an answer, anticipating not listening, drunk with the boys, a gentleman with the ladies, and a stud with the "chicks." It seems to me it would be easier and more fun to just be yourself, but I've been here for almost four years, two years on campus, and from what I have seen, most men are discouraged from expressing anything that would make them unique. It certainly makes me appreciate those men who do not aspire to be John Wayne, who do care and

treatment of women, hazing, the GSS and even the condition of our library are all examples of the Aggie desire to sink our heads deeper into the sand so all of the challenges will go away. How can we recognize the problems in our own society, when we ignore them at our own university? Finally, does A&M encourage people to be caring, productive, worthwhile people in our society?

Female Aggies do not have a definite role. Having women students such a conservative, traditional university causes some interal conflict. In the atmospheric attitude is the woman can work as long as she's at dinner on the table when the comes home. When women are limited to such a role, they are not encouraged to grow in any direction they wish. When they are stifled in the way they waste their potential and come less productive or happy members of society.

Male Aggies are encouraged to be "real" men. How ironic it is that not being allowed to show emotion is called "real." A real man is a piece of ice cold granite, never bending under pressure, sharp, always ready with an answer, anticipating not listening, drunk with the boys, a gentleman with the ladies, and a stud with the "chicks." It seems to me it would be easier and more fun to just be yourself, but I've been here for almost four years, two years on campus, and from what I have seen, most men are discouraged from expressing anything that would make them unique. It certainly makes me appreciate those men who do not aspire to be John Wayne, who do care and

We can clear the atmosphere. We become truly educated in every way we only allowed discussion and engaged growth and ideas. We are leaders in research and we have a wealth of materials and potential. I am ashamed to forget the rest of the purpose of education. If we challenged ourselves and became thinking people, believing people. If we could admit the flaws in ourselves and our society and discover ways to remedy them, we produced individuals, not products. "real" Aggies, we would be not a world class, we would be the best.

Jill Webb is a senior secondary education major and columnist for The Battalion.

## These are a few of Loyd's fav-o-right thangs

Ya know, it's that time again.

Time to contemplate the last four years spent here, time to say goodbye to my friends (both of them), time to take that big step up to the Big Cesspool, and most of all, time to write that obligatory garbage-filled goodbye column everyone here writes with just the perfect touch of hypocritical insincerity.

Well, heh-heh-heh, I'm not gonna do it.

You know what I'm talking about. It happens every semester at about this time. Teary-eyed staffers lament about saying goodbye to everything that moves in the B-CS Metroplex. Trust me, they don't mean it! It's just 20 inches or so of rambling trash from people too scared to wake up and smell



Loyd Brumfield

the Ovaltine in the real world. Yeah, I've had enough of it, too, so that's why I'm going to do something a little bit different.

Don't think I'm tooting my own horn because what I write may very well be just as lame as the previous columns, but at least it will be original.

I'll be walking across that stage in a week and a half now, Lord willin', so I thought I'd take this opportunity to say a hearty "Good riddance!!!" to my favorite pet peeves here at A&M. I warn you, it won't be pretty.

Before you sigh disgustedly and mutter "Scrooge!" under your breath, let me say there are a few things I'll miss here — football games and my freshman year, to name a few. Ah, yes, my freshman year — a time spent largely harassing obnoxious neighbors with a dog that didn't exist named Mount Fuji and sitting around with the roommate blowing sundry objects up in the microwave. The list includes freezer pops, eggs, cockroaches and little packets of

ketchup. We tried to blow up a racquetball once, but we chickened out. We were just fish, you know.

But I digress.

My years here have been fairly neat-keen, I guess, but I'm not leaving here in proper "Smiley-face Good Ag" fashion, though. I've got a few gripes. Let's start with . . . oh, yeah — Country Music.

I didn't even know who George Strait was until I arrived here on campus. I take that back, I did know who he was — I thought he was the Vice-President of the United States.

Interesting anecdote that I probably won't tell my grandkids but I'm telling you anyway #1: A couple of weeks into the fall semester of my freshman year, I was sleepily sitting in my seat getting ready for my 8 a.m. history class when my friend Melanie (I forgot her last name, but she'll appreciate the publicity) from Victoria came in and asked me how I spent my weekend.

"Oh, I sat around and critiqued *Godzilla vs. The Sea Monster* with the roommate. What'd you do?" I asked curiously.

"I saw George," she replied.

"George who?"

"George Strait."

"Oh, no kidding? Who's he?"

"What do you mean, 'Who's He? He's God, that's who!!!"

And, lo, I was severely castigated for being oblivious to someone who sings about chairs and how much he loves Amarillo. Or is that Abilene? Maybe it was Alice. Oh, well, personally I like my music to have a little more kick to it.

Gripe #2 — Northgate: Count me out of the fan club for this one, gang. Me no likee spending hot, humid evenings in ramshackle, smoke-filled toolsheds with a bunch of drunken cow-

boys and Battalion staffers. I prefer my activities to be a little bit more cerebral, like constructing a hideous mask out of paper mache and scaring pizza guys with it.

Gripe #3 — the drive up here: I happen to be from Beaumont, a sparkling city of roughly 118,000 located darn near exactly 150 miles southeast of here. The drive takes about two hours of fifty minutes on mostly two-way roads nearly all the way here.

Trouble is, usually there's a line of cars and trucks ahead of me going a collective total of 45 miles an hour. You've seen 'em on the road — pick-up trucks with bumper stickers that say either "KIKK'er," or "If you ain't Cowboy, you ain't \*\*\*\*" (expletive deleted for the benefit of the home readers). To all those slowpokes out there I give a helpful driving tip: The Shoulder is Your Friend. Always remember that.

Gripe #4 — roadwork: Is there some law in the city books that states every little bit of road construction must occur at the same time? It started simply enough with the expansion of the east side of University Drive. But then it grew to include the campus, and soon the Reed McDonald building was virtually cut-off from the rest of the University.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not exactly Mr. Naive here. I realize it's all a plot formulated by those hideous Regents to keep us pinkos from polluting your minds.

But the construction didn't stop there. It moved on to include the west side of University drive, slowing summer traffic down to a lethargic slither. And then Texas Avenue was repaved. By gosh, they're even working on Highway Six now! Is there no end to this madness? I tell you, things just haven't been the same since they invented the Yugo.

Gripe #4 — Math classes: I . . . no, I can't do it. It's just too traumatic for me. Any second now I could suffer a relapse.

Gripe #5 — Red tape: You know, it ought to be a simple thing to have a take on your degree audit changed.

All I wanted was to switch B.S. to B.A. because I'm an artsy kind of guy, right? Well listen to this: I had to go through the Spanish Inquisition of modern day paperwork to get it done. First stop — my adviser. Second stop — extremely helpful people in the College of Liberal Arts who just out there to impress upon you how much the stupid student, are inconveniencing them, the watchdogs of academic

Next stop — Heaton Hall and the Good Lord that the fine folks type in the new information center because that's how everything gets messed up in the first place.

Well, that should just about do it. Of course, this is by no means an exhaustive list of gripes but heck, War Peace is just over a million pages long. Contains only 300 major characters.

I left out a bunch — like the College library, the Reed McDonald building (You think Heldenfels smells like keep expecting someone to say, "Bo your sleeve, this won't hurt a bit." I enter this place), utility bills and so on but I don't want you to get the wrong impression and think I do nothing to complain.

So it's time to move on. Time to go to my new job exactly one hour from home and make something of my life. So the next time you read a hypocritical "I'm gonna miss you" column, think of me. I'll be roughly 100 miles away probably blowing things in the microwave and popping *The Temptation of Christ* into the old VCR.

It's like my good buddy Mark says: "Yep."

Loyd Brumfield is a God willin' and creek don't rise August graduate. Less something goes wrong. Terribly wrong. Really.

### Mail Call

#### Let the parking tradition live

EDITOR:

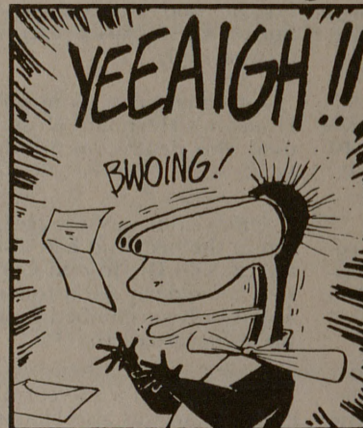
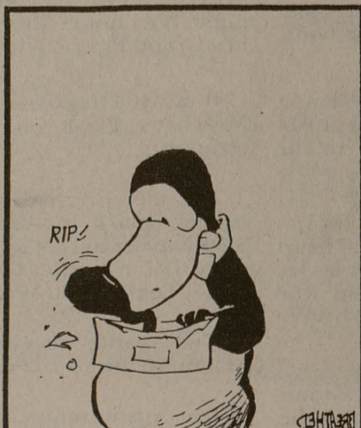
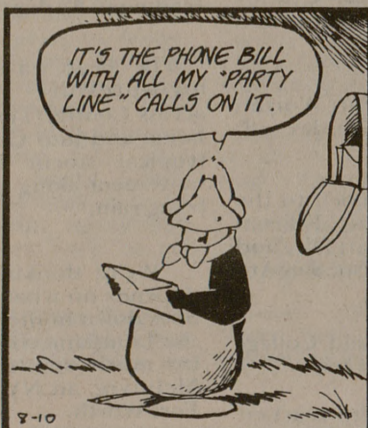
It has recently come to my attention that our "world class" university has found another way to show us just how much "class" it lacks. I am referring to the proposed change in parking policy. It seems that the Parking Transit Authority, in another display of infinite wisdom, has decided to abolish the green lots and dole out red stickers to all on campus students, thereby enabling freshmen and sophomores access to the prized parking spots close to the dorms.

This is an outrage. It is one of the rights of passage for a student, when becoming an upperclassman, to be awarded a coveted red sticker. It is tradition for underclassmen to make long treks out to the fish lot to get to their cars. I've paid for my red sticker with two years of hard work, and now I will have to fight with clueless freshmen for a spot that is rightfully mine! Dr. Mobley's first action as the new president should be to right this terrible injustice. This is one tradition that we cannot let die.

Steve Dickerson '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.

### BLOOM COUNTY



by Berke Breathed

### The Battalion

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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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