

Opinion

Americans lacking respect for others

While celebrating a first place finish in Seoul, South Korea, two American swimmers obviously had a little too much soju and decided to swipe two ancient Korean masks from a hotel lobby for an Olympic souvenir (as if a gold medal were not enough).

They were caught and arrested causing a major embarrassment for United States Olympic officials and athletes, the Americans attending the Olympics and those of us here in the States. But we shouldn't have been surprised. This is just another example of how Americans, especially young ones, do not have the courtesy or decency to respect other cultures, even when visiting a foreign country.

Not only were these Olympians — supposedly the cream of the crop in our nation — stealing, but they were stealing national treasures.

We have been led to believe that the U.S. of A. is No. 1 in everything worth being No. 1 in and that the American way is the only way. This attitude has caused a disdain in us for other countries' perspectives and age-old customs. It can be seen every spring break by the hordes of college students who flock to Matamoros, Mexico to party. They go to buy inexpensive products and have a good time and leave after trashing the streets, taunting the natives and behaving in a rude and boorish manner.

It would certainly seem appropriate if when we sat down to enjoy the All-American meal of hamburgers and fries, we also occasionally took a slice of humble pie.

The Battalion Editorial Board

Mail Call

Cookie monsters not camp norm

EDITOR: OK, you got me. You have finally infuriated me to the point where you got me to do exactly what you wanted: write a letter in response to an opinion article. I've been angry with *Battalion* columnists before but Becky Weisenfels wins the award for pushing my patience so far that I cannot resist feeling compelled to respond.

I'm sorry to hear that you didn't have a good time at Fish Camp, Becky, — oh, wait a minute — that's right, you didn't go.

So where did you get the information on which your opinion is based? Let's see, your article specifically mentions two friends who "sat up one night on the bathroom floor, eating mint Oreos and Cornquistos until they made themselves sick." As a psychology major, I find your two friends very interesting. However, I can hardly believe that their experience is representative of the majority of students who have attended Fish Camp.

Of course, not everybody who goes will love it, but we're talking about more than 3,000 freshmen each year. It's extremely idealistic to think that they're all going to have a great time. Inevitably there will be outliers sitting on the bathroom floor imitating the Cookie Monster.

Furthermore, I'm happy to hear that you survived your first year here all by yourself. We're all very proud of you.

But what's wrong with taking advantage of the opportunity to learn more about our school, make friends, and have fun? Call me crazy, but in my opinion those sound like positive aspects of a beneficial organization. And since you've never been there, let me tell you that Fish Camp does succeed in providing such an environment. I cannot understand your rationale for calling that a waste of time. Fish Camp does perpetuate Aggie traditions, ease the transition to college life, and initiate friendships.

Mike O'Brien '89

Weisenfels planing Detroit visit

EDITOR: We found Becky Weisenfels' article in yesterday's *Batt* on the shortcomings of Fish Camp to be very weak. It is an article based entirely on hearsay and her own outlandish assumptions. Her article has about as much validity as someone who says living in Detroit is awful, yet has never had the courage or conviction to travel to Detroit and find out for himself. Becky, go to Fish Camp, then we'll talk.

Todd Renaud '92
John Loyd '91

Bush's ACLU bashing 'despicable'

EDITOR: George Bush's attempts to gain political mileage out of bashing the American Civil Liberties Union is despicable.

Once again he is demonstrating his own sharp turn to the right by pandering to the right-wing extremists in his party.

The ACLU is constantly under attack — because it takes the Bill of Rights seriously.

Ultra-conservatives and right-wing extremists would prefer to handpick and choose which American citizens are protected under the Bill of Rights and determine to what degree those rights can be extended.

For years, the ACLU has worked hard to make sure that the Bill of Rights is a reality for all Americans regardless of wealth and social status.

If George Bush and Dan Quayle cannot appreciate this, they have no place trying to lead this country into the future.

Mike Thomas '87

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.

The Battalion

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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.

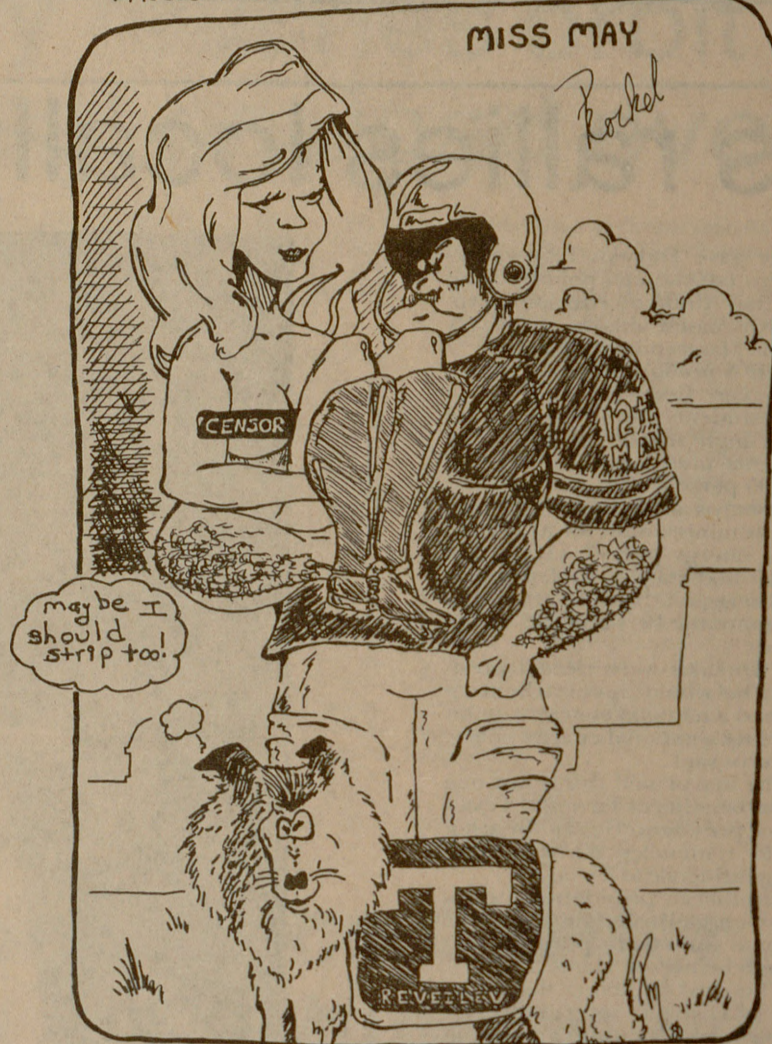
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A New Tradition for A&M:



He ain't that heavy; he's my nine-year-old brother



Anthony Wilson

The last time I took my nine-year-old brother Trey to an Aggie football game was two years ago. He wore a maroon beanie with an "ATM" on the front and two oversized "gig 'em" thumbs protruding from each side. We had a great time cheering the Aggies on to a big victory over the Houston Cougars.

This weekend the A&M football team returns to the Astrodome as will Trey and I. I've been thinking about this weekend for a long time now and also about when Trey stopped becoming just a brother, but also one of my best friends.

First let me explain a little about Trey. He's an extremely large kid for his age, but he's also one of the most sensitive people I know. A few years ago, my mother and he were grocery shopping when he noticed an apple had fallen off the shelf and was lying on the ground. He seemed disturbed by it and asked Mom if she thought the apple was lonely. She suggested that he put it back with the others and he happily did so.

But he's also extremely rambunctious. On his first day of first grade he flipped off the lights as he was leaving the bathroom, leaving about 20 other six-year-old boys in the dark with their pants around their knees. Trey claimed it was just force of habit to turn off the lights.

And I had the huge responsibility of being this complex person's big brother. But it was a job I've relished.

It's really something to have a young child look up to you like he did me. During my senior year in high school, I was the captain of the high school basketball team. And during the season, our refrigerator was adorned with crude pictures of Tomball Cougars eating Magnolia Bulldogs, Brenham Cubs and Consol Tigers. When I decided to attend A&M, Trey decided that he was going to be an Aggie too.

And the drawings became much more sophisticated. Trey drew pictures of Ol' Sarge mutilating a broken-horned Bevo, gig-impaled Horned Frogs and featherless Owls. He even added clever captions such as "Kill the Cows," "Kill the Frogs" and "Kill the Owls."

But it wasn't until after my freshman year at A&M that I stopped regarding Trey as a little kid and he became a real buddy.

That summer, I returned to Tomball — not exactly a hub of activity for a 19-year-old who would have suffered serious withdrawals if he hadn't gone dancing at the Rox-Z every Friday night. I was bored stiff, just trying to survive those three months before I could return to College Station and my friends. Little did I know that I would soon find a great friend in the second-grader who lived down the hall.

One day as I was moping around the house, Trey came home from day-care and wanted to play baseball. Needless to say, I was not in the mood to play ball in 96-degree, 96-percent humidity

weather. But after some needed agreed. And I had the most fun I had all summer.

After that day, Trey and I went out to the front yard bare-chested wearing Hawaiian shorts and caps every day. We would set up around using Frisbees and play in the darkness forced us to stop.

And Trey, only in his first season of Little League, became one heck of a pitcher. I would throw him a couple of shy breaking pitches to start out then throw him one right down the middle. He would tie into it and send it into the neighbor's yard — houses down. Home runs soon became to Trey what hot babes are to Hefner.

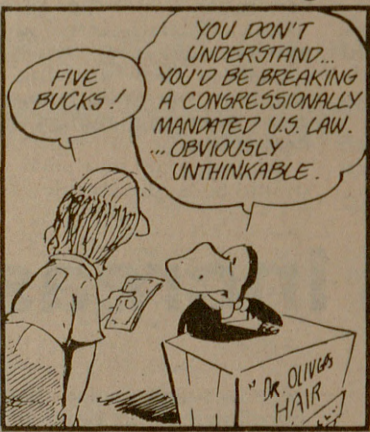
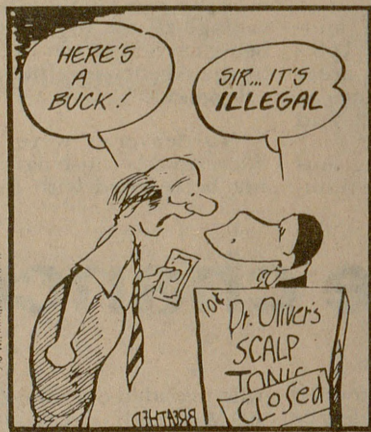
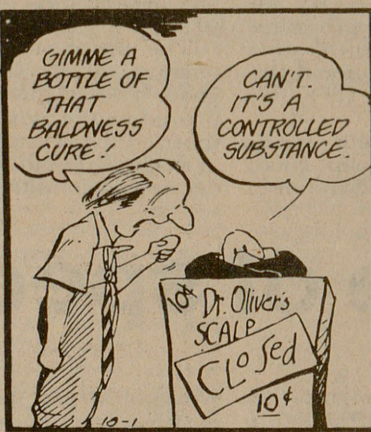
He would circle the bases slowly sometimes trotting backwards, taking the whole time by screaming, HA HA! Another HOME RUN! to be embarrassing when the neighbor would come out of their house to see what the commotion was all about.

But soon, every day I was eagerly anticipating Trey's return home so I could play baseball. It was a great summer.

I haven't had the chance to spend other summer with Trey since then. I may never again get to. And I missed it a lot. I'm not quite sure I'm writing this. Maybe it's so that one day I can show it to him and tell him I love you. You're my brother. You're my friend."

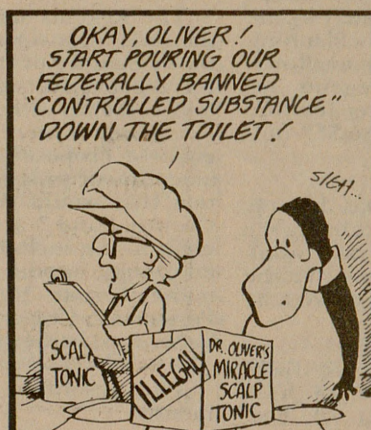
Anthony Wilson is a senior journalism major and opinion page editor of *The Battalion*.

BLOOM COUNTY



by Berke Breathed

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