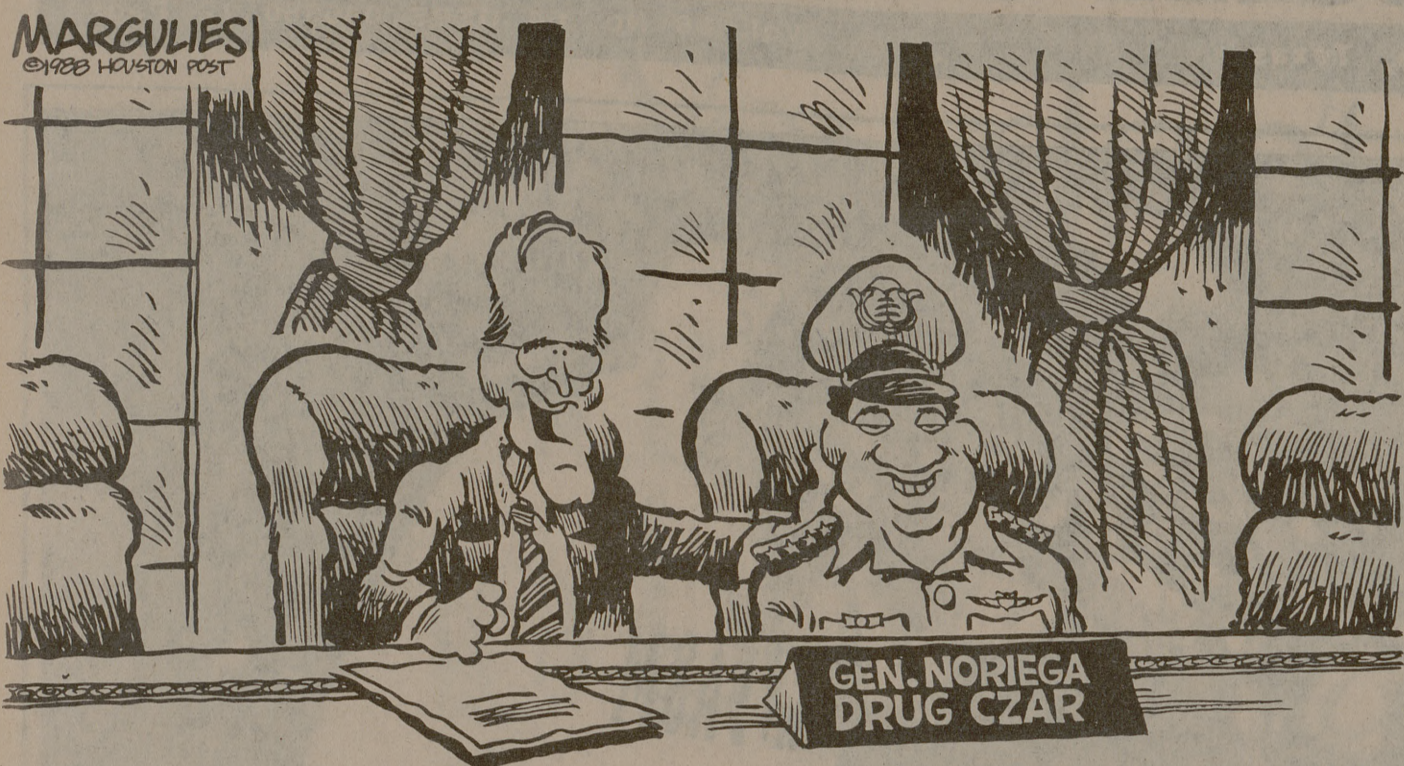


MARGULIES
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"In keeping with my promise to name a Hispanic to my cabinet..."

Closed minds hurting A&M

I had originally planned to write this column about my holiday experiences with those dreaded, Godless, pinko-commie Teasips. But since this is one of my last two columns as opinion page editor, and I know the last won't be read during finals week, I felt compelled to say something I've wanted to say all semester.

Maybe I've just become more skeptical since becoming *The Battalion's* opinion page editor. Or maybe it's just that as I'm approaching the end of my college days, I've become more cynical about the gullibility of the typical college student.

Or maybe I've just opened my eyes along with my mind and realized how blind most of the student body here at Texas A&M University really is. A prime example is the way students blindly follow tradition for tradition's sake without contemplating, or even considering, the alternatives or consequences of their actions.

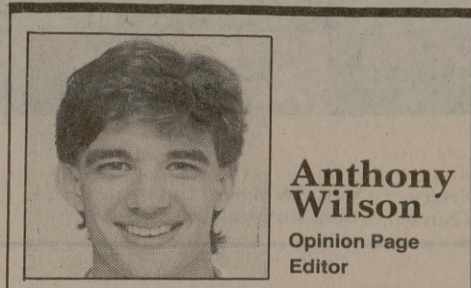
I'm not going to tell you that tradition is stupid and has no place at our university. Certainly, tradition is one of the things, if not the thing, which separates Texas A&M from every other institution of higher education in the nation.

What I do want to stress is the importance of considering other people's points-of-view, being considerate of those and being open and receptive to change. Many recent incidents at A&M have exhibited how Aggies continue to practice beliefs that have passed outdated and moved straight into ancient.

For example, recently discrimination has been a hot topic of discussion on the A&M campus.

Just last year, discrimination was prevalent at the bonfire construction site. A female photographer who was there on assignment for *The Aggie* and yearbook was harassed and removed from the perimeter area. Meanwhile male photographers, who were simply photographing the event for themselves, were allowed in. At the time, *Batt* columnist Debbie Jensen made a valid point when she wrote, "If a tradition is discriminatory, it should not represent Texas A&M. It is not the image I would want the University to have in other people's eyes."

In Oct. of 1986, students also encountered problems at the age-old midnight yell practice. Several people ran out onto Kyle Field and the junior cadets got a little carried away and physically beat them with their fists while others used their helmets, just to drive the



Anthony Wilson
Opinion Page Editor

point home. Even police officers calming a rioting quell aren't allowed those liberties.

One cadet told *The Battalion*, "How would you feel if somebody ran over your father's grave?" in reference to the supposed sanctity of Kyle Field. As columnist Karl Pallmeyer appropriately replied in an article, "... how would you feel if your father was buried under AstroTurf? Why do football players receive special consideration in running across 'graves'?"

The running onto the field was silly and practically asking for trouble. But does the breaking of traditions justify the use of violence to get two-percenters to straighten up their acts and conform? Maybe we should publicly whip and flog people who sit down at football games, or tar and feather anyone who won't say "howdy," or use a red-hot iron to brand people who dare to go where no man has gone before — the MSC grass.

Another recent example of the closed-mindedness of A&M students was the reaction to the original apartheid shanty built earlier this year. On Mar. 6, A&M's Students Against Apartheid built a shanty on campus to raise student awareness of the situation in South Africa. *The Battalion* was riddled with letters proclaiming the shanty an "eyesore" and it was consistently torn down and rebuilt for weeks. The climax of the issue came when on April 25 the paper reported that two seniors were arrested for placing crucified pigeons in the shanty along with a sign reading, "There will be no peace until there are no niggers."

One would have thought that after this shocking turn of events, people would have realized the importance of the shack, but it was continually dismantled.

Obviously, some of the students are not only out of touch with sensitive, but important, situations across the world and in our own backyard.

At our most recent bonfire on Tuesday night, I witnessed an early morning scuffle that started when two students were arguing about the prominence of

the Confederate flag at bonfire. The redneck who was sporting the flag on his pickup truck stood up and proclaimed that he loved the flag and the statue of the Confederate soldier in his hometown because, as he said, "I hate niggers."

He then called the two white males "nigger lovers," jumped on one of them and hit him repeatedly in the face while one of his buddies threw the other on the ground and then kicked him in the jaw.

Last week I talked with the wife of a former student who didn't appreciate most of the articles on this semester's opinion page and questioned why I am attending A&M. I explained that I came to A&M not because of tradition, but because of the educational opportunities it offered. After all, this is my life and I'm doing everything I can to get ahead and be successful, I said. She responded by saying I ought to "go to t.u."

She also told me of how A&M's minority students now have more power than its white students and about how she didn't want her daughter to come to A&M because she believed that A&M should've remained all-male and all-military. And that's precisely the problem with A&M.

Anytime I've heard anyone criticize or question any aspect of A&M, and offer a different approach or unusual insight, he is inevitably greeted with "Highway 6 runs both ways," or "If you hate A&M so much, why don't you just go to t.u."

Great. Just think how much better our school and how much more cohesive our student body would be if it just opened its collective minds and closed its collective mouths.

Many of you are seniors who will soon be leaving A&M's hallowed halls and I'm especially urging you to end your college careers considering others' perspectives. And to you freshmen, don't allow yourselves to be brainwashed into one vein of thinking.

As *Battalion* Assistant Sports Editor Doug Walker once said when told he wasn't red-ass enough, "I'd rather be dumbass than red-ass." And if that's someone's attitude, fine. Let them be.

After all, one great thing about a so-called "two-percenter" is that he has guts — being one of few is much more difficult than being one of many.

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

Mail Call

Open mouth, insert 40,000 feet

EDITOR:

In an attempt to "hang" Jackie Sherrill and our football program, *The Battalion* opened its big mouth Friday and declared that we deserve the "death penalty." I declare that we as students insert our 40,000 or so feet into their mouths.

From further events, it has become obvious that George Smith is a low-down bum and liar and will say or do anything for a buck. The only thing worse than a person like George Smith is a group of people advocating "death penalties" without ever knowing if a crime was committed, strolling around proclaiming to the faithful Aggies.

Maybe the Editorial Board feels that if they can play a part in destroying the Aggie football program, students will be so bored they will be tempted to take a serious look at the school paper.

Now, I strongly believe in the rights of any person to form his own opinion, but I don't believe in persecuting someone or some organization based solely on allegations, especially when those allegations come from the likes of someone with the reputation of George Smith.

Gerald Don Hicks '87
Graduate student

Batt in shabby state

EDITOR:

Well, I believe *The Battalion* can pretty much open its mouth, reach in and withdraw its foot. When I opened the *Batt* and read the demand for the "death penalty" of our football program, I was shocked. Who in the hell died and made you people the trial jury?

Watching George Smith on television the next night made me think about you. Here was a man trying to make a quick buck at our expense, looking into the camera and admitting he was a liar. The whole thing would not have irritated me so much if you people were not so quick to judge Coach Sherrill. What ever happened to the system of innocent until proven guilty?

Here's a thought. Why don't you all try supporting our school instead of tearing it down? *The Battalion* has really ticked me off this year. First Fish Camp, now our football program — two of the best things about this school. Being a sophomore, I'm looking forward to seeing what the *Batt* will be like in the next couple of years. It sure couldn't get any worse. Why don't you so-called editors take your liberal thoughts and head to Austin where you belong.

Oh, by the way, I know I speak for a number of others when I say, "Thanks for not resigning Mr. Sherrill. You didn't back down, you didn't lower yourself and we need a person with guts like you to stare down the others who are jealous and are so willing to see us torn down. Keep it up, Jackie."

Tim Smith '91

Were the wins worth it?

EDITOR:

So, Jackie, are you proud of what you have done? When you arrived here, you said that you wanted to establish the Aggies as winners first by simply winning a few games, then by winning the Southwest Conference title and going to the Cotton Bowl, and finally by winning the national championship. These are respectable goals, of course, but, what has this done for us in reality?

In reality, this has put Texas A&M's football program on: 1.) two-year probation with no SWC title or bowl appearance in the first year, and 2.) probably more than that, to accomplish the goals you set for yourself (and the University) in 1982, you could have done it the hard way, as Arkansas has done, but instead you went down the quick and easy path. You cheated. You paid players. You broke rules. And now Texas A&M is paying the price for your impatience.

You have disgraced this university, its students, faculty, alumni and yourself. Even after the probation was handed down, you lied. And now everyone knows you lied. The death penalty should come next. For the 34 wins in the four years that I have been here, Texas A&M has to endure the humiliation of being known as a cheater for years to come. Were the wins, the SWC championships and the Cotton Bowls worth it, Prof. Sherrill?

Steve Murray '89

One question becomes five

EDITORS:

This letter is in response to *The Battalion* Editorial Board's comments and Hammon's sports editorial in the Nov. 18 issue. I have just one question. Who made you worthy of passing judgement on the whole Jackie Sherrill/George Smith situation? Were you there? Do you know Jackie Sherrill or George Smith personally? Have you been involved in any part of the current NCAA investigation? If you can answer yes to any of these questions, please, by all means disregard my letter now!

Now if you answered no to these questions, just what do they teach you to do in order to become good journalists? I admit, I am not a journalism major, but it seems to me that before you start writing opinions such as those I read in the Nov. 18 paper, you should have all the facts. Sure, you all read the Dallas Morning News and noted it as your source. But just because they said it doesn't make it true. Why didn't you hold back with your harsh judgements until you checked their source out? Don't you think you should have tried to determine the real truth before you ostracized Jackie Sherrill in front of the whole nation? I'm sure you are aware that your opinions in *The Battalion* have been quoted by newspapers across the country.

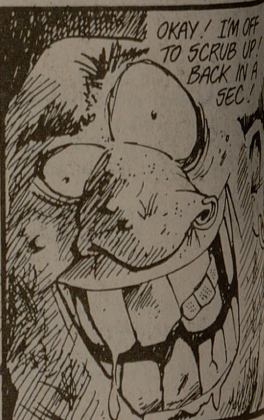
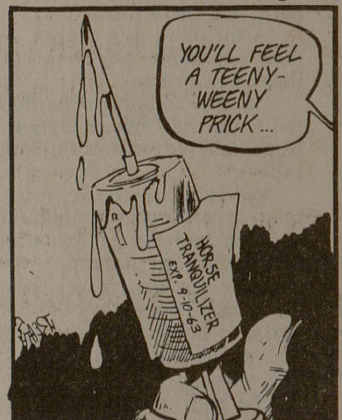
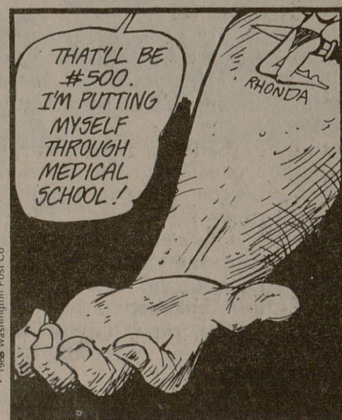
I am not condoning the previous, already proven violations that have occurred. We were definitely wrong and deserved to be punished. I also am not saying that everything which has come to light in the past few days isn't true. If I believe the University should be punished accordingly, in addition to the individuals involved. What I am saying is that the last time I checked, in this country, one is innocent until proven guilty.

Cynthia Lowery '88

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed



The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

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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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