

## 'Tis the season to be thankful, jolly

Not having a reason to celebrate Christmas seems foreign to us as we prepare shopping lists and decorate trees.

However, an Associated Press story in the Nov. 29 edition of *The Battalion* quoted the deputy mayor of Bethlehem as saying, "We don't see any reason to celebrate Christmas."

Because of a year-long revolt against Israeli occupation, the Palestinian town where Christ was born has canceled its traditional celebrations for Christmas. This decision was made out of concern for the more than 300 Palestinians who have died and 5,000 others who have been arrested since the uprising began Dec. 8, 1987.

As you decide on presents for family and friends and make wishes of your own for Christmas morning, we hope you remember the parts of the world where the only gift people are receiving is the gift of life for one more day.

We hope the pursuit of world peace is at the top of everyone's Christmas wish list this holiday season.

The Battalion Editorial Board

## Mail Call

### Can't we open our minds?

EDITOR:

All right, Ags, cut loose and give it a rest already!

I've had enough about hearing bad rap about the *Batt* and some letters in the Mail Call section.

The editors have as much right to their opinions as anyone else who is narrow enough to cut them down without listening to what they have to say.

The letters I read, especially Tim Smith's, which included a bark at the editors to "go back to Austin" where they "belong" did not show constructive argument but vicious attacks and cute ways to insult the *Batt*.

Come on, Ags. Anthony Wilson is right. Can't we open our minds just a little bit and at least listen to other ideas? If they are contrary to ours, can't we just live with ours and let them live with theirs? Then maybe we can open ourselves to diversity, new ways and innovations.

Various ideas and beliefs, even if conflicting, are the basis of what everyone here could make into a "world-class university," exploring every aspect of life and studies around us, not exclusively football, the military and cattle.

And a final note on my own sentiments concerning the NCAA allegations: Sure, A&M has an awesome football team and it's a good part of our athletic program, but if the allegations are true, then what the hell is our honest Ag 12th Man spirit based on?

Note, Mr. Frawley, that I'm saying "if the allegations are true." If they aren't, then God bless Jackie Sherrill for what he has had to go through.

Michelle Warner '91

### Ignorance preventing greatness

EDITOR:

Anthony Wilson, thank you so much for your opinion column on Nov. 28. You have summed up in one article what I've been trying to express to fellow Ags all semester.

I think it is so contradictory when we, as a student body, want national and international prestige, but our ignorance towards others prevents this.

Joy L. Marshall '91

### Where has the honor gone?

EDITOR:

When Gov. Richard Coke addressed the first class of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas in October 1876, he gave them the following advice: "Let honor be your guiding star in your dealings with your superiors, your fellows, with all . . . Stand by the right even to the sacrifice of life itself, and learn that death is preferable to dishonor."

Upon this foundation, Texas A&M created its Honor Code which states, "An Aggie doesn't lie, cheat, or steal, and will not tolerate those who do." Aggies are a special breed because of our love of and deep adherence to the traditions which separates Aggieland from all other universities.

At the core of all of our traditions is our belief in personal and group integrity. Texas A&M was reared on the characters of the greatest leaders of the South—Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee and Lawrence Sullivan Ross. All were men who would lose their lives rather than discredit their families and friends. If we at A&M lose our honor there is no further reason to keep the doors of this institution open.

Coach Sherrill is innocent of the accusations currently leveled by the *Dallas Morning News* until he is proven otherwise. However, he was proven guilty of an Honor Code violation on Sept. 8, 1988. This fact gives credence to the allegations of Nov. 18 and holds A&M up to further brutal ridicule.

I say to Coach Sherrill: Bear Bryant was certainly no saint, but he never performed any act which disgraced and brought shame to the students of his beloved Alabama. If Jackie Sherrill is a man of one-tenth the character of his mentor, he would leave this institution before we are further dishonored. If he has no personal honor I would hope that our officials would step in and attempt to salvage what is left of our sacred heritage.

To Gen. Thomas Darling, I humbly submit: It is a waste of time to ask freshmen in the Corps of Cadets to memorize the Aggie Code of Honor and its four articles when the officials of this university have so blatantly chosen to disregard it.

To preserve this house, to keep it standing, the time has come for us to pick up a broom and begin to clean house.

Bryan Landry '91

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.

## Just who are the good Ags?

I never realized how many ignorant people are at A&M—until this week.

In the past few days, for some reason, all of them have decided to write letters to the editor concerning the Jackie Sherrill/George Smith controversy. So far, many of the letters have gone something like this:

EDITOR:

The editorial board of *The Battalion* should resign immediately. The editorial board members expressed their opinions before all of the facts were out by saying that Jackie Sherrill should resign and that A&M should get the death penalty. It is obvious that the editorial board consists only of two-percenters and liberals who want to discredit Texas A&M. Shame on these bad Ags!

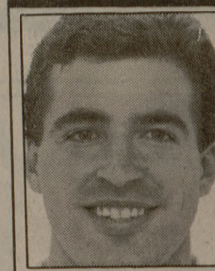
Furthermore, imagine how stupid the members of the editorial board felt when George Smith admitted that he had lied and Jackie Sherrill had never actually paid him off. The truth hurts, doesn't it? And the truth is that Jackie Sherrill never broke any rules and that he is still a great coach and a great Aggie. Keep up the good work, Jackie!

I.M. Dumb '90

Well, I'd like to answer a few of the charges contained in letters such as this. But please do not mistake my arguments as some sort of defense for the actions of the Editorial Board. I am not a member of the Board, and I have absolutely nothing to do with the editorial positions expressed by *The Battalion*.

The two editorials in the Friday, Nov. 18 edition of *The Battalion* called for Jackie Sherrill to resign and for A&M to receive the "death penalty" if the allegations levied by George Smith proved to be true. It is true that the headlines "Ags deserve death" and "Sherrill's got to go" were not qualified concerning the veracity of these allegations—but you can only fit so many words into a headline. Besides, when an editorial is written, it is expected that readers will read more than just the headline before they reach a final decision on the subject.

But is it right to make a statement about a particular issue before all the facts are known? Perhaps not. But if people were to wait until all of the facts were known before they made a deci-



Dean Sueltenfuss  
Columnist

sion on a matter, nothing would ever get done.

So when a highly credible newspaper such as the *Dallas Morning News* prints a story quoting George Smith as having received payments from Jackie Sherrill, what is the rational reaction? To decide that the whole story is a bunch of baloney that should be dismissed as rumor? Or to decide that the story has brought up a valid topic of discussion that needs to be addressed?

What is particularly ludicrous about many of the recent letters to the editor is their assumption that the "whole truth" about this situation was not revealed until George Smith (during his press conference of Nov. 19) retracted his allegations by claiming that he had been lying. It's like saying, "We didn't believe George Smith when he was saying bad things about Texas A&M, but now that he's changed his story, we're behind him all the way."

Unfortunately, this sort of stupidity is not confined to the student body of A&M. It can be traced all the way up to the Board of Regents.

In reference to George Smith's allegations, David Eller, the chairman of the Board of Regents, said that the University accepted the statements that Smith had made during his press conference. After the Regents' Nov. 19 meeting had the audacity to declare that the investigation was finished as far as Smith was concerned.

Dean Carlton, class of '49, voiced his support for A&M and Sherrill, and said that the entire incident was simply the result of "sloppy journalism." He also suggested that the best thing that could come out of the entire situation would be to get rid of *The Battalion*.

It is people like Mr. Eller and Mr. Carlton who give A&M a bad name. They have disgraced Aggies everywhere

by closing their eyes to the possible wrongdoing on the part of Jackie Sherrill. They have blindly chosen the path of ignorance, hoping that they will be confronted by the truth. Upon seeing possible problems with A&M's athletic department, they have turned their backs on these problems and hope they will go away.

Ah, the stuff of leadership. Mr. Eller, Mr. Carlton, we salute you.

It's easy to criticize the editors of *The Battalion* by claiming that they have graded Texas A&M in front of the tire nation.

It's easy. In fact, you don't even have to think in order to criticize them; you have to do is jump on the bandwagon and start screaming how good A&M and Jackie Sherrill are and how stupid their detractors are.

And that's what a lot of recent letter writers have done. They've taken the easy way out by refusing to acknowledge that A&M isn't perfect. They've laid out against anyone who would dare question the credibility of Jackie Sherrill or A&M.

But in a way, I'm glad that this incident has happened. I'm glad that simple, frightened people have made their feelings known, because it has given us an opportunity to separate the good Aggies from the bad ones.

The good Aggies are the people who look at their University with an open mind. They are the people who are afraid to stand up and criticize something when they think it's wrong. They do not hide from the truth—they seek it out.

The bad Aggies are the people who out of idiocy or greed (or both), vowed to support Jackie Sherrill and our athletic program regardless of the truth. These people do not care about honor or respect. They care about money and football. These people are not true Aggies. They are fakes.

And the sooner we get rid of them, all the way from the lowliest freshman to the highest regent—the sooner we can restore our University's pride, honor and dignity.

Dean Sueltenfuss is a junior journalism major and columnist for *The Battalion*.

## Cost of parenting well worth it

If my parents had opted for the let's-not-have-puppies plan, they would be sitting on easy street right now—and I wouldn't be here.

I was trying to figure out exactly how much I cost my parents, from the day I was born until now. I could add the things they bought me before I was born, but I was not responsible for those costs. I was in no position to stop them (not that I would have) from spending the major bucks on baby clothes, baby cribs, baby booties and other paraphernalia for the expectant duo.

Before embarking on this trip to find out how many pesos my parents popped to keep me in Keds, consider the gender problem.

I always thought boys cost less than girls, but recent observations have caused me to change my opinion. It's true that girls look like they cost more. They're the ones who buy designer clothes, expensive perfume and shelving paper. Compared to guys who, on the whole, seem to be less conscious of those things, girls look more expensive.

But you have to talk to the guys to realize they spend their money on major machinery—televisions, cars, stereos and Heather Locklear posters. Guys spend the money—just not as obviously as girls. So I conclude that guys and girls are equally expensive.

Now, I have a theory concerning how much money parents will spend on their offspring per year. It's called the Theory of Exchanges.

When you were born, your parents



Becky Weisenfels  
Managing Editor

spent mucho-bucks to make you look cuddly. You never really asked for the Snoopy diapers or Calvin Klein bottle warmer, but they bought it—in exchange, they got to have a cute baby to round out the family portrait. They bought that stuff and in return you were supposed to gurgle and giggle on cue and NEVER spit up (but then sometimes ya' gotta' do what ya' gotta' do).

Momentum to spend money was high for parents in this stage of the game. They were doing their best to keep up the Cleaver legacy of a family with clean, respectable kids.

Then you hit the toddler years. You wanted toys, and you had the vocal cords to scream until you got them. Your parents wanted you to shut up, so they bought the Tonka trucks, the Barbies and the Lincoln Logs. Besides, you were still young enough to look good on Easter Sunday in those ridiculous garments with lace and velvet, so they humored you. You got toys and they got some quiet kid for the holidays. It was a fair exchange. Buying momentum was going down, but not noticeably.

Then you got to high school. Parents'

momentum to spend on you was at an all-time low. They just wanted you out of the house. The whole time, you were screaming for a new car, money, a reo, money and perhaps stocks and bonds. Parents kept thinking that, unless they decide to spring for college, they take the risk of having you in the house for heaven-knows-how-long. They decide to spring for college.

The exchange was that my parents help pay to send me to this haven of homeless pseudo-intellectuals and I let them on holidays—and then I keep my mouth shut.

After thinking all of this over, I decided that I did not really cost my parents that much at all. It was pretty much a fair trade all the way down the line. They bought me diapers, and I cutie and tried not to cry during the night (unless they upset me). They bought me Barbie and I didn't scream during church service.

They bought me a bike and I let them hold her Tupperware parties in peace. They got a car, they got to claim me on the income tax return.

They pay for college, and I have been thrown in jail or disgraced family name (not too badly, at least).

Of course, I am sure my parents expect me to strike out on my own after graduate. And I might. But there might be fun to see what I could do for if I told them I was going to come back home.

Becky Weisenfels is a senior journalism major, managing editor and columnist for *The Battalion*.

## BLOOM COUNTY



## The Battalion

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### Editorial Policy

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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