

Mail Call

No racism at KANM

EDITOR:

In J. Frank Hernandez' column on Jan. 18, KANM was named as one of the many facets of racism of Texas A&M University. This is a very unjust accusation. Mr. Hernandez obviously does not know much about the format of the radio station. If he had done the slightest bit of homework, he would discover:

1. Student D.J.s decide what music to play on their shows (free format programming).
2. Few "black music" shows are available because rap music is often either too popular or too vulgar to play.
3. There are three reggae shows and one African music program already on the air every week.
4. There are no Hispanic music shows because there have been no volunteers to do one.

How does this make KANM racist? I strongly recommend Mr. Hernandez listen to the station or read the program guide before making such pat judgments.

Karen Ellington '91
Program Director, KANM

We really will miss you, Ron

EDITOR:

There it was. A column with the headline "Goodbye Ron, we'll miss you." Could it be that *The Battalion* actually printed an opinion that I might like or agree with? Could it be that I was wrong all the time? Is *The Battalion* not an entirely liberally biased paper?

No way!
In fact, our great school newspaper used its hysterical sarcasm in its attempt to rip apart a president who did a lot for his country. Dean Sueltenfuss can have the old days back, but the simple fact is that Ronald Reagan led the United States back from the depths of unemployment and inflation, and he revived American pride and patriotism. (To Dean's dismay, I'm sure President Bush will carry on Reagan's eight-year tradition.) So to *The Battalion* and Dean, I say with respect and sincerity that America will miss Ronald Reagan.

Chris Samsury '90

Reagan was great leader

EDITOR:

In reference to Dean Sueltenfuss' sarcastic column "Goodbye Ron, we'll miss you," I'd just like to ask Mr. Sueltenfuss why a "journalist" such as himself has to resort to cheap shot remarks such as "Big Ron realized that all those laws protecting the environment were silly." Surely this article could not reflect your true opinion of Ronald Reagan. It is my opinion that the reason you wrote this article is to create a controversy. And maybe somehow, to you, in some grotesquely distorted way, that's your definition of journalism.

If Reagan was such a poor leader of our country, why has a president not had this much popularity leaving office since the 1940s? Could it be his youthful good looks? I think not. Mr. Sueltenfuss, if "Big Ron" was such a horrible leader of our country, why are respected journalists, not only in our own country, but around the globe, ranking him among the best presidents we have ever had?

Since you are the opinion page editor, I would like to tell you that it is my opinion that your opinion is not the opinion shared by many others. Of course, that's just my opinion.

Russell Griffin '91

Dry up, Ag!

EDITOR:

This letter is in response to that selfish Ag who got wet. Who said that this was our parking place? Your sticker is nothing more than a license to hunt for a spot to park! And what about those who don't even have a car? Those who must wait in the rain until the next shuttle bus comes or must ride a bicycle to school, huh?

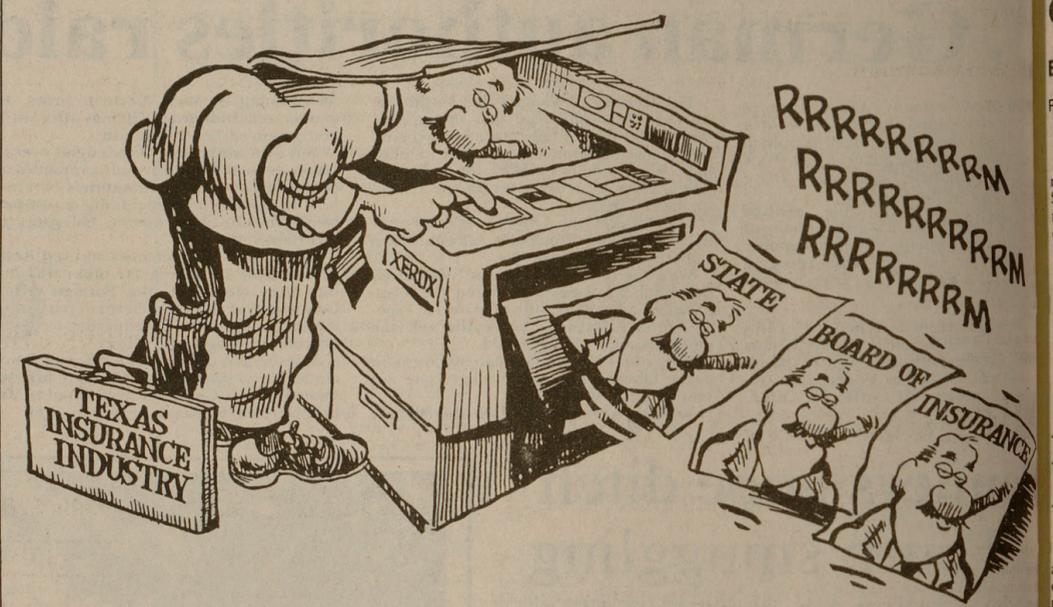
You make me sick!
Many of those "visitors" are former students returning to gain more expertise from others who are the best in their fields. Many of those "visitors" who you are so mad at pay three times what your sticker is worth to attend two-day conferences.

C'mon Ag, show a little respect and courtesy! So you had to walk 200 more yards. I suppose in a downpour you'd be drier if you parked where you normally do? You want a guaranteed spot? Then pay the \$100 faculty parking fee. Or perhaps we should dome the A&M campus so that next time it rains, you won't get wet. Wah!

Mario Perches
Graduate student

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.

MARGULIES
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Reversal of Roe vs. Wade would return states' rights

This past Sunday marked the 16th anniversary of the landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Roe vs. Wade*, the decision legalizing abortion across the country. Pro-life groups mobilized in an attempt to sway the high court into reversing the decision in the case, while pro-choice activists showed their strong support for the ruling.

Setting aside all the emotional rhetoric and hype, let's look at the underlying implications of the court decision and possible outcomes if the case were overturned.

The 1973 Supreme Court case was initiated by a lawsuit filed by a Dallas woman, Jane Roe (not her real name). It challenged a state law that prohibited abortion except in cases where the mother's life was endangered. Because the Supreme Court is the "law of the land," their ruling against this Texas law mandated that all states were to lift restrictions on abortions and allow women access to abortions.

So now, if the decision were to be reversed, the abortion issue would be handled by each state individually. A reversal does not mean that abortion would simply be made illegal, as some people have wrongly implied.

Overturing the *Roe vs. Wade* ruling would take the law-making out of the U.S. Supreme Court and give it back to



James Cecil
Columnist

state legislatures. Our political system was not meant to have an activist judicial branch; that is, judges making laws from the bench.

Allowing the states to pass their own abortion legislation would give the people their right to influence the process and the laws that they must live under. Legislators, who represent and are answerable to their local constituencies, would be making the laws instead of appointed, life-term judges in Washington, D.C. I believe this is known as democracy.

The states may lift the few restrictions there are on abortion, or they may completely ban abortion. Chances are that there will be different legislative packages passed in each state. This is the problem that pro-choice activists have with overturning *Roe vs. Wade*. An uncertainty develops about future laws and they feel more comfortable knowing the present Supreme Court decision limits flexibilities in state laws.

Perhaps the pro-choice movement is afraid that the American people will move against abortion. Right now it doesn't matter what the people think the Supreme Court doesn't have to answer to them. But if state legislatures had to write the laws concerning abortion, the people could express their views and affect the outcome of the laws. Clearly, those opposed to overturning *Roe vs. Wade* will choke the fluence the American people have on the legislative process.

As a point of interest, part of *Roe's* case against the state law restricting abortion on demand was that she was pregnant because she had been raped and had no control over the situation. About a year and a half ago *Roe* announced that she really had been raped; she had lied to build an emotional appeal to the court.

State governments, the government close to the people, write other laws dealing with peoples' rights in instances such as rape, murder, robbery, and civil suits. Overturning *Roe vs. Wade* and giving legislative authority back to a legislative body would correct the 16-year-old mistake.

James Cecil is a senior economics major and a columnist for The Battalion.

Traditions don't excuse foolishness and apathy

"Aggie protests simply aren't a tradition." Or so read the column headline in the Jan. 17 issue of *The Battalion*.

It made me want to crawl. I'm sick of traditions and conservatism being used as an excuse for apathy and blindness.

Traditions have their time and their place and their season. They can be good and well founded, or destructive. I have mine, you have yours. Traditions cannot be avoided, for they are integral parts of our lives. Traditions are found in the family, in the church, in government and friends and school.

What annoys me, drives me to disgust, is the placing of faith and trust into a tradition simply because it has always been. Blindness is not a virtue.

There is a line from Joseph Byrnes, originally concerning religion, but it is applicable to every aspect of our lives. "Somehow people have to pay rational attention to their tradition in order to have it enter more fully into their lives."

I am reminded of a play. The setting was a small rural town. At the beginning the townspeople are talking about a lottery — a lottery which happened every year to make the crops grow. An eighty-year-old man was discussing how the lottery wasn't what it used to be back when he was an old man. One woman was laughing because she thought the lottery was a farce, and she was waiting for her brother to win. A mother was afraid that her child would get the lot.

The townspeople gathered around a metal box, a box that had always been used for the lottery. A man stood up and called each of the families one by one to draw. One by one they came. A family picked the luck of the draw, and each of the members of the family drew. The mother of the child won, and she was stoned to death. Everyone had a hand in it — after all, it had always been that way.

We come to a university — at least in the ideal sense — to explore concepts and attitudes, to interact with thoughts and ideas, to stimulate ourselves, to learn.

What is going on at A&M is not accurate with that view. I see students afraid of different views, of awareness about key issues, of change. Maybe it isn't fear; maybe it's apathy. Could it be that students at A&M are apathetic?

Last Saturday, an anti-abortion rally was staged at Rudder Fountain to protest the 16th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision to legalize abortion. In addition to the anti-abortioners, a group of students decided to voice their opinion concerning pro-choice.

Less than twenty students were there advocating pro-choice. It was not their rally; it was surprising that they were even there. Around 50 people were attending the rally against abortion. The funny thing was that the majority of those people were professors and families, not students whose lives would be affected by a change in the court ruling.



Todd Honeycutt
Columnist

The number of students showing up to the rally tells one of two things. The first is that students at A&M are for abortion and do not feel that the anti-abortioners posed any kind of threat (which they do). The second is more plausible: that students at A&M are apathetic and do not care about their rights, either pro-choice or anti-abortion.

Perhaps we should ask ourselves the following questions: Why are we so apathetic, so complacent with the way our lives are or the way our lives may be in the future? Why are we so afraid of protests and change and people asking us to examine our beliefs?

Much has been said of the Medicine Tribe and Students Against Apartheid and other so called liberal groups. Some people perceive them as being a bunch of homosexual, atheistic pinko-communists trying to incite a revolution of sorts. Fear — fear of difference and of change — plays a big part of perception in anything. Groups such as those men-

tioned see something about the world that isn't quite right, and they present the evidence to the students. The students then can question their beliefs, morals and thoughts to determine if themselves if they are truly correct in their thinking or if they simply are floating with the grain, blindly following traditions.

In an article last week concerning students' reactions about the new co-eds dorms, one student said, "What took so long? We finally broke the conservatism cloud that has lingered above A&M for a long time." While the imagery is good, the irony in this quote is found in another article concerning co-ed housing. "Even though A&M is a conservative school and we're trying to maintain the image, the surveys (concerning student interest in co-ed housing) showed a definite interest," said David McDowell, 1987-88 RHA President.

A&M is changing. It has to change. You can see it in the new co-ed housing in the rise in social awareness, in the increase in the amount of protests. A&M is evolving, and it can evolve without abolishing its traditions which have made A&M famous. All it takes is a reassessment of those traditions, those ways of thinking, which inhibit us.

But, then again, maybe blindness is a virtue at A&M.

Todd Honeycutt is a sophomore psychology major and a columnist for The Battalion.

The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

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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.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods.

Mail subscriptions are \$17.44 per semester, \$34.62 per school year and \$36.44 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 230 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Battalion*, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77843-4111.