

## Mail Call

### Foreign profs not difficult to understand

EDITOR:

I am writing in response to the Jan. 24 article "Teachers' English discussed by Board." Since my first semester here, this topic has been a concern of mine. Granted, there are a few professors and teaching assistants who are difficult if not impossible to understand. But I feel the communications problems lie not with the instructors, but with the students.

Often, before the instructor completes his or her first sentence, a chorus of "I can't understand a word they're saying" can be heard. If A&M is to become the "world class" University it once strove to be, foreign professors, teaching assistants and students are an integral part. Otherwise, the greatest accomplishment of this institution can be "American class" University.

I encourage and challenge all students to be patient and maybe a little more attentive to all visiting instructors. But be careful, you might learn something.

Kenneth M. Beishir '90

### Christian beliefs are 'facts'

EDITOR:

In regard to Mr. Freeman's letter of Jan. 25, I believe that there is nothing wrong with the attitudes of Christians who openly discuss their Christian (not religious) beliefs.

Mr. Freeman is disgruntled that Christians do not label our expression as a "theory" or "opinion."

We convey our beliefs as facts because we have experienced the reality of Christ within our lives. True, it is each individual's inherent right to accept or reject the reality of Christ, for He himself taught this principle.

We do not expect everyone to accept the reality of Christ (although this is our ambition) for one does not accept fact without its support by proof. Just as a child does not accept the fact that a fire will burn him until he touches the flame, a person does not truly accept Christ until he experiences the reality. Those who adhere to the adage "seeing is believing" will believe someday. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

It is not a question of IF a person believes in Christ but WHEN a person accepts the reality. I just hope that those who do not believe now come to the realization in this life before it is too late. For this reason, Christians do not express their belief as an opinion or theory; this would be a misrepresentation of fact.

Drew Popelka '92

### Let's practice religion in church

EDITOR:

I am writing in response to Brian Butler's Jan. 23 letter.

In it, he tried to make some arguments against Hope Warren's Jan. 17 letter that said religious beliefs should be kept out of the classroom.

Brian, I bet you were one of the people who gave half your life savings to Oral Roberts a couple of years ago.

What you and obsessed people like you have got to understand is that there is a time and a place for everything. The time for religious talk is church on Sunday or Wednesday or whenever you go. If you have a theology class, talk about it then, not in economics.

Brian, the point is that if I pay to take a class, I don't need Dr. X telling me about his religious beliefs instead of what's going to be on the next exam. He's taking up my time with something I didn't ask for.

What if the next time you went to the bank, the teller gave you a 20 minute lecture on Buddhism before giving you your money. I bet you'd be pretty irate, now wouldn't you?

When you say it's a professor's right to "spread the word" in the classroom, you're wrong. That is not his job and that is not what he is asked to do.

Let him preach any other place, but please, not on my time.

Kevin G. McGeagh '91

### Religion: The final letter

EDITOR:

In the Jan. 24 issue of *The Battalion*, Jeffrey Zimring proposes several things concerning a professor's right to express his or her religious beliefs in the classroom. I do not agree with what he proposes.

First, Mr. Zimring states that "the professor's views are of interest only to those who share the beliefs of Christianity," and are therefore "inappropriate." Well, are we then to allow only those views of which the class unanimously approves? If so, we will end up as ideological clones or will be sucked into a scholastic vacuum.

Secondly, Mr. Zimring states that "it is not fair . . . to expect non-Christians to endure Christian ideas in the classroom." Is it then absurd to suggest that it is also "not fair" to expect creationists to endure evolutionist ideas, or Democrats to endure Republican ideas, or even a Christian to endure the discussion of "Godless" ideas?

I believe that Jesus Christ offers a personal relationship to those who only ask. However, I also believe the decision to accept or reject His offer is an individual's own choice, and not a decision someone can force a person to make. People must make up their own minds, for each is responsible for their own decision.

As Mr. Zimring pointed out, there are a great number of beliefs represented at Texas A&M. In view of this, we must decide what we believe for ourselves, so that we are not threatened by the presentation of ideas in the classroom which are not our own.

Scott Seidel '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.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Fliers of a mock *Battalion* article were distributed around campus Thursday — and if you didn't look closely, you might have thought they were real.

The mock article was a personal joke among friends that simply was misunderstood by someone who reproduced and distributed it.

Our main concern is that some people may have been led to believe it was a real article, which it wasn't. We take our work at *The Battalion* seriously and apologize if anyone was misled.

Becky Weisenfels  
Editor

## 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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## Ol' Barb is one of the girls

So Ronnie got the gold watch, George took the oath and we all got a new president.

I watched as much of the inauguration as I could, between classes and work. I even saw the Aggie Band, after searching desperately when every channel went to a commercial right as it came into sight. But I did get to see it.

I saw the cavalry marching in front of a giant hat (I guess was a float) and behind the UT band. Good spot.

I did miss, however, the Ross Volunteers marching by the reviewing stand, turning to look at the new president of the United States — and see him looking down and putting Sweet 'n Low in his coffee. What a thrill.

And then I watched "20/20" to see Barbara Walters talk to the new big man and his wife. As I sat watching, I realized something. Through the entire day, I kept hearing the same phrase over and over again. Can you guess what it was?

A. I thought Michael Dukakis won the election.

B. Can we turn the channel and see if "Rawhide" is on?

C. Oh, so Dan Quayle is still alive.

D. I really like Barbara Bush.

E. Are they still delivering mail today?

If you guessed D., you guessed absolutely right. For some reason, Barbara Bush has really hit it off big with a lot of people. George isn't the only one who finds her to be a neat lady.

I think this is going to be an asset for



Becky Weisenfels  
Editor

George in the White House.

On the "20/20" interview, Walters asked President Bush (doesn't that sound odd?) about his wife's popularity. He said that he thinks the American people sense a "genuineness" about his wife. I think that's pretty close to the mark.

Nancy Reagan and Barbara Bush are the Lady Di and Princess Fergie of America (though they are just a few years older).

First there was Nancy, who is comparable to Lady Di. They both have famous husbands who put them in the limelight. They both dress well (usually — at least better than me) and project a distinguished, classy air (again, better than me). They know their etiquette and carry off their public roles well. They're the type of people who get their homes in "Better Homes and Gardens." They never get a run in their hose or have their hair go flat.

Then there is Barbara (let's call her Barb just for kicks) and Fergie. They both came after the glamour girls. They both have a more relaxed and lively atti-

tude. They're the type of people you read "Better Homes and Gardens" for. They would rather read "Better Homes and Gardens" cookie recipes. They would rather read "Better Homes and Gardens" comfortable than glamorous. I like them. They seem human.

Barbara Bush will tell you all the things about herself and then tell you that she doesn't care what people say she's not changing. People admire her.

We spend our entire life looking at magazines and television shows of these wonderful, beautiful, infatigable people who we are supposed to emulate. We, too, are supposed to wear a size 6 (have I got news for you) and look good even after exercising (my hair sticks and my face turns red). Let's face it, it's US against THEM.

And Barbara Bush seems an awful lot like US.

I have the funny feeling that, after exercising, her hair sticks up and her face turns red, too. I like that.

Barb also has a good attitude about the White House. She has kept it in perspective. She knows that she was elected, and doesn't expect to be a factor in policy decisions. That doesn't mean she will never give her opinion, but she realizes that it is all it is — her opinion.

She said that the only change in plans on making it is that when she goes up to walk the dog in the morning, she will put on her jogging suit instead of her bathrobe. Good deal. Nancy probably would wear a chiffon dress with corsage and pearl earrings.

Becky Weisenfels is a senior journalism major and editor of *The Battalion*.

## Drugs need to be legalized

### Jeffrey Farmer

Guest columnist

The "War on Drugs" is headed north. The Alaska State Legislature is considering a number of different bills that are intended to tax, fine, or criminalize private marijuana use. That's right, I said criminalize. In Alaska it is still legal to grow and keep small quantities of pot. It is also legal to use pot in your own home.

The reason for this is that Alaskans value their independence from government interference. They have a privacy provision in their state constitution, and state courts have ruled that it is unconstitutional for the state to prohibit private activities that are not a threat to others (such as marijuana use). This provision was put there by the people of Alaska in a referendum.

But the war on drugs is the political fad of the year, and it is finally getting up to the Arctic Circle. Different legislators have proposed different means for getting around the unconstitutionality of intruding on the privacy of their citizens; the ideas range from a steep tax to submitting another referendum to the voters.

The various proponents of the changes are using the same arguments that are always used to justify a paternalistic government protecting its citizens from themselves. Think about the children. We've got to control this or it will get out of hand. Other silly things. One state legislator said that when police answer domestic violence calls and find a husband beating his wife, they find that he's on pot "every time."

I hope these legislators don't succeed. In fact, I think the rest of the states

would do better to move in the direction of Alaska and institute a rational, moral and workable drug policy — and not just for pot, but for all of the popular, illegal drugs. By this I mean that drugs should be decriminalized, taxed, and made available to adults (perhaps by prescription) at reasonable prices. Purity should be controlled, and the tax revenues should go to hospitals and treatment centers to pay for the care and rehabilitation of addicts.

I know this isn't a popular stand. If you're already upset, try to calm down a bit before reading further.

This policy is rational. I resent having my tax dollars go to support police-state tactics and suppression of people's civil liberties. I also resent having to foot the bill for the treatments provided to addicts by various government agencies. After all, I'm not the one who made the choice to use some dangerous drug. The ones who take the risk are the ones who should pay the consequences. Under this proposal, they will. If more people begin using drugs, tax revenues will increase to pay for the increase in health problems that may be associated with the drugs. The level of the tax can reflect the danger of the drug. (In fact, if this strategy were followed there would be less tax on pot than on booze.)

This policy is moral. The abuse of government power and the intrusion of government into the private lives of its

citizens is a great evil. It is just as bad as the majority to force its will upon a minority with no consideration for the rights. The morality of the proposal comes straight from the golden rule. You don't send your police in to someone's house to shoot at me and steal my money and I won't shoot my way into your house and steal your booze. It's the foundation of the civilized world.

The policy is workable. We have Food and Drug Administration to regulate drugs and affix warning labels. We have doctors and pharmacies. Furthermore, the organized criminals who presently make so much money from the illegal trade (not to mention the elected officials on the take) would be put out of business; when the prices drop, they're no longer able to afford those fast smuggling operations.

I can hear the arguments now: "It's for the children. The domestic violence."

Well, as for the children, youths would have freer access to pot than to penicillin. Which one is illegal?

As for domestic violence, it's been around for a while and probably won't go away easily. If we can't blame drugs, then we'll blame cholesterol.

And when the National Food Policy break down your door looking for meat (or the National Sex Police looking for pornography), don't say you weren't warned, because I'm warning you. Right now.

Jeffrey Farmer is a graduate student of mathematics and a guest columnist for *The Battalion*.

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