

Thursday, March 2, 1989

Students, local bookstores react to 'Satanic Verses' controversy

By Shane Hall

REVIEWER

Moslem anger over author Salman Rushdie's novel, "The Satanic Verses," is not confined only to the Middle East or other areas with large Moslem populations. The furor has reached Bryan-College Station and the Texas A&M campus as well.

Many Moslems view the novel as a blasphemy of both Islam and its prophet, Mohammed. The views of Moslems on the A&M campus express similar sentiment.

Hisham Youssef, a civil engineering graduate student from Egypt, described the book as a distortion of facts and history. Youssef is president of the Muslim Students Association.

"The book is considered fiction, but it is intended as an insult to all Muslims and their beliefs," he said.

Another Moslem student, Moosa Alkindi, an educational technology

graduate student from Oman, agrees. Alkindi said Rushdie's novel is misleading and an intended insult to Moslem beliefs.

Brad Neal, a junior mechanical engineering major from Mt. Pleasant and a member of the Muslim Students Association, called the book "a thinly-veiled slander against the religion and the prophet."

"If Rushdie wanted to make a critical statement about Islam, it should have been done in a fair and non-slandering manner," Neal said. "But to have the prophet naming prostitutes as his wives is not the way to go about it."

The book contains a passage describing a dream sequence in which prostitutes take the names of the wives of a prophet named Mahmoud.

Youssef said the book is not the first of its kind and probably will not be the last.

"Others have written inaccurate things about Islam," he said. Neal

cited Christian author and speaker Josh McDowell as one example.

The three men said none of them are interested in reading the book, but that they are not interested in taking action to ban the book locally.

"We just want to give our side about this as much as we can, when we can," Neal said.

Local bookstores report a fairly heavy demand for the book. Texann Draph, manager of Bookland in the Post Oak Mall, said she has been ordering as many as 20-25 copies at a time.

"I'm getting men in three-piece suits buying it because it's controversial," Draph said.

Demand for the book at the mall's other bookstore has been large as well. Jeff Bishop, assistant manager of Waldenbooks, said even though the company headquarters decided to remove public displays of the book, the store will special order

See Satanic/Page 8

Next Corps Commander looks forward to new job

Poling says public relations will be top priority

By Andrea Warrenburg

REPORTER

When Matthew Clark Poling enrolled as a freshman in the Texas A&M Corps of Cadets in Fall 1986, he had no idea he would one day be the leader of the almost 2,000 men and women.

"I was apprehensive about the Corps," Poling said. "I didn't know if it was what I wanted to do."

But Poling, a junior biomedical science major from San Antonio, turned his apprehensions into dedication and looks forward to assuming the duties of Corps Commander for 1989-90.

Poling said top priority will be given to improving the Corps' public relations.

"The direction the Corps is taking is good," Poling said. "I think the Corps is probably better respected now than in the past few years. We want to continue to reinforce this positive attitude among the student body."

Poling also wants to ensure that A&M's traditions and the Corps perpetuate.

"We are the founders of the modern traditions and try to maintain them because they are so important to A&M," Poling said. "I am confident that the Corps' place in the University is set in stone and that in 25 years, my son will have the option to be in the Corps."

Being at the top of the Corps' chain of command will encompass many responsibilities for Poling including being the organization's final decision maker, the primary link between the Corps and the Commandant's office and the Corps' representative among student leaders. Poling will work closely with an 18-member staff and the four major unit commanders.

Poling said although he has prior leadership experience as a top ranking junior, he feels pressure going into his new position.



Photo by Kathy Haveman

Freshman computer science major Wade Shaw of Houston (left) 'whips out' to Matt Poling, the newly-named 1989-90 Corps Commander, Monday afternoon on the Quadrangle.

"You can't be fully prepared for it," Poling said. "You just have to be confident and believe in yourself and what you are doing."

Poling said he must have faith in the cadets and believe they are going to work together and support the same goals.

At a ceremony announcing the new Corps Commander last week,

Corps Commandant Gen. Thomas Darling said the Corps was being passed to good hands.

Poling said he has a good vision of where the Corps is now and where it needs to be in the future.

After graduation, Poling will be commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force and plans to attend medical school.

New bill would create plan to pay college tuition bills in installments

By Alan Sembera

SENIOR STAFF WRITER

A bill introduced to the Texas Legislature to change the installment plan for tuition payments would save money and help students get their grades earlier, proponents say.

The pending legislation, introduced to the House by Rep. Wilhelmina Delco, D-Austin, would allow students to pay tuition all at once or in three installments, with the last payment due before finals week.

Schools now allow students to pay in one, two or four payments, with the fourth payment due after final exams at some schools.

"The schools were actually holding up grade distribution in order to make sure the fourth payments were in," a spokesman for Delco said. "It was creating a book-keeping problem."

"The students were dropping out at the last minute and not completing the semester by not paying the bill. It was becoming a cost to the institutions because they

were having to go back and rework the GPAs."

Texas colleges and universities have lost millions of dollars from the unpaid tuition bills.

Thomas H. Taylor, the Texas A&M system controller, said A&M loses between \$40,000 and \$45,000 each semester because of unpaid tuition bills.

The bad debts come from students who drop out and never come back to the University, he said.

When students don't pay all of their tuition, he said, they are barred from enrollment and the University won't release their transcripts.

Most students owe such a small amount of money that it's not worth the cost of taking legal action, Taylor added.

The bill also would relax regulation requiring schools to automatically bar students who don't make their tuition payments. The pending legislation would give schools flexibility in dealing with students' on an individual basis in order to take extenuating circumstances into account.

If the bill passes, Taylor said, A&M would continue with its policy of not allowing any exceptions.

An identical bill was introduced to the Senate earlier.

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