

Common courtesy before tradition

Lately there has been a lot of talk about traditions, yet one tradition seems to be dying, and no one is doing anything about it. In our rush to uphold and protect the sacred traditions of Texas A&M, we are letting common courtesy fall by the wayside.

There are numerous examples of this. If people fail to remove their hats during yells, they are met with a barrage of people yelling, "Uncover!" in the most obnoxious possible manner. Those who inadvertently walk on the MSC grass are curtly told to "get off the grass" without being told why. Each weekend, those involved in bonfire pound on each and every door in many residence halls to wake people, including those who have no desire to participate. Finally, those who hold ideas contrary to those of the majority are called "two percenters" or worse and told "Highway 6 runs both ways."

This kind of intolerance makes the entire University look bad. We must all work hard to make this a more polite and tolerant campus. Common courtesy is, and should be, paramount to tradition.

The Battalion Editorial Board

Health Center ailing

To be sick is to know the Beutel Health Center and to know it well.

But to know it is **not** to love it. Being a frequent visitor of the "Quack Shack," paying a visit at least twice a semester since the fall of 1986, I have made some observations, both positive and negative.

I may not be an authority on the Quack Shack, but for the size of this campus and the number of students who filter through the Health Center each day, the Center seems to do a good job of providing quality health care to the masses. And, for students, paying only \$15 a semester for quality health care from quality physicians isn't a high price to pay when compared to other medical facilities. Prescriptions are even dispensed at wholesale prices.

But the main problem I have found lies not in the care but whether or not it is easily accessible.

Staffed by seven doctors, the Center has treated an average of 356 patients a day since September, including at least 98 appointments per day under the new appointment policy that is supposed to alleviate endless waiting.

However, the new policy, while good for some (those who actually do get appointments and the doctors) does not seem to be doing much to reduce the number of patients in the waiting rooms during regular hours or after hours in the emergency care clinic.

In four years, I have never been able to get out of the Quack Shack in less than two hours. This week was no exception. (I thought it said somewhere that seniors got priority over freshmen. Well, not in the Quack Shack.)

On Monday, I called to make an appointment only to be told "Sorry, we're booked until Thursday." Thursday! I could have died by then. But although I was not granted the privilege of an appointment, I was perfectly welcome to "just walk in and wait" or come by the emergency clinic in the evening. In actuality, it would be beneficial to know in advance when you're going to be sick. Watch out, that headache on Monday may be telling you to make plans to spend Wednesday afternoon in the Quack Shack.

With each doctor limited daily to only 12 previously scheduled appointments, 256 of the average 356 patients seen per day must wait their turns — wait in various waiting rooms, wait in chairs, wait on couches, wait on floors.....**WAIT A MINUTE!**— Should so many "sickies" be around so many other "sickies" for so long?

Well, to avoid the wait I thought I'd wise up and make a nighttime visit to the hospital's upstairs emergency clinic. Just by coincidence, other fellow sickies had the same idea. A nurse informed me that with eight ahead of me I could expect a two hour wait. I only



Juliette Rizzo
Opinion Page Editor

thought I was miserable before.

Depending on the night, at least 50 people also wait then since the sickest patients are seen first. I have no objection to this except that only one physician is usually available. So I waited and when called I discovered I didn't enjoy waiting *again* for the doctor in a little area with nothing more than a curtain to separate me from the next person, who I overheard was having female problems on top of possibly being pregnant. I don't think she appreciated answering the doctor's probing questions about her sexual history knowing that everyone else could hear. (Definitely not my idea of social medicine.) Oh, by the way, the guy on the other side of the diaphanous curtain was wounded by a tree (he tripped over it at bonfire cut), although he sounded like he was being wounded in combat with the nurse as she jabbed while asking if it hurt.

After quietly making the doctor aware of my symptoms, I was given a prescription. At last, I was out of there.

On the way home, I realized that although the quality of care was adequate, the lack of privacy and the wait made me sick of being sick. I think it makes a lot of students sick of the Health Center without realizing that we are fortunate to have one of the best college health centers in the state.

To alleviate such stress among students, if the Health Center has enough funds to remain open into the evenings, why not consider opening the main doors 24 hours, thus maybe relieving the waiting and ensuring privacy by using the rooms on the main floor? Not only would it lessen the wait but time would be saved from having to send someone to the first floor at night to retrieve records.

The Health Center provides good care, once the patient gets to see the doctor, but the wait is too long. This is an inadequacy of the Health Center that the administration of this University should look into solving. They should consider raising the fees, or some other creative action, if the Health Center wants to purport to provide quality health care that is timely and efficient as well.

Juliette Rizzo is a junior journalism major and opinion page editor for The Battalion.

Homosexuals have human rights

EDITOR:

I am writing in reference to Adam Mathieu's article in *The Battalion* on October 10 concerning homosexuality.

It is about time there was an article (no matter the subject) where the columnist actually educated himself on his subject before writing about it. There have been numerous articles in your paper concerning subjects that I have been involved in that have been totally misrepresented by columnists. They should find out why something is being done, who is making decisions and most of all talk to the people they will be writing about.

Mr. Mathieu's article is another article on a subject with which I am "involved." I am a homosexual. I do not live openly and shout it from the rooftops. I will not march and fight for something that is already mine — human rights. I am a human being. That I am gay is not an issue for me. Bryan-College Station has a fairly large gay community that consists of people from every age group, social class, etc. We have construction workers, store clerks, medical personnel, teachers and, of course, hairstylists. I know fraternity members who are gay and even one Corps member.

When I first "came out" two years ago, I expected to be embraced by the gay community, but to my surprise, I walked into a bar of just plain people. Again, that I was gay was not an issue. This was when I stopped hating myself for being gay. This was when I realized gay people are no different from other people in an area that was personal and private — their sex lives. The real perverts are the people who think that's any of their business. Again, thank you Mr. Mathieu.

Name withheld by request

Offensive attack on values

EDITOR:

In response to the pro-homosexual column in Tuesday's *Battalion*, I would like to make the following points. Asking me to respect the courage of the 11

members of the Gay Students Services for being in a yearbook picture is the most ludicrous request I've had in a long time. As a Christian, I am offended by frequent editorial attacks on my values. Perhaps *The Battalion* will see it fit to present opposing views such as mine.

First, the Bible clearly states homosexuality is a sin. For that matter so is lying and stealing. Of course most liars and thieves don't have a political lobby advocating lying and stealing as "alternative lifestyles."

Second, a confidential poll of traditional psychiatrists revealed that a majority continued to think of homosexuality as a "pathological" condition. Perhaps some homosexuals are born with homosexual tendencies, but that's hardly an excuse if the behavior is wrong. There is some evidence that alcoholics are born with their tendencies, but few people use that as an argument to legitimize a drunkard lifestyle. We admire an alcoholic's courage when he tries to quit the bottle, not when he wallows in his destructive lifestyle.

Third, I am saddened by the loss of lives to AIDS, including lives of homosexuals; just as I am saddened when a drunk kills himself and others in a car wreck. However, I think society has a right to protect itself from both drunks and homosexuals by passing laws restricting their behavior.

For more information about homosexuals, you may wish to read the celebrated work called *The Gay Report*, by Jay and Young, a book by and about homosexuals, which calmly reports the high percentage of homosexuals who admit to horrible practices, including bestiality, pedophilia, and suggestions on "how to get access to boys."

So don't ask me to respect homosexuality. Instead I'll pray for homosexuals to escape their destructive lifestyles before it's too late.

L.M. Smith
Professor

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial 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 classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

My desk: warehouse of junk

I took a long look at my desk the other day and realized it had finally gotten completely out of hand. I subsequently abandoned all hope of ever rescuing it from its chaotic state.

I had the feeling this would happen. First, there was the mail I was going to answer. It started out as a little pile to the right of my typewriter.

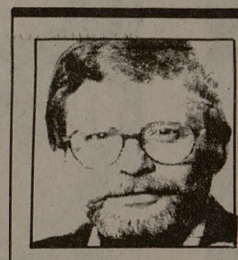
Then, it began to grow and reached ceiling level. I stuck my hand under the pile and pulled out the bottom letter. It was dated 1982.

That makes me seven years behind in answering my mail and, worse, when I reached under the pile to get to the bottom letter, the stack sort of disintegrated and a lot of the mail fell down under my desk. Unfortunately, that's where it will remain because my doctor told me not to bend over and do any heavy lifting.

Then, there is the matter of the coffee cups. I bring in a cup of coffee from the kitchen each morning as I begin my work day.

I get involved in what I'm doing and forget about the coffee. By the time I reach for it, it's cold. So it just sits there. I counted recently and there were 11 cups of cold coffee on my desk.

Some of these cups date back to June, and there is green stuff growing inside them. If I had any children, per-



Lewis Grizzard
Syndicated Columnist

haps they could use the cups, and whatever is growing inside them, for a science project.

Since I don't have any children, I have called an exterminator, and he said it would be two weeks before he could come over and spray my coffee cups.

"In the meantime," he said, "don't get too near any of the growth. You never know what you could catch from something like that."

There also are a lot of newspapers on my desk. I'm convinced if you leave two newspapers on your desk they will engage in the mating process and produce other newspapers.

I distinctly remember leaving a copy of USA Today on top of the Wall Street Journal and now there are all these newspapers all over the place with color photographs of those involved in the HUD scandal.

Here's what else I found on my desk:

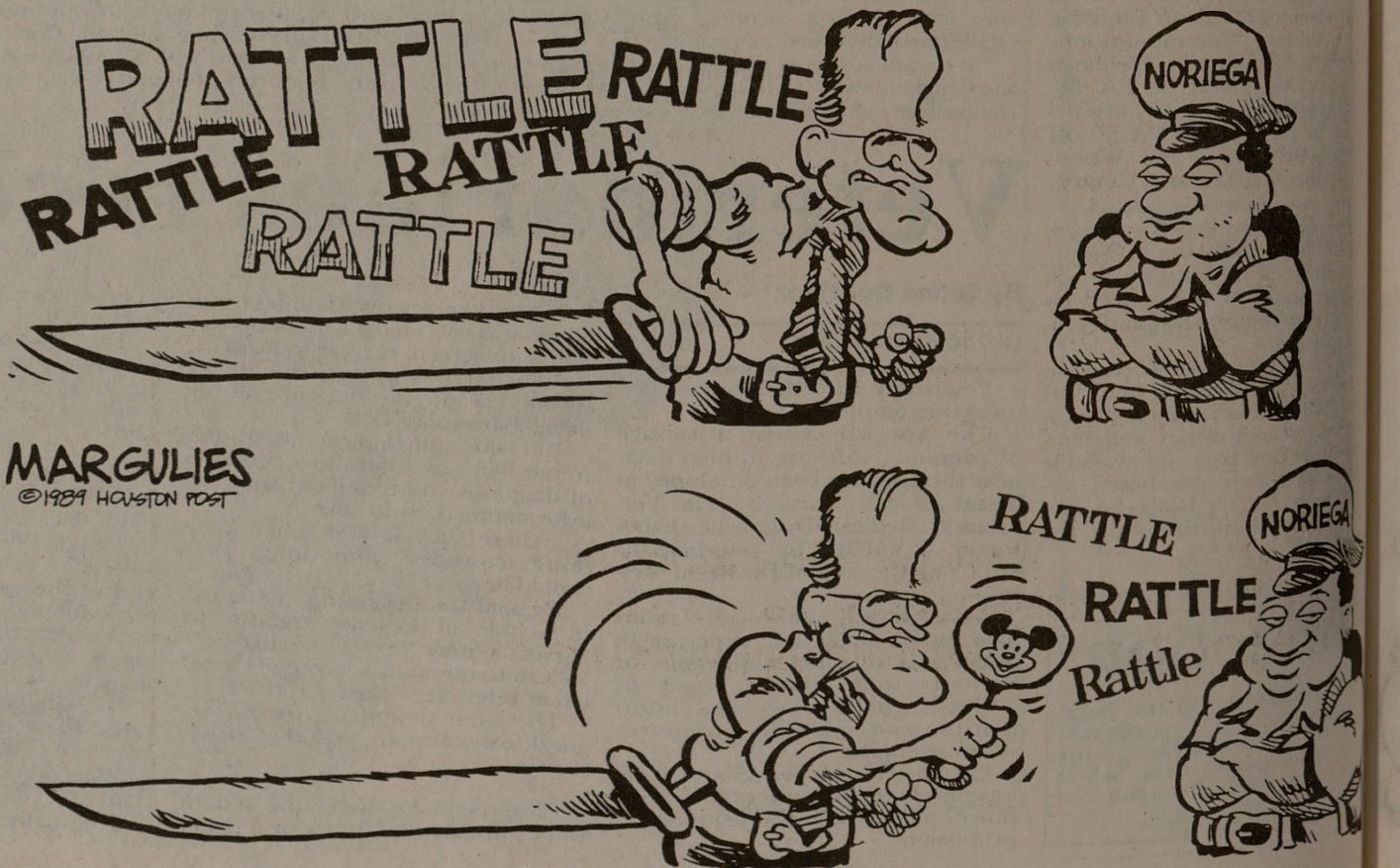
A yoyo. It was underneath a stack of paperback books I was going to read but never did. The books include "Lonesome Dove," "Bitter Blood," "Winds of War" and "A Confederacy of Dunces," and they were sitting on top of a golf shoe.

I can't explain how one golf shoe got on top of my desk, and I don't know where the other one is, either. Perhaps it was eaten by some sort of mutant newspaper.

I also found a key to the city of Waco, Texas, given to me when I made a speech there 10 years ago, a copy of the magazine *Editor & Publisher*, a yearbook from my senior year in high school, a photograph of me drinking a hot Pepsi in Russia, an autographed photo of legendary Western movie star Lash LaRue, a letter from an old girlfriend, detailing how much an improvement her new boyfriend was over me, a road map of Idaho, fossilized doughnut, an obscene bumper sticker, some rubber bands, two socks that didn't match, a dead mouse and a nail.

Two more weeks before the exterminator comes. If I turn up missing between now and then, first check inside the coffee cups.

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The Battalion

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