

## Things about A&M I wish mother would have warned me about

**Susan McAloon**  
Guest Columnist

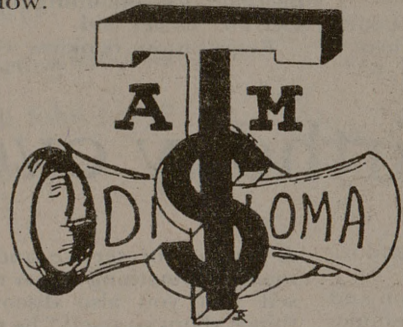
While sitting here with my recently acquired parking ticket in front of me and wondering where I was going to get the \$35 to pay for it, it dawned on me what was really going on at A&M. No, it's not that I'm *livid* about receiving a ticket for being parked in a virtually empty lot for five minutes while I ran to turn in an assignment in the Zachry Building, which is about 4,000 miles from my ill-placed bus stop. It is the one-fee-after-another that I pay to go to A&M that really gets me frustrated. Let's briefly go over the fees that I, and many like me pay, just to attend class here.

1.) Since I am an out-of-state student, I have to pay a ridiculous \$122.00 per semester hour. I have 16 hours this semester (so I can graduate before I'm on social security). Because I am not made out of money, I need to pay it in installments. Add another \$10 for the "convenience" of paying in installments. This totals a "down-payment" of \$619.75 with payments of \$554.75 for the next three months. By then, the semester is over and the cycle begins again.

2.) Let's talk fees. I know I'm not the only dissatisfied Aggie paying "fees of unknown origin," like the General Use Fee of \$96.00. Yeah, I know the school puts out explanations about what these fees are for, but if there's a General Use Fee, what the heck do we pay the laboratory, health center, student services, student center complex, computer access, student ID card and even graduating senior fees for? I've never been to the Health Center, and even if I did go, it isn't free. I am using my own

computer, never have used one on campus. And student services? How many events are there on campus that are actually free? Things that cost "only a dollar" aren't free.

3.) The Parking Permit Fee. This comes under the heading of "Optional Services," which aren't that optional for someone who lives off-campus and wants to get to class on time. When I first came here as a transfer student, a junior who was sick of living in dorms and wanted to live off-campus, no one warned me of the parking void. So I bought a sticker and drove to class, for the first week anyway. After that, the \$55.00 I paid for a "day student permit" bought me an ugly blue sticker I now have to try to scrape off my window.



I bought a bus pass. A \$50.00 bus pass. Then they moved my bus stop to a ridiculous place by the Military Science Building, where big, lumbering buses have no business trying to squeeze in. Then they changed the name of my bus and all the others. Now it's a question of decoding the intricate little maps, pictures and cutesy names they came up with to try to figure out which bus is actually the right one. By the way, buses do not run ever 15 minutes. More like every 30 minutes.

Is A&M trying to say something to

me? Am I missing a hidden message like: "We don't like out-of-staters/off-campus people/seniors/poor people?" I am finally getting the hint. Gee, I can't wait to pay another couple of hundred for an Aggie ring. Don't get me wrong, I understand all the symbolism and pride you're supposed to have for the ring, but all I'm going to think about when I look at it (after I finish paying off the loan I took out to get in the first place) is how I survived A&M: all the money it cost me to go here, all the football games I couldn't afford to bring my fiancé to since he doesn't go to A&M and a guest ticket costs \$22 or so and using someone else's ID is a crime, and soon.

For all you Ags who will be offended and say "why did you come to A&M?" I say: who knows? Please understand my point. I like being an Aggie. I like other Aggies. I'm even getting used to Texas in general. It's just that when I came here, no one told me about all these things.

The parking situation really is just unbelievable (few I think will dispute that). I think the main problem is that A&M is getting too big for itself. Now they want to expand the MSC. I wonder if they'll add a "Student Center Expansion" fee to our bills next semester? I cherish the thought of paying for it, and then graduating a century or two before it's finished, judging by the past track record of construction here at A&M.

All right, I feel better now. But, I still have to come up with \$35 for this parking ticket within the next 10 days, or I'll have to pay a \$5 late charge. I could blow it off, but then I won't be able to register for classes early, which means I'll have to stand in line at the Pavilion, which means...

## Politician or playboy: I want to know

A new book about the late Rev. Martin Luther King is already stirring up controversy.

I have not yet read "And The Walls Came Tumbling Down," by the Rev. Ralph David Abernathy, but according to the pre-publishing hype, it confirms some embarrassing rumors about King's personal life.

It has been suggested to me that even if King is guilty of these alleged transgressions, it is wrong for the author to come out and trash the reputation of a great man. The argument seems to be centered along two lines: First, that an individual's personal life has no relevance to his ability to be a leader, and therefore we don't need to know about it. And second, he's not only dead, but he's been dead for a long time, so why don't we just "let sleeping dogs lie?"

I strongly disagree on both counts.

First of all, I find a very obvious and direct correlation between the personal lives and political philosophies of the men and women who want to hold positions of power in our country.

Look, for example, at the experiences of Gary Hart and Joe Biden in the last presidential campaign. Hart was followed, hounded and harassed by the media until, in the face of overwhelming evidence, he admitted to cheating on his wife. Biden gave an eloquent speech that the press revealed was a near-carbon copy of a speech made previously by a British politician.

Many people think King is one of the greatest men who ever lived; he may be. But it requires an unbiased review of all the aspects of his life, good and bad, to decide what sort of man King was.

After the revelations, both men dropped out of the race, as well they should have. After all, cheating on your wife and plagiarizing a speech are just forms of other moral defects. Reduced to their most basic level, we call it lying and stealing.

I don't want a leader who thinks that it is OK to lie or steal. If Gary Hart lied to his wife, how can I be assured that he won't lie to his constituents? If Joe Biden would steal a speech, then he might steal from taxpayers, or at least be more inclined to tolerate subordinates who do. Since behavior in private life can reveal the tenets and morals upon which a person acts, they are relevant to the ability of that person to perform in office; therefore, I want and expect the media to tell me about such things.

Now, back to Martin Luther King.

Some people might say that since



**Scot Walker**  
Editor

King is dead and gone, we should allow him to rest in peace. After all, isn't the only person who benefits from dragging the name of a great man through the mud the person who makes millions of dollars by writing the book?

Wrong. We all benefit when we make available all the information concerning the man and his life. People have the right to know the truth about all public figures, dead or alive. Many people think King is one of the greatest men who ever lived; he may be. But it requires an unbiased review of all the aspects of his life, good and bad, to decide what sort of man King was. We can determine King's true nature only if we have all the correct facts about his life.

Abernathy, who was King's top aide and one of his best friends, writes about King's "weakness for women." King "believed in the biblical prohibition against sex outside of marriage," Abernathy writes. "It was just that he had a particularly difficult time with that temptation." Abernathy goes on to discuss King's extramarital relationships with several women.

If these allegations are true—and we might never know—then perhaps King is not as great as so many people have proclaimed him to be. A great visionary probably. A great leader of people, definitely. A great orator, absolutely. But a good father, loyal husband, and great moral example for us to tell our children and grandchildren about? Well, let's just say all the evidence isn't yet.

I reserve the right to decide for myself who to admire and who to respect. But in order to do that, I have to have all the information, and I have found that I didn't get it in 10th-grade American history, or even in History 106 at Texas A&M. It was through the media that I learned that Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin were not exactly of impeccable moral character, and it is through the media that I heard the rumors about King's alleged problems in resisting temptations of the flesh.

I'm going to use my own mind to decide whether King is someone who should be a role model for me or my children; I encourage everyone to do the same. But first, let's get all the information out in the open.

Scot Walker is a junior journalism major and editor of The Battalion.

## Gay rights not justifiable to society: a rebuttal

I have attempted to rebut Mr. Mathieu's arguments for gay rights in an analytical manner.

Mr. Mathieu argued that homosexuals make up a large segment of the population, (either 10 or 3-5 percent, depending on gender), and therefore deserve rights merely because they demand consideration. The fact that a segment of the population has increased to a point where their complaints are loud enough to be heard does not lend legitimacy to their cause.

**David Brooks**  
Guest Columnist

If the population of axe-murderers grew to a large number, would we consider their desires legitimate?

Mr. Mathieu also argued that homosexuals do not choose their own sexual orientation. This is indeed correct according to research, but has no rele-

vance to the discussion. Homosexuality is a basic perversion of normal biological behavior and can therefore be considered a type of illness. Although homosexuality may seem as normal to gays as heterosexuality does to straights, it is not biologically normal.

Mr. Mathieu said the homosexual lifestyle is not harmful to anyone except themselves. He said society has no right to interfere with a relationship. Two cases can be presented against these arguments.

First, the homosexual lifestyle has inarguably harmed society by serving as a massive conduit for the spread of AIDS. I have no objection to following this point to its logical conclusion, which is the simultaneous condemnation of bisexual, intravenous drug using, and prostitute lifestyles, but in no sense can gay society be considered "not harmful to anyone," especially in the context of the past several years.

Second, society does take it upon itself to interfere with relationships. The distinction between a "loving" relationship and any other is immate-

rial, because only the participants in such a relationship can make that distinction.

To use Mr. Mathieu's own example, society interferes in abusive relationships. The reason society interferes in a situation where a husband beats his wife, however, is that it has been determined that the vast majority of society considers such behavior unacceptable. The same point is true with regard to the gay lifestyle. The laws of this country have always been motivated by the opinions of the majority of the population, expressed through democracy and popular election of our legislative representatives. The vast majority considers governmental interference with abusive spouses just, and the same point applies to governmental interference with the gay lifestyle.

I admire the courage shown by those members of the Gay Student Services who posed for the AggieLand. I cannot respect what they stand for, but I admire anyone who stands up for what they believe in. However, the idea that these students' willingness to pose con-

stitutes a justification for extension of gay rights is ludicrous. Misguided people can be courageous. No amount of courage will justify gay rights, as long as there's a lack of evidence proving homosexuality is biologically normal.

In conclusion, homosexuals are not deserving of all the rights of heterosexuals. If an individual so desires, they should be taken (counseling, etc.) from a young age to correct this biological abnormality (which would also result in the avoidance of many of the mental and emotional hardships that regularly attend such orientation). If the individual is secure in their orientation, then that person and others should accept the laws of the U.S. as mandated by the majority of the people, and a more significant (in terms of population) segment of society: heterosexuals.

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