

Mail Call

Tears, not beers

EDITOR:
You few people are against Texas A&M in every way who are trying to stop bonfire! As nicely as I can put it—HIT HIGHWAY SIX RUNNING! The Aggie bonfire represents the undying love Aggies share for their school and each other. That is what makes Aggies stand above everyone, and why other universities are jealous of Texas A&M!

We all wear the same ring, share many of the same memories of Texas A&M, and celebrate and remember one another at times like Aggie Muster. Bonfire symbolizes all of these emotions. It all comes together when stack goes up in flames, and a tear runs down your face while you're arm in arm with your buddies. That is Aggie spirit, the exact thing unifying the fightin' Texas Aggies. I'm proud to have worked on bonfire this year! And Mr. Jordan, you call that ignorant? Please assess your values on Highway 6! Aggies Against Bonfire will stop bonfire when A&M's colors turn orange and white, I transfer to t.u. and hell freezes over. That is for sure. And we all know that will happen when A&M beats my old high school for the national championship!

Hey Ags! Build it bigger, build it taller, BUILD THE HELL OUTTA BONFIRE! Whoop!
Steve McBride '90

Don't burn education

EDITOR:
In the Nov. 21 issue of *The Battalion*, Waylan Cain enlightened us with Steve Moore's beautiful imagery of bonfire: "Centerpole . . . is Texas A&M standing for higher education at its best. The logs . . . are Aggies, you and me." While I was fighting back the tears, two questions came to mind. First, which part of the University does the outhouse represent? Obviously, it is an appropriate place to put the b.s. that Cain, Moore and other traditionalists are shovelling at us.

Secondly, if bonfire represents A&M, then why do we douse it with jet fuel and burn it down? Come on Ags, let's show these people that we will not succumb to their stupidity. Let's not burn down "higher education at its best." Please, BEAT THE HELL OUTTA BONFIRE!
Clinton Miller '92

Remove advertising inserts

EDITOR:
I think *The Battalion* should stop accepting loose advertising inserts. Within a couple of hours of being delivered, the Grandy's and Little Caesar's coupon inserts in the November 29th *Battalion* had been scattered around campus as far as the eye could see. This is the typical fate of such inserts. In the rush to grab *Battalions* in the morning, they rain down within a 20-foot radius of the delivery stations and the wind and people's feet do the rest. Publications like *U. Magazine* at least have some interest value and for the most part are kept and read, but those inserts just make a huge mess. If those companies want to take out a big ad, make it part of *The Battalion*. I think *The Battalion* should show some responsibility and leadership by removing this consistent and very unnecessary form of pollution.
Tim Goodman '90

Bonfire lives

EDITOR:
I would like to address some comments to the Faculty Senate and students of Texas A&M concerning the recommendation to form a committee to review the tradition of Bonfire. It is the right and duty of the Faculty Senate to keep abreast of issues such as this that affect the student body as a whole, but one thing should be kept firmly in mind. In the final analysis, the Bonfire tradition must continue.

Bonfire has been an indispensable part of my education here at A&M, as it has for others. Bonfire produces leaders, people who know what it is like to put aside personal comfort and work through pain and fatigue. Bonfire produces people who know what it is like to single-mindedly pursue a goal. No classroom can match the satisfaction of working on that magnificent piece of art.

Every day I pass a plaque commemorating Wiley K. Jopling, a student who died in pursuit of the fire, and it never fails to stir in me a sense of loss. However, the eradication of Bonfire is not worth what it would take away from A&M and the students who live here. Without it, the very soul of A&M is gone, that part of us that knows that

somehow, we are better than other schools. Without the desire for the fire, we will be just another university, maybe bigger than some, but no better.

Members of the Faculty Senate, review the tradition, it is your right and duty, but remember what it means to those of us who live here and those that have gone before us. Bonfire must live on.
T.A. Hennard '91

Editorial is contradictory

EDITOR:
The editorial entitled, "Protest groups should focus on local issues," is so full of holes and contradictions that a letter is in order to point a few of those inconsistencies out, for the benefit of the Battalion Board.

Someone in the community has to be heard as the voice against apartheid. SAA is fulfilling that role, which by definition will not necessarily be a local one, since apartheid is not part of the U.S. political system. However, apartheid is a local issue because the University steadfastly maintains its pro-apartheid stock portfolio. We could help stop apartheid through our local actions by adopting the non-violent approach of divestment.

SAA are not "protesting the living conditions of a country" as your editorial suggests. They are protesting an inhuman political system of oppression. Part of this oppression manifests itself as forcing one group of people to endure an entire lifestyle far inferior to others in the country. Deplorable living conditions is the most striking part, but not the only part, of the inferior lifestyle which apartheid has created for many people.

Contradiction #1: is asking SAA to sponsor food drives when it is recognized that SAA has already done so. There are doubtlessly over 100 other campus organizations (including *The Battalion*) spending time on great causes that have also not sponsored food drives. Why single out SAA?

As for the Medicine Tribe, the waste and recycling problems of the area will be around for a long time, whereas the MSC tree destruction is imminent and must be dealt with now. Both the MSC trees and recycling are local issues (contradiction #2). You have also slighted the efforts of the Texas Environmental Action Coalition. Furthermore, you have failed to practice

what you preach by not suggesting the recycling of *The Battalion* after use in the "don't litter" announcement currently running in the Battalion.

If the sight of the shanty bothers the Battalion editors, what about the unsightly blight of dead trees and muddied earth which is bonfire, a disgraceful testimony to A&M's role in and approval of world deforestation? Why not point out all the effort wasted by the bonfire crew which could be directed towards the more constructive purposes you mention? What about the groups who protested AGAINST the SAA rally? Where are the justly deserved criticisms of the misdirected efforts of the Young Conservatives and College Republicans?

Michael Worsham
Environmental Engineering Graduate Student

Preservation, not destruction

EDITOR:
In regard to bonfire, it is foreseeable that the increasing environmental awareness of the general public will threaten the future of this destructive tradition. Even though the tradition has some 80 years of history chalked up, its plain wastefulness will become evident to more and more conscientious people, and the practice will decline. Too much of the natural world has succumbed to mankind's manipulations, and needless acts such as bonfire are no exception.

"It is widely known that the harvest site will be cleared for stripmining anyway, but that is a poor justification for "cut," since both are environmentally destructive. The fact that we will all die someday does not entice us to rush the process.

As temporary inhabitants and true stewards of this planet, we must analyze the consequences of our resource exploitations, however small in scale, and as mature university students we should channel our efforts toward the preservation, not the destruction, of what remains.

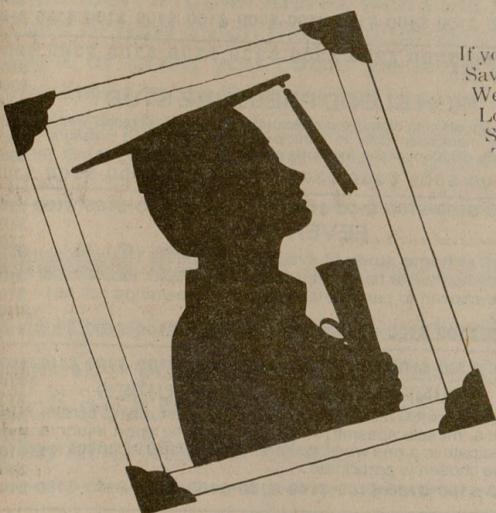
Mark Brogley '91

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.

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