

# Mail Call

## History will remember Shelby

**EDITOR:**  
I am not a former student of A&M and perhaps an outsider's perspective would interest your readers.

In the past few years, A&M has suffered damage to its reputation as a result of problems within its athletic department. These problems, however, have not emanated from the basketball program.

Dr. Shelby Metcalf has conducted himself with the utmost class and was highly respected as an opponent and individual by those who are not A&M fans.

He has also shown tremendous loyalty to your school, passing up opportunities to move on in order to remain at the school and town he so dearly loves. The average former student would do well to be as loyal.

Now certain members of the athletic department, with more trophies than intelligence, have taken it upon themselves to reward Dr. Metcalf by denigrating his performance behind his back at the NCAA meetings.

What a display of class! A lesser man might have ignored this, but I would place my respect any day with someone who is man enough to speak up and fight back.

John David Crow may look to hire someone of his own ilk to replace Shelby ... maybe Jim Valvano or Billy Tubbs?

Regardless of what happens hereafter, A&M has lost a great deal of respect. When will you learn to start putting pressure on your officials to be accountable for the school's image instead of just the bottom line?

Hang in there, Shelby. History will remember you much more kindly than those idiots calling the shots in this deal.

Don E. Allen

## Purpose of 'Don't Panic' is to teach

**EDITOR:**  
Last week The Battalion published a series of comic strips that ridiculed the book "Don't Panic" by Dr. William Bassichis.

I believe the purpose of a book is to teach. Even if the first edition of "Don't Panic" was just a set of lecture notes put together, I believe it taught me more about the subject than many other famous books I've had.

The later edition of "Don't Panic" is presented in a very professional manner and it no longer only constitutes a set of notes, as the comic strips implied.

Two years ago I took the class in which "Don't Panic" is

used, and I believe that it was one of the most productive classes I've had at A&M.

It sounds to me as though the artist did rather poorly when he took the class and that this is some sort of revenge. Please don't let his personal anger damage the reputation of an excellent professor.

Rafael Alvarez '90

## Barry arrest showed racism

**EDITOR:**  
I believe Timm Doolen showed much ignorance and close-mindedness in assuming that it is "absurd" to speculate that the arrest of Marion Barry was racially motivated.

From what I understand, Mr. Barry has been under investigation for over five years by the FBI. If this is true, why did it take so long to "catch" Mr. Barry?

There were two movies recently, "Mississippi Burning" and "Cry Freedom" which seem to reinterpret history. In "Mississippi Burning" blacks were helpless victims who were unable to "overcome" until the FBI came in and saved the day; in "Cry Freedom" I'm led to believe that most horrifying injustices imposed by South African whites were on a white reporter, who bravely escapes so that he can relay these injustices to the rest of the world.

Both films grossly misinterpret the victim and oppressors. Yet cinematically, both are impeccable and will undoubtedly serve as references to "wrongdoing (that) is obviously racially motivated (which) the American public will (come) to know." Movies like these offend my intelligence.

Doolen, you offend my intelligence. You tell me that I should dismiss any notion that cases like Barry's and Tawana Brawley's are racially motivated. But history tells me that the most powerful intelligence agency in this land was founded by a racist.

Although these may just be cases of a politician falling by the wayside or a drugged-up girl concocting a false story, it is scarier to me that these might be examples of people in power ridding themselves of someone they could not manipulate or people in power venting their racial hatred on a girl.

In both cases the public is unaware of all the details, yet you know all the facts. I just hope you're right.

T. David Binns '88

## Evaluations should be used

**EDITOR:**

College is not cheap. Many students at A&M work over the summer and/or during the semester to pay for their higher education. Yet, have you ever asked yourself, "I paid for that?" as you turned in a final?

Student evaluations are filled out on professors and teaching assistants in most courses offered at A&M; however, why do instructors, as they pass out these forms, inform you "These (evaluation forms) don't decide whether or not I stay?" If that is the case, why bother!

You paid his salary; at a restaurant if you think the spinach is cold you send it back. As adults we expect to get what we pay for. When you and your classmates feel instruction is lacking, your opinion, as well as your money, needs to have some clout with the administration.

Students know whether or not a teacher is effective. Students attend class. While to my knowledge, none of my professors were visited or evaluated during class by a higher authority.

If students are in class they want to learn, providing the best instruction is the responsibility of the university.

Using student evaluations promptly and carefully should improve the quality of the education. The student's quest for knowledge hopefully comes first, not the job position of the faculty.

I do not believe that inquiries are justified because of one bad evaluation or even poor evaluations from a particular class, but inadequate returns from a majority of the instructor's classes should be investigated promptly.

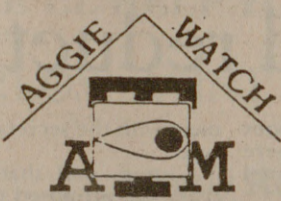
Those students who write derogatory evaluations should be in the minority; therefore, no investigation would be needed (simply because the instructor is fulfilling his/her teaching obligation for the majority of the students.)

Improving the instruction, using the majority of student opinion and remembering the hard work done by students (for money and grades) are reasons for student evaluations to be used by the administration to remove inadequate instructors. I would like to think that no class at A&M should be taken back to be reheated.

Mark Blankinship '92

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