

MARGULIES  
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RONALD REAGAN

# checks, lies, and videotape



## Mail Call

If you don't like traditions, leave

EDITOR:

We have endured letters from students who were opposed to bonfire, exhausted from the rivalry between A&M and U. or offended by the label of "two-percenter" they received because they did not participate in yells at football games. We have listened to students who think the Corps unit runs are selfish and those who are appalled because some people think that Aggies should make the time to come to Silver Taps to honor fellow students who have passed away. We read the comments of one Carol Malone who says A&M is "infected with narrow-minded snobs," and we've had enough.

We love Texas A&M almost as much as we love the Lord. We love the Corps of Cadets, Silver Taps and we sure as hell love the Fightin' Texas Aggie Bonfire. Both of our fathers attended A&M and so will all of our children. We love all traditions here at A&M and have one thing to say to two-percenters like Malone and anyone who feels the same way she does: You make us VOMIT.

If you don't enjoy people who take pride in their school, that's fine with us. Leave! If you think tradition suppresses diversity, and you feel a burning desire to stand out in a crowd, go to Austin. They have all the freaks you can handle over there.

Brad Wehner '93  
Todd Tomlin '93

Have an opinion? Express it!

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. There is no guarantee that letters submitted will be printed.

## Forest Service's clearcutting policy abominable

Amen to Mike Worsham's article on clearcutting! Clearcutting as a practice is wasteful, but clearcutting as a National Forest Service policy is downright abominable. It is time for us to adopt a new attitude towards wilderness areas — one of conservation rather than manipulation. In fact, a very broad conservation attitude must be adopted by all of us if we wish to maintain our present quality of life.

The two numbers six billion and 10 million reflect two values, one of which is increasing as the other is decreasing. Six billion is the projected global human population by the year 2000. Six billion of us! A little arithmetic will reveal this as equivalent (roughly) to: 46 United States of Americas; 4,000 Houstons or 77,935 capacity Kyle Fields. The number 10 million reflects the estimate of the total number of species inhabiting the Earth. We are not alone! The Animal Welfare Institute estimates that

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20 percent of these will be extinct by 2000. One out of five species! Extinction rates are rising rapidly: from approximately 25 during the years 1600-1700, to possibly one per day today. This number continues to increase.

So what can we do? This is where our new conservation ethics will come in handy. First, we must realize that everything comes from the Earth, and humans, acting as tenants, are now responsible for its general upkeep. Humans are still animals, our needs are all the same: food, water, oxygen and shelter. We cannot escape this fact, it is very important to remember this. Second, we should remember the

phrase, "Good planets are hard to find." We only have one Earth and none of the planets in our solar system are capable of sustaining us. At the level of present technology, it would take us close to 90,000 years to reach Proxima Centauri, our closest neighbor star. And how can we assume our new planet search will be satisfied there? So we must remember that we only have one of these Earth-things, and its resources are limited. If our population exceeds or wastes these resources, people (and other species) will die. Ecologists call this the "carrying capacity" of an area, and it is a concept that is very real. Resources will limit the size of any population.

So what am I getting at? Well, all this talk should be telling us something: It's time to start living responsibly. Talk is nice, but talk is cheap and we all know actions speak louder than words. Take action! Do something; there's much we can do about it. Recycling, for example,

benefits everyone and everything. Through recycling we can reduce our intake of Earth's resources through conservation of raw materials and energy. This will also decrease waste policies which destroy habitat (i.e. pollution emissions, waste in landfills/clearcutting of forests). There is a group on campus who can give you a list of places in Bryan-College Station that recycle everything from aluminum cans to dead batteries (Texas Environmental Action Coalition). Another way to take action is by writing our political leaders. They really do listen to us! If you read Mike's column and it disturbed you, send a letter to Phil Gramm and tell him so. Phil has a very hard time reading minds, he won't know if you don't tell him. Finally we can conserve everything we can't recycle — use less energy, less water and reuse things you would otherwise throw away (grocery sacks, tin foil, use cloth instead of paper napkins,

towels). Let the companies you spend your money on know you don't like them using plastic, Styrofoam® or whatever it is they're using. All of these methods are direct action we can take to help conserve.

Action is the key — if we don't do anything about this problem, it will not go away. All of us, as tenants on Earth must realize our role in this process and what we can do to help out. Six billion is continuing to rise; 10 million is continuing to fall: How long will we wait?

Mike Smith is a senior wildlife and fisheries sciences major.

As with all columns, viewpoints expressed in Reader's Opinions are not necessarily those of The Battalion. Persons interested in submitting a Reader's Opinion should contact the Opinion Page Editor at 845-3314.

## Column rooting for gun control missed the target

Just a few comments regarding the anti-gun article published in The Battalion on Feb. 7. Timm Doolen's article outlined some good and bad points, but mostly missed the target.

Doolen asked the question: "What purpose do semi-automatic weapons fulfill in a civilized society such as the United States?"

First, calling the United States a civilized society is a matter of opinion. Ask the many foreigners in our community about American civility and most will point to the sharp differences in crime rates between the U.S. and the rest of the world. An industrialized society, definitely yes. But a civilized society, sometimes.

For more opinions on the civility of the United States, you can also ask police officers and crime victims from Los Angeles, Houston, Washington, D.C., Detroit, ...

Doolen asked if the Second Amendment is a good reason for having semi-automatic weapons? Maybe. I have to agree with Doolen, however, that some restrictions should be imposed. After all, can you imagine what this country would be like if you could legally buy a MAC-10, Teflon-coated bullets or a real AK-47?

One point of concern and disagreement not mentioned in the article is that it's not just the contents of

Jean-Michel  
Kurt Metayer

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the gun control laws, but the public officials' and certain anti-gun organizations' way of having changes made to the various states' and national constitution. Most are trying to, or have, bypassed the normal procedures set by those guidelines and laws, something that could be considered a crime in itself. If the changes in the law were about something less emotional than gun control, things would not be done this way. Take the environmental issues, for example.

Doolen also asked if hunting was a legitimate purpose for using a semi-automatic weapon. Maybe. Certainly there is no better substitute for a well-aimed shot, but if a hunter wants to use a semi-auto to hunt with, and he does so according to the law, then let him.

Being a hunter myself, not only have I never heard of anyone blasting a deer with 30 rounds, but I also doubt it happens often enough to worry about it. By the way Timm, what constitutes a "regular rifle?"

If the concern is because of the danger imposed by the ownership of

certain weapons, then we can compare that with the ownership of certain automobiles.

If semi-automatic weapons should be banned, or at least owned in the most restrictive way gun control groups can force legislatures to make them, shouldn't fast cars also be restricted? Let's ask: what purpose do fast cars fulfill in a civilized society such as the United States? Is there a real need to own an automobile that has the capability to do 0 to 60 in two eye blinks? Or have the capacity to move at 140 mph? With the exception of Germany's

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autobahn and certain salty flats in the middle of Utah, I don't know of a place where it is relatively safe or OK to drive

that fast.

Moreover, is it necessary for a high school kid (or college kid, for that matter) to be given the opportunity to turn his parents' hand-me-down Chevy into a hot-rod? Here you have your average 17-year-old at the control of a 3000-pound vehicle capable of attaining very high velocities in a very short time, out to improve himself and impress everyone, sober or not.

Should there be groups out to convince legislatures that certain vehicles fulfill no sensible purpose and therefore should be prohibited?

Maybe, instead, it makes more sense to argue for a judicial system with some backbone to interpret and help enforce

the laws and punish habitual speedsters, environmental polluters (individuals or corporations), irresponsible drivers (young or old, drunk or sober) or gun owners whose sole purpose for having a weapon is to commit crimes (drug dealers, poachers, thieves).

Maybe an aspiring crook or potential Rambo will stop and think about what he's about to do, knowing that when he gets caught, he will be punished. I mean really punished.

Maybe civility is something that has to be enforced?

Maybe what Doolen should have asked was: "Is this whole business about gun control the real issue we are faced with?" Maybe it's not just Doolen, but all these judges, pro-gun lobbies, anti-gun groups and politicians that are also missing the target.

Jean-Michel Kurt Metayer is a junior mechanical engineering major.

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## Adventures In Cartooning

by Don Atkinson Jr.



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