

Protesters need make commitment to causes

There was this guy named Earl Rudder. On D-Day during World War II, his unit was picked up to scale the side of this cliff and destroy a gun emplacement. Allied High Command said that his task was very important but 30 to 40 percent casualties could be expected. How do you work with someone for six months or a year knowing that three chances in ten say that he will not make it, or that you might end up dead? The members of Rudder's unit must of had a great deal of commitment.

At an Aggies for Clayton Williams meeting during the fall semester, a guy in the room was wearing a Nazi party armband. During the question period the guy said that he felt Clayton Williams' drug camps were really concentration camps. He did not argue convincingly. The Clayton Williams people were lucky he had so little knowledge on his subject, because they had not done a great deal of research into the drug camps issue either. What upset me about the guy who wore the armband was his weak commitment to his cause. When confronted with mild arguments for Williams position, he stopped protesting the drug camps and switched to the issue of banning assault weapons.

The drug camps idea cannot be equated with concentration camps. The premise of the drug camps is that if a person is convicted of a drug related crime, the option would exist of either going to jail or going to the drug camp. Some drug offenses are felonies, which means that a convict loses the right to vote, hold office, or go to colleges or universities like A&M. By going to the drug camp, the record of the crime would be cleared and all rights retained.

H. Alan Montgomery
Reader's Opinion

A person convicted of a drug-related crime would have three months of boot camps and six months of minimum wage on a public works project. When everyone is dressed the same and looks almost the same, then a person begins to see what there is underneath. A first offender would be put in an environment where some choices about the future would have to be made. When confronted with a set of peers who have all committed the same crime, an individual would have to say, "Do I want to be part of a group like this?" Most sane individuals would opt for a no-drug future.

At a Clayton Williams rally in February, members of the Medicine Tribe held a disruptive protest without making an effort to debate the drug camp issue with Clayton Williams or his supporters. Why didn't these people have enough commitment to try to display their displeasure in a more constructive fashion? The only conclusion I can draw is that they have taken up protesting as an entertaining pastime, which is rather sad.

When Rudder's Rangers got to the top of that cliff on D-Day, they discovered that the Germans had moved the gun emplacement the day before. Even in the face of this discovery their commitment was not shaken, because the did find the new position and silence the gun. I just wonder whether anyone will have that level of commitment any time in the future.

Pageant demonstration not just a silly protest

I would like the opportunity to respond to Scot Walker's column of Friday, March 2, which concerned the protest of the Miss Texas A&M pageant.

Allow me to make an example which is in keeping with Walker's argument. Let's say that I am an employer, and I have several applicants competing for a position I need filled. As Walker says, "Life ain't fair," so if I want to choose an unqualified white man over an unqualified African-American woman, so what? As Walker says, "Everybody is judged on something," and if I want to judge on skin color and the other differences in physical characteristics between the races, so what? Did I hear someone say that race should have nothing to do with such a decision — that only the fitness of the two for the job should be judged? Then you are in agreement with the protestors. What does physical beauty, a completely inherited characteristic, have to do with fitness for a college education? It does not demonstrate a capacity to work hard, as good grades or even the development of a talent do, nor does it demonstrate a naturally valuable intellect (both of which are clearly related to success in college). It is, and always will be, purely discrimination based on an inherited physical characteristic. It is the same as race discrimination.

I realize that the results of the pageant are not based entirely on appearance. I am arguing that no part of the results of a scholarship competition can be justified in having such a base, except where discrimination on such a basis renders it necessary to prevent the continuation of such discrimination — as is the case with affirmative action programs.

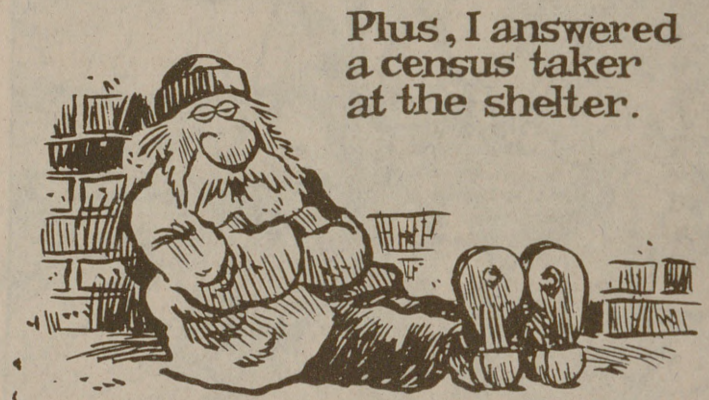
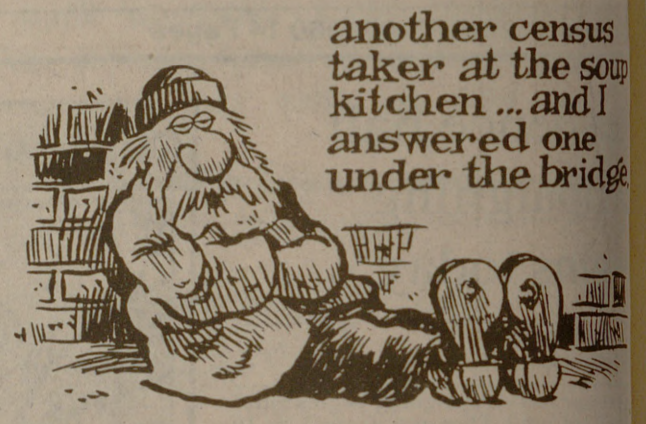
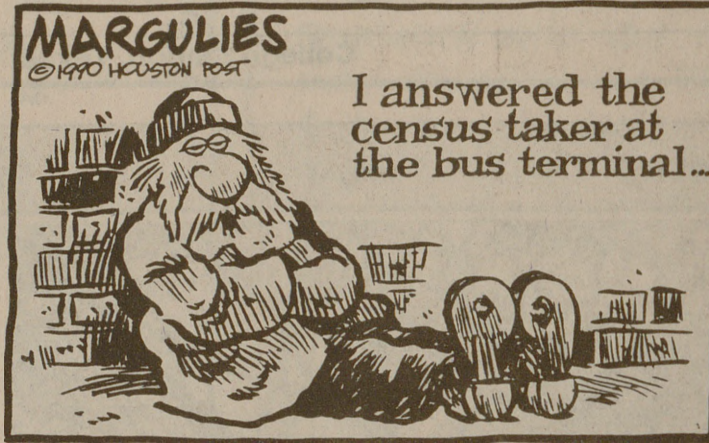
If you oppose affirmative action on the basis that no decision about

Cara Shannon Clark
Reader's Opinion

advancement should be made on the basis of inherited characteristics, then you are already obviously in opposition to beauty (or even partial-beauty) pageants.

If you do not oppose affirmative action, I would like to point out the following major difference between the awarding of scholarships to minorities on the basis of their membership in minority groups and the awarding of scholarships to women on the basis of their physical attractions: Physically attractive women have not historically been discriminated against anymore than women on the whole. Affirmative action is a temporary attempt to rectify past discrimination, which passively produces present discrimination. Since attractive women have not experienced discrimination exceeding that experienced by women on the whole, there is no logical justification for their being offered special advancement over other women.

Women have many valuable abilities and talents with which they could rightfully compete for scholarships. Having them compete on the basis of their sexual desirability is degrading to all women, and simply reinforces the idea that it is a real and important of measure of woman's worth. I think that is justification plenty for "silly protests," Mr. Walker. If you cannot find better justifications for the continuation of unjustifiable discrimination than "Life ain't fair," perhaps you should reconsider your silly opinion.



Mail Call

Traditions promote unity

EDITOR:

In response to Marcus Johnson's letter to the editor, we would like to express our opinion.

Marcus is as narrow-minded as he thinks the Corps is. Substitute the word discipline for conformity, narrow-mindedness and seniority. It is unique to what those Ags desire to do, and that is to serve their country in the armed forces.

Remember Marcus? Those men who gave their lives so you could have yours?

Those who do not pursue a contract desire the comradery, discipline, sense of belonging and pride that the Corps promotes. Many believe in the benefits the Corps discipline provides once the student leaves A&M.

Traditions are voluntary. They promote unity among Ags and remind us of the history and beliefs A&M was founded on. Is honoring fellow Ags who have died so bad, Marcus? Traditions are a rich part of the Aggie experience.

Rivalries are a part of all schools, and the teasips know this as well. Walk around t.u. with an Aggie shirt and we guarantee you'll get just as many smirks and snide comments.

As for Ags hiring Ags, they are obviously doing something right. Just take a look at Clayton Williams and the success of his businesses. He recognizes the quality of education here and the type of person A&M produces.

I am sure Cary Moore's statement had no racial overtones. As for A&M being held back competitively, I would not call being a top ten university non-competitive.

As for your astute observation about Highway 6, I think it means if you don't love it, leave it. Nobody is making you stay.

Eric Peterson '93 and Andrew Whelpley '93

Faculty memos waste forests, too

EDITOR:

I am writing so that none of your readers will have the misimpression that Professor Stephen H. Daniel's anti-bonfire stance pervades A&M's philosophy department.

Philosophers, to the annoyance of some of our students and colleagues, delight in picking apart arguments, so let me begin by criticizing Daniel's. He draws an analogy between land-clearing, on the one hand, and hazing, sexual harassment and racism on the other.

He then quickly moves to equating land-clearing with "the systematic destruction of forests." Since the systematic destruction of forests is "fundamentally immoral," just as is sexual harassment, we cannot use tradition as a justification for either, he writes. But, of course, land-clearing need not destroy forests; indeed, some land-clearing is necessary in order to preserve ecological balance and thus prevents destruction of forests.

Had Daniel shown that bonfire cannot occur without destruction of forests (systematic or otherwise), then perhaps he would also have shown that bonfire is immoral. But he has not even argued for the claim that bonfire

cannot occur without destroying forests.

To my mind, a question far more important than the morality of bonfire is this: When are faculty attempts to influence, even coerce, student behavior morally justified? As educators at A&M we have a challenging and exciting responsibility to our students. To meet this responsibility we must take care to impose upon ourselves at the very least the same standards of conduct that we expect of our students. Yet as faculty we routinely waste vast amounts of paper (processed trees), by sending unnecessary memos around campus and by engaging in research of dubious historical importance. (This is true in most universities, not just A&M!)

Unless we, as individual faculty members and as a group, stop contributing to this quite systematic destruction of forests, we cannot ask students to do likewise without standing rightfully convicted of hypocrisy and unwarranted self-righteousness. (A similar, and more important, point could be made about academic dishonesty; again, A&M is not unusual in this regard.) Let Daniel crusade to reduce the number of memos (excluding those from student organizations) I get in my campus mailbox by 75 percent or so! Then I shall respect his anti-bonfire crusade, even though I may still disagree with his opinion.

Susan C. Hale
Assistant professor of philosophy

Ags should know A&M history

EDITOR:

We Aggies pride ourselves on being a part of a school rich in tradition and history. But how much does the average Aggie know about A&M's wonderful history? I was walking past the Academic Building the other day and observed what seemed to be a young Ag showing her parents around campus.

The three were standing in front of Sully's statue and as I walked by, the parents casually glanced up at the statue and said, "Now what did this guy do? He must be important." The girl, much to my surprise, remarked, "I don't know," and then turned around and walked away. Did this Ag not even know that if she had walked around to the back of the statue's base, she would have learned that Lawrence Sullivan Ross was a brigadier general in the U.S. Army, governor of Texas and president of Texas A&M College?

I can't believe that any member of the Aggie student body would not even know who Sully was. Please Ags, read an A&M brochure, take a tour of the campus and learn about the history of this wonderful school! You'll definitely better appreciate the honor of being an Aggie if you do so.

Rebecca L. Hall '93

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Adventures In Cartooning

by Don Atkinson Jr.

