

Mail Call

You've got a lot of nerve, baby

EDITOR:

Boy, Matt, you have a lot of nerve! To think that you can stand there and point the finger at women and call them selfish! I think you are selfish to say that women should lower their expectations for a group of inconsiderate, greedy idiots like yourself. I believe that it is the right of any individual, whether male or female, to have any expectations they want, no matter how high. And I'm certainly not going to lower my goals and expectations for you. And as to the statement you made concerning women being blessed (by men) with more opportunities and roles: you are sorely mistaken on this point. I do not consider these privileges a blessing. As a legal citizen of the United States of America, I consider it my right. Wake up, Matt; it's 1990 and all citizens have rights and goals and expectations, despite what you think. I would rather be considered selfish and inconsiderate, than be considered dumb and lose my self-respect, baby.

Paige Brooks '91

Women not an extension of men

EDITOR:

Had Matt McBurnett's article concerned any other minority group, I suspect the calls for his termination would be immediate and righteous. By simply replacing the term "women" with "African-American," or perhaps "Hispanic," in his remark "the farther women get, the more they expect," the pigheadedness of McBurnett's position is made clearer. Unfortunately, though, women are still regarded as a special sub-category among minorities.

His light-hearted tone on the issue may be explained by the common perception of women as extensions of men. The notion holds that women are under "our" special protectorship, since they receive all kinds of courtesies and preferential treatments. But, you have only to note their scarcity among CEO's (less than 3 percent are women), on the floor of Congress (less than 5 percent), in the upper ranks of the military (where only one woman has achieved the rank of General), or in any position of prominence and influence, to see the irreality of this notion, as well as McBurnett's assertion that "since 1970, women have been successful in acquiring most of the things they have tried to achieve."

When he demands that women's trend of higher expectations stop soon, McBurnett reveals a stubborn resistance to the fact of change: women, as a group, are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with their status, and policies to

address instances of sexism are already institutionalized or being expanded. The 53 percent of our population that is female must be granted full equality before this nation can even begin to approach true democracy.

Your article was doubly offensive because you attempted to align all Texas A&M men, solely because of their gender, with your own ignorant stance. Your remarks shame this University, struggling as it is out of the stereotypes of its own traditions. Do the right thing, and either address your poor judgement, or terminate your position on The Battalion staff.

Bill Sparks
Graduate Student

Mobley's statistics misleading

EDITOR:

Within The Battalion's recent segment on the quality of teaching at Texas A&M, President Mobley was quoted as stating that the current "student/faculty ratio here is about 19 to 1." As both an alumnus of this University and an instructor of freshman English here, I am curious as to how Mobley arrived at this astounding statistic.

During my undergraduate years (1984-88), most of my classes contained 40-50 students, and several exceeded 100 students in size. Even the upper level and honors classes averaged 20-25 students per class. Currently, it is not unusual for many introductory math, science, business (and recently English) courses to contain 200-plus students per class. Even the freshman English course I teach (described by most students as their smallest class) averages 25-27 students per class.

Apparently Mobley has divided the total number of students at A&M by the total number of faculty, and has come up with an impressive ratio of 19 to 1. Although this figure may be accurate, it is very misleading and does not represent the average class size at this University. I applaud President Mobley's desire to "assess instructional effectiveness," but in order to do this effectively we must approach our current situation realistically rather than statistically.

Barbara Bell '88

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. Each letter must be signed and must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer. All letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald, or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

Guide to NOTIS users

Lisa McClain
Reader's Opinion

Now finding the literature you need at the Sterling C. Evans Library is even more fun than ever! Thanks to the new catalog system NOTIS, library users can now look forward to waiting in line for NOTIS terminals and suffering through computer system breakdowns.

The card catalogs have been ousted, and NOTIS has taken over. The only remaining card catalog is the subject card catalog, but even may soon be extinct. To find authors and titles, one must use NOTIS.

Since the implementation of NOTIS, the library's computerized card catalog system, several complaints have been voiced. Faculty and students have expressed frustration with the system.

For example, waiting for a NOTIS terminal is a wonderful way to waste valuable time. If you happen to be lucky enough to be waiting on someone who is looking up every entry for the United States of America, you could wait days. There are several terminals, but they seem to be full nearly all the time. (HINT: try the terminal on second floor in Documents on a Saturday night around 11 p.m.)

With the card catalogs, you could pull out the drawer you needed, find your card, jot down the location and be on your way. I've seen many brows break out at the NOTIS terminals as users try in desperation to find the information they need.

Another feature of NOTIS is its unequal ability to crash. Computer systems are notorious for crashing when you need them most. What is the next step when the only source of authors and titles in the building breaks down? As you stand at the NOTIS terminal, you can't help but wonder how many books have been "lost" in the transfer from the card catalogs to NOTIS. Human error is a daily occurrence, so surely not all the books have been accounted for. A wad of Bubble Yum between two entry cards and that's it. You've lost two or three entries.

These two or three lost entries may have been difficult to locate even if they had been transferred from the card catalogs successfully. If you don't enter the correct keyword, you may end up with the dilemma I did.

I entered John Fitzgerald Kennedy as my keyword — two entries were displayed. Those were the library named after the former president, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Surely there are more than two documents on JFK in our large library. All of my griping cannot go uncontested, however. I spoke with a concerned library employee who explained to me how to use NOTIS to my advantage, when it's running. (I added the running part.)

One thing I learned is that there is a difference between "keyword" and "subject". "Keyword" is a command designed to retrieve any entry concerning the word you enter. "Subject" refers to the Library of Congress listings.

The same concerned employee expressed that the library realizes that the system can be confusing and distressing to users. She added that library staff truly wants to help.

Users experiencing problems with NOTIS should take their complaints to the library staff for clarification. In seriousness, they really are pretty helpful, so don't hesitate to ask them for aid in your quest for knowledge.

As Texas A&M expands its technological horizons, it will provide better instruction to the users of this new technology.

Lisa McClain is a junior journalism major.

NCNB takes advantage of its Texas customers

NCNB Texas is bad bull. This may sound harsh, but it is tame compared to what others are saying about an institution that they feel has impoverished individuals and communities:

"What it amounts to is that NCNB has a license to steal and is raping the state of Texas." — Billy Mobley, a Stephenville corporate chairman.

"We don't need looters (NCNB), we're crying out for builders." — Robin Dennis, President of Consumers For Ethical Financial Institution, Incorporated.

Where to begin? NCNB, based out of Charlotte, North Carolina, is one of the nation's largest banks boasting scores of branches. NCNB entered Texas in July 1988 when the First Republic Bank Corporation failed and was auctioned off in its entirety, some 40 banks, to NCNB in a massive federally assisted bailout. NCNB acquired the bank system estimated at a worth of \$33 billion for a figure between \$2 and \$4 billion.

Now, there are stacks of documentation, originating federally as well as privately, implicating the bank in several illegal and shady dealings with the likes of the FDIC and the IRS. In point of fact, the current Chief Financial Officer of Texas operations, Thomas Hartman, was involved in the largest bankruptcy in American history in 1983, Baldwin United, and came away officially censured for

Andrew W. Yung
Reader's Opinion

misrepresenting information to stockholders.

But even if we are to look beyond questionable tax credits and previous indictments, Aggies, Texans, and American taxpayers have reason to be outraged at NCNB's practices.

The Community Reinvestment Act is just one of many laws which embody principles of sound economic equity and is just one of many laws which several hold NCNB violates. The rationale for these laws which require that financial institutions invest a percentage of their resources (deposits, in a bank's case) back into the community or area is self-evident. The November 17, 1989 Wall Street Journal read, "This has been sad for the Texas economy as well as for the United States government, because NCNB has no interest in making or carrying loans to Texans."

In a nutshell: NCNB smugly collects Texas deposits from checking accounts, IRAs, or whatever, while funneling that money out of the state and country, thereby making local loans unavailable to citizens with aspirations of improving the community.

Hartman himself slipped and told the

New York Times, "We're primarily interested in building a deposit franchise." But NCNB has done much more than deny issuance of new long-term loans to qualified businessmen; they have classified good performing loans as 'bad' or 'high risk' and called for their immediate payment.

Take Mike Lloyd's case for example: Last year Lloyd was a successful dairy farmer (some 500 cows) in Erath County, Texas. However, NCNB took over the local bank and refused to honor his land loan which he had never missed a payment on. Instead, they demanded \$230 thousand to pay off the loan under the threat of foreclosure. Foreclosure it is, it seems ... But there is always a sob story or two in business, right?

Reality Check: It's purported that between 19,000 and 20,000 other Texans have already met the same fate within the past several months. NCNB is redlining the agriculture, oil and gas, and real estate industries specifically and Texans generally. Let me try to bring this home, Ags.

Imagine your parents borrowed \$100,000 in 1980 to buy a house from the local bank on a 20-year deal with a repayment plan of \$6000 per year. Well, you parents made every payment on time and now it's 1990. The local bank is taken over, and the new bank demands your parents' balance be paid in full (\$40,000). Who has \$40,000 cash? So, even though your family has already

sunk \$60,000 into the house, you lose it. Do you think you are going to be able to get a new home loan at another bank with such a poor credit record? No — you defaulted on a loan. This scenario is not at all unrealistic for hundreds of fellow Texans.

What are these modern carpetbaggers doing with our (depositors' and taxpayers') money? To begin with they have transferred (transferred, not loaned) over two billion dollars to support failing operations in Florida and to pump up that state's economy. The Southern Finance Project (a pilot light organization for the advancement of fair banking) made this comment in response to NCNB's 'self-dealing' policies: "Excessive or careless insider lending is frequently cited by regulators and analysts as a leading cause of bank safety and soundness problems."

Even more disturbing are NCNB's other uses for American effectual subsidies. The corporation hoards its funds and collects on history-proven long-term loans to acquire more failing S&L's with the aid of our government. Why not? This financial myopia makes sense to a corporation too vast to remember the individuals in cities like Abilene and blinded by the matching funds of green the FDIC is willing to secure.

And perhaps the final insult this bank seems to have paid Americans is in the

undermining of our government's attempt to bring human rights to South Africa via sanctions. NCNB is the largest U.S. lender to South Africa. Hugh McColl Jr., NCNB Corporate Chairman, has stated, "I've lived in a segregated society, and that doesn't make me a racist." The bank balks at its critics, insists it will continue to do business with South Africa. There's hefty profit in exploitation, undoubtedly.

McColl contends that the United States should not try to influence South Africa's future and his business reflects this ideology with its depositors funds. In 1988, NCNB Senior Vice President Willan A. McGee took on a self-satisfied air and affirmed, "NCNB does indeed have correspondent relationships with three South African banks." This promotion of racial injustices goes far beyond de facto involvement seeming implying de jure legitimacy.

There's more, much more. But the plenty enough to make an informed decision on who to bank with and who not. Furthermore, never discount the power of unconventional political action — an Abilene family's (the Dennises) picketing was quite efficacious and a true manifestation of patriotism. And let's not forget letters to our representatives. But most of all, Aggie let's not forget the Mike Lloyds.

Andrew W. Yung is a freshman political science major.

The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

Member of
Texas Press Association
American Collegiate Press

The Battalion Editorial Board

Cindy McMillian,
Editor

Timm Doolen, Managing Editor
Ellen Hobbs, Opinion Page Editor
Holly Becka, City Editor

Kristin North,
Meg Reagan,
News Editors

Nadja Sabawala,
Sports Editor

Eric Roalson, Art Director

Lisa Ann Robertson,
Lifestyles Editor

Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M and Bryan-College Station.

Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editorial board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Newsroom: 845-3313.

Mail subscriptions are \$20 per semester, \$40 per school year and \$50 per full year: 845-2611. Advertising rates furnished on request: 845-2696.

Our address: The Battalion, 230 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77843-4111.

Adventures In Cartooning

by Don Atkinson Jr.

