

Madene Walker

Reader's Opinion

## Cadets praised for service by administrator

Memorial day was a day for respecting and honoring all servicemen who served our country with the sacrifice of their time, energy, health and, for some, their lives

For over five years I was privileged to work in the Office of the Commandant at Texas A&M, so I have some unique memories and a heartfelt message to share.

There are a few cadets who have problems dealing with life in the Corps just as there are a few active duty servicemen who have difficulty coping with the military environment. The public broadcasting of their complaints results in the negative response of the general public toward the entire Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M. Please understand, the discontented are in the minority. I present the majority for your review.

The cadets I remember are the officers — the juniors and seniors who willingly accept the responsibility of governing the Corps, from the Cadet Corps Commanders to the Commanding Officers of each individual outfit. They are the finest group of young people I have ever known.

They served their University first, then their country, with the skills acquired from dedicated active duty officers from each branch of service. They served with the sacrifice of their time, energy and, occasionally, their health and grades by offering their

**"They are the finest group of young people I have ever known."**

devotions totally. The Corps absorbed so much time and effort, that many of the officers were required to delay their graduation date into the fifth year. Yet, they did it willingly as they love their University and their country with their entire being.

When the Corps of Cadets marches as a unit it parades as proudly as any active duty military unit ever has in this nation's history. These are active duty service youth who represent, first, A&M in their cadet uniforms. They then represent the military services with the flag of the service branch carried at the beginning of their unit (the United States Air Force, Army, Naval and Marine Corps). Lastly, their beloved country is represented with the United States flag presented by the Color Guard cadets marching at the very head of the entire Corps.

In addition, the Corps is filled with special units from the Corps as a whole. Honor units that are composed of the best of the best. The cadets selected work hard to prove their worth to these groups: the Fish Drill Team, Rudder's Rangers, Ross Volunteers, Color Guard, Parsons' Mounted Cavalry, Rifle Team, Recon Company, Ranger Challenge, Blackhats and SAME. These units take part in competitions all over the United States and bring home trophies in every competition.

On this past Memorial Day, Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M University, I remembered you as exceptional young people. I thank you, I respect you, I honor you and I love you.

Madene Walker is a staff member in the Texas Veterinary Medical Center.

# Homosexual rights often violated

C.E. Harris

Reader's Opinion

In a May 16 column in The Battalion, Jon Beeler maintains that homosexuals should have the right to privacy in their own homes but, evidently, few if any further protections against discrimination.

"Alternative sexual preferences," he writes, "should not be protected in the business place, the military or in institutions of higher learning." To be sure, he also says that "gay men and women should enjoy the same rights that all Americans receive until their sexual preference obstructs the welfare of their immediate environment."

But I infer that, from Beeler's standpoint, virtually everything gays do in the public arena in some way

obstructs their immediate environment. I suspect, for example, that if gays encounter discrimination in applying for teaching positions or in renting an apartment or buying a home, they would also hold that the state should offer them no protection. Now this is pretty strong stuff.

What arguments does he give in defense of his position? One argument is the old natural law argument that homosexuality is "just not meant to be — by God or by nature." He also calls

homosexuality a "vice" and a "deviancy."

There is a long tradition of moral thinking which argues from what is "natural" to what is "right," but most ethicists other than conservative Roman Catholics rejected this tradition in the 19th century.

There are at least three reasons for this. First, it is not an easy thing to form a clear account of what is and isn't "natural." Second, it is difficult to argue that what is "natural," if it could be defined, should be a good guide for what is right. Third, the natural law tradition also holds that masturbation, sterilization and contraception are immoral, as well as homosexuality. It

thus has some implications that most people find highly implausible. Another argument that the app make is that homosexuality is a and therefore immoral. He says homosexuality is "a hapless chom mentally ill."

There are two problems with argument. First, the claim that homosexuality is as mental illness highly controversial one which psychologists would question.

Second, even if homosexuality in some sense the result of a "sick" it does not follow that they are. Consider this example: Suppose someone is so neurotic and lacking social skills that he never gets married and masturbation is his only sexual outlet.

We might want to say that his masturbation is the consequence of emotional deficiency, but would we want to say it is therefore immoral? I think most people would find this illogical and inhumane.

Another argument is that "homosexuals do not constitute a minority described by family trees comprise a minority defined by the behavior." Somehow this is supposed to show that homosexuals do not deserve protection against discrimination, say blacks, Jews, hispanics or women.

But then, religious minorities are defined by their behavior too. We want to say that they therefore deserve protection against discrimination?

Finally, Beeler argues that homosexuality is "detrimental to values, and family values sew them together." If the claim is that homosexuality is "detrimental" to values in the sense that homosexual relationships are not heterosexual relationships, then the claim is the definition.

If the claim is that allowing homosexual relationships will destroy all, or even most, or even many heterosexual families, then seems most unlikely to me. Surely is little if any evidence for this, certainly Beeler does not present it.

C.E. Harris is an associate professor in the Department of Philosophy.

## Mail Call

### Commute to A&M without cars

EDITOR

My daily commute to campus gives me just 15 minutes to think, but even this brief trip is long enough to realize that we must be young men and women "before our time." Let me develop this thought. Our campus and the surrounding city have problems. For instance, the parking problem on campus, the traffic problems around campus and the unsightly Northgate area. How are these problems linked? They all have to do with the distinctly American infatuation with the automobile, our social vanity and our shortsightedness.

National statistics for fuel consumption and pollution are well known and widely cited. Often missed, however, are the latent ways cars affect our existence, especially in a city like College Station. Cars have allowed us to spread out on the landscape, traveling relatively long distances in "cheap and easy" comfort. Living more than two miles from campus makes real exercise of commuting by bicycle or on foot — exercise resulting in real sweat. There is very little social acceptance or even toleration for sweat or body odor in our society, hence the widespread use of automobiles in our daily lives, parking problems on our campus and unsightly stretches of asphalt encircling Texas A&M.

We must consider, as students, professors and staff of the University, the long term effects of our addiction to the automobile. If each person commuting to campus and living within three miles of campus was required to walk or use a bicycle, a bus or a moped, I would reasonably guess that parking problems would soon disappear. Campus bus lines could be extended to cover more area outside the

three mile area, reducing traffic problems further.

The administration could encourage alternative transportation use by issuing free "rainy day" parking permits to people who normally walk, bike or drive a scooter to school. There are relatively few days when these would be necessary, judging from the weather I have observed since arriving in College Station. A low cost "rainy day" bus pass would help reduce the use of cars on rainy days. The addition of bicycle lanes on University, South College, Texas Avenue and Wellborn Road would encourage bicycle use.

None of these suggestions address the social aspects of arriving at work or to class sweaty; this is when we must be men and women "before our time." We must understand that sweat is a sign that we care about preserving the environment, our resources and the beauty of our surroundings. I urge everyone to think twice before putting a key in the ignition. I also urge the administration to find more effective ways of transporting students, faculty and staff to and from campus without cars. Surely this simple problem can be easily solved with creative thinking and courageous decisions. If we solve this problem with progressive thought and action, we will be men and women "before our time."

Brinnen S. Carter  
Graduate student

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## Our University needs College of Fine Arts

Why don't we create a world class university out of Texas A&M?

Not a new idea, huh? Sounds like old news, doesn't it? But are we considered a world class university?

Well, we do have a new branch University in Japan. We might receive the presidential library. We even have a Corps of Cadets. While we're at it, why don't we mention the outstanding sports achievements.

Now are we a world class university?

To some people, this is it. But to the people of this world that decide upon this classification, we are far from it. We have business, engineering, liberal arts, agriculture and a wonderful theatre complex.

Too bad the University's own theatre department has to pay rent in order to produce a play in that space.

Sure, it's wonderful to see the touring companies that OPAS brings for us to enjoy. But why can't they support Aggies in the arts instead of supporting other universities' fine arts departments?

There is a lot of talent that this University is not exhibiting to the rest of the world.

When I look at other universities around the world that are considered world class, I see a strong involvement



Rudy Cordova Jr.  
Columnist

in the arts. You are probably asking yourself, "What does art have to do with anything?"

But when you study art you are learning about a culture. It's important to know where we've been, where we are and where we're going.

A fine arts department is greatly needed by this University. There is much to be learned in the fields of music, dance, theatre and art. Texas A&M is cheating itself of the freedom we have as human beings to express ourselves through the arts.

I've been to Europe, and it's amazing to see the amount of culture that bleeds from the history and the people themselves. They don't destroy their architecture when it gets old.

They cherish their music and dance. They even have world renowned acting troupes that reproduce plays the way they were presented almost 3000 years ago.

Here in America, we have universities like Harvard, Yale, Stanford, UCLA and even UT that all contain fine arts departments with world status. They give students the opportunity to open themselves up to a culture that speaks about the world we live in. If only Texas A&M could learn from these universities.

We all have different ideas as to what constitutes a world class university. The closed-minded person will throw out the idea of a fine arts department because they believe that art is for pansies.

What that person doesn't realize is that the arts are around us all daily. We see it in movies, television, magazines and newspapers. We can't avoid it, because in doing so we are turning away from the opportunity to study our civilization.

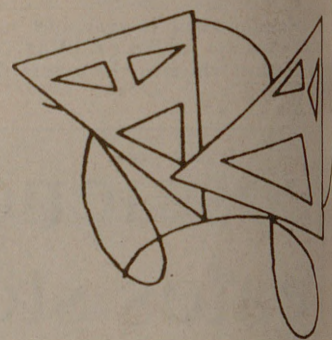
I know it's important for us to study business, medicine, agriculture and engineering. It's all a part of what makes this world turn.

What I'm trying to say is that we need to expand our knowledge through classical thinking. That too is an integral part of our lives.

If we as students had the support from the community, the Board of Regents and the rest of the University, then we could prove to the world that

even Aggies can perform and appreciate the arts.

World class means being open to ideas, not harnessed to tradition. Granted, this university has come



way through its traditions, but that's only a small part of our capacity.

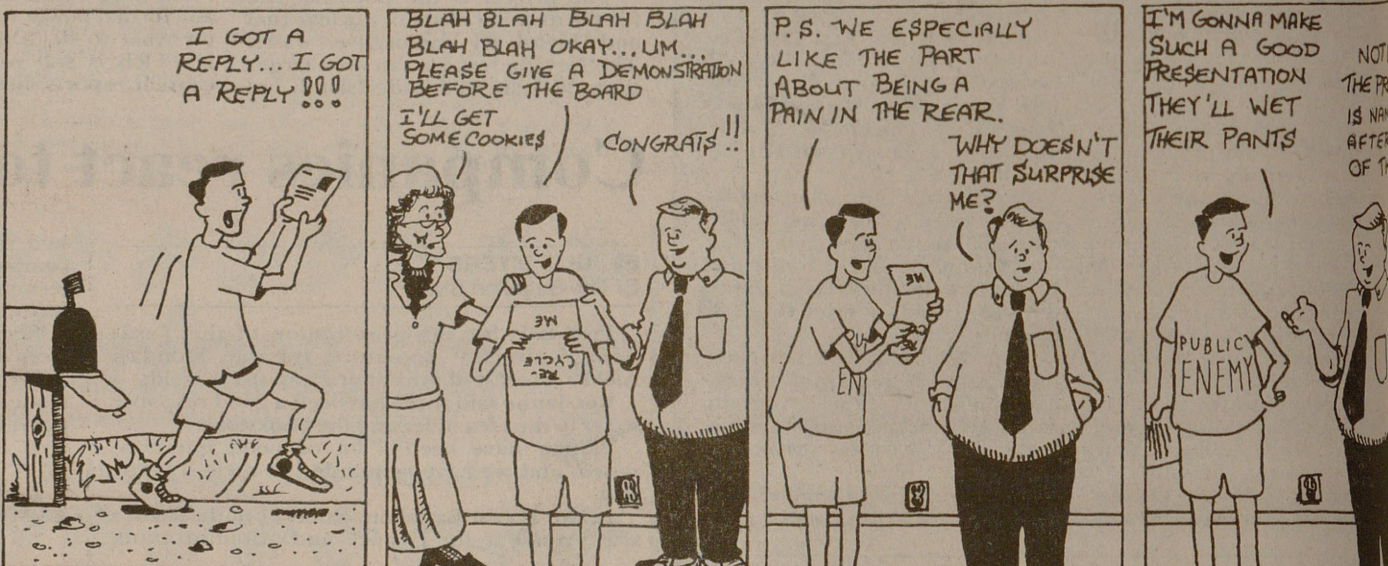
We can't close our doors to new ideas. We're holding back instead of pushing forward.

Let's move together in this quest for world status by creating a foundation for future Aggies to build upon.

Let's open a College of Fine Arts to expand our knowledge. That's what education is all about, isn't it?

Rudy Cordova Jr. is a senior in the arts major.

## FAX



by Brett Bridgeman

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