

## Students' protests may be effective

Last spring, construction began on a new wing of the Memorial Student Center. Twenty-six trees were cut down or moved to make space for this addition.

There were a lot of students who were pretty upset about this. A lot of moaning and groaning was going on around campus. But in the end only a handful of people made strong appeals on behalf of the trees.

Why didn't the majority of the people who wanted the trees to stay speak up? Because most people believe that speaking up just doesn't do any good, especially in a case like this, when you're a lowly peon talking to the rich and powerful people. Even if there are other lowly peons who feel the same way.

Well, let me tell you a little story: This May, Warren Hellmen, trustee chairman at Mills College in Oakland, Calif., announced the small, 138-year-old women's college would begin admitting male students in the fall to increase enrollment and improve Mills' financial situation.

The Mills College student body was less than thrilled with this plan. Most of the women of Mills are there because they prefer to be taught in a university created for women. If they had wanted to be coeds, they would have gone to a coeducational facility.

The women of Mills protested the decision. They went on strike. They tied yellow ribbons around trees. They made banners and posters and T-shirts. They even got together with faculty, staff and alumni and worked up a new plan for financial support and enrollment increases to present to the trustees.

Two weeks after the strike and protests began, Hellmen appeared before the students wearing the yellow garb that was a sign of support for the students' cause and said, "All of you had a lot of banners for us. Here's one for you." Then he unfurled a banner that read, "MILLS. For Women. Again."



Ellen Hobbs  
Opinion Page Editor

You see, it's not always so futile. We need to realize the importance and the effectiveness of protest. Not rioting, not imposing on the rights of others, not censorship or violence or beligerence, but peaceful, positive protest.

Some people seem to think that protest is bad, something just liberal commies or religious zealots use to get their own way. But our right to protest gives us a lever to help us protect our other rights.

Think about it. If you were billed too much by the electric company and called them up to ask them about it, and they said, "So?" you wouldn't just let them get away with it. You'd go to their offices. You'd write a letter. You'd throw a little fit right there on the phone.

But many people seem to feel there are a lot of things that people or companies or groups do to us, and even though we don't like it, there's nothing we can do about it, just because we're us and they're them.

And maybe we can't always win. But sometimes we can. And we just can't know until we try.

If you feel like something needs to be said about an injustice, or construction, or gun control, or fireworks laws, or whatever, stand up and say something. Write a letter to a newspaper. Speak at a meeting. Make a banner. Pass out fliers. Join an organization. Try to convince people that you're right. Help find a better way to do it. Protest!

## Grading policy below 'average'

EDITOR:

What is the point of retaking a class at Texas A&M if you don't end up with the grade you deserve?

It is odd that other universities will give a student a grade for a class that is based upon the student's understanding of the subject whether they have taken the class for a second time or not. But here at A&M, if a student takes a class more than once, their grades for the class are averaged. So if a student fails algebra once and gets an A the second time, their grade is a C.

This policy is ridiculous and unfair to the students. It punishes students for having the drive to try to improve their grade-point ratio and their understanding of the subject because even the highest grade in the class will warrant a mediocre GPR.

The grading policy should be changed. Rather than averaging the grades of retaken classes, the new grade should

replace the old one and credit should only be given for one class.

James Saxon, graduate student  
Savannah Gorrell '91

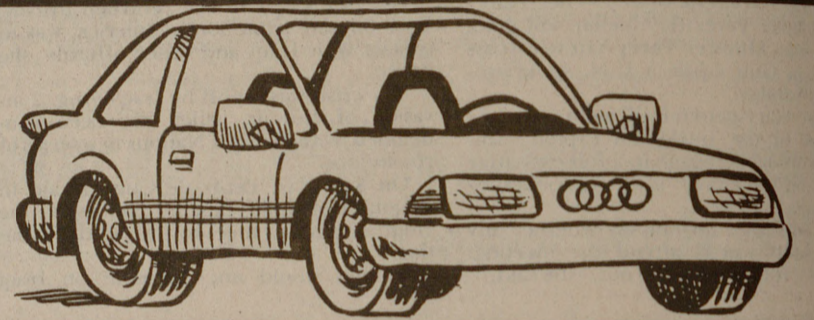
EDITOR'S NOTE: The 1989-90 Texas A&M Undergraduate Catalog says: "Credit for a course failed may be obtained only by registering and repeating the course in class. The original grade will remain on the student's permanent record, and both grades will be used in computing the GPR. An F or U previously made is not removed once the course is passed."

## Have an opinion? Express it!

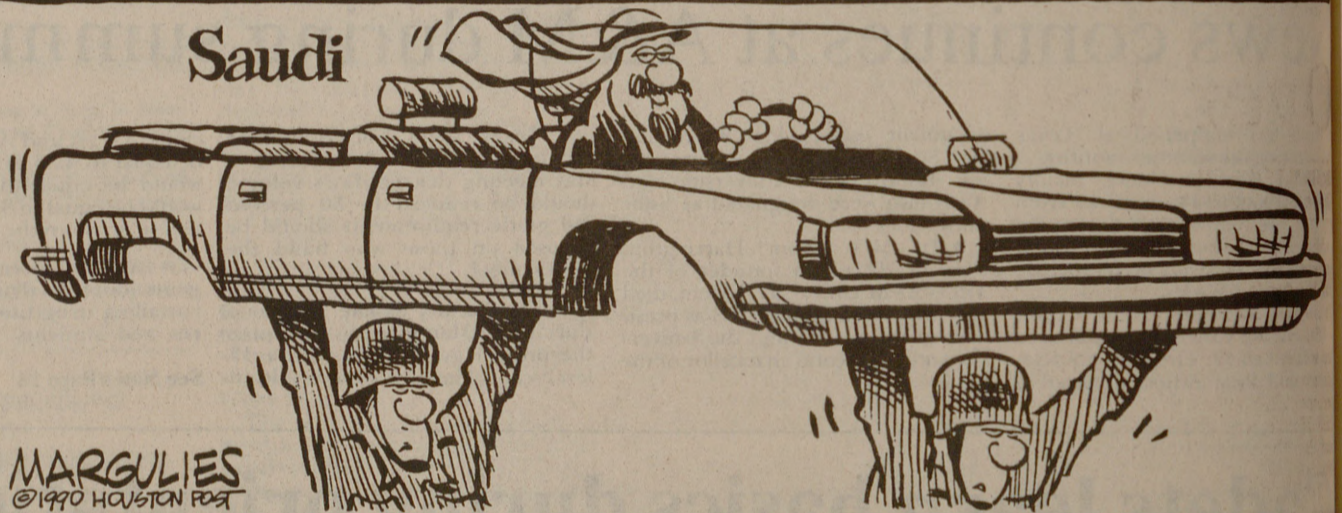
Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. There is no guarantee that letters submitted will be printed. Each letter must be signed and must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

## LUXURY IMPORTS:

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MARGULIES  
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## Clip 'n' save this handy guide to the Opinion Page

This is an easy-to-understand guide to The Battalion Opinion Page. I hope that it will answer some of the questions you have about Page 2. If you have any other questions, the Opinion Page editor can be reached at 845-3314.

Please participate in the Opinion Page. Write us and get yourself in print!

### I want to submit a letter to the editor. What do I do?

First, write a letter. A letter to the editor can be up to 300 words in length, or a little more than one page, typewritten and single spaced (you don't have to type it—just make sure we can read it). If you want to write something longer than that, you may submit a Reader's Opinion, which I'll explain in a minute.

You can either mail your letter to The Batt, or you can bring it by. Our newsroom is in 216 Reed McDonald (the building on the corner with the Bus Stop Snack Bar, on the north side of campus). Our

Ellen Hobbs

Opinion Page Editor

mailing address is Mail Call, 230 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843-1111. If you want to use campus mail, we're at Mail Stop 1111.

If you're a student submitting a letter, make sure to include your class year—the number, not the words (instead of senior, say Class of '91. WHOOP!)—your student I.D. and phone number, and your major. If you work on campus and are not a student, tell us where you work.

If you bring your letter to The Batt, make sure to bring your A&M I.D. or, if that's not possible, your driver's license. If you mail your letter, expect a call from us to verify that you are who you say you are.

Our policy says that all letters must be signed by one or more individuals. No group can take responsibility for one letter. If a long list of

signatures is given, we will print the first signature and indicate how many other signatures were on the letter.

No anonymous letters will be printed. There must be a name printed with each letter.

We edit for grammar, spelling, length and style. We will not, however, change the essence of your letter.

Please don't expect your letter to be printed the same day you turn it in. It may take us a few days, or even longer, to get your letter typed into our computer system, verify it and find room for it on the page. We deal with a great volume of letters, and sometimes it takes us a while to get them all printed.

There is no guarantee that your letter will be printed. We try to print all the letters, but sometimes, for a variety of reasons, we just can't. Don't let that discourage you—most of the time we print everything we get.

What's this about Reader's Opinions?  
Anything that is submitted

that is too long for Mail Call can end up being a Reader's Opinion column.

Your Reader's Opinion will be edited just like a letter. The shorter and more concise your column, the less the chance that it will be cut.

If you submit a Reader's Opinion, include the same information you would include with a letter to the editor.

No more than three Reader's Opinions will be printed per person per semester.

I like to write stuff on word processors. What if I want to bring in a letter or a column on a disk? Can The Batt load it directly into their computers?

We can load submissions from many Macintosh or XT systems very quickly. If you want to submit items on disks, submit both the disk and a hard copy. Chances are it won't take as long to be printed as it would if we had to get it typed in by hand. I'll make sure you get your disks back.

What's the difference between editorials and

columns?

Editorials are the opinion of The Battalion as a whole. They are written and selected by a majority of the members of The Battalion Editorial Board, which is made up of The Battalion editors that are named in the box at the bottom of this page.

Editorials appear in the upper left-hand corner of Page 2, are boxed and shaded, and have the words "The Battalion Editorial Board" printed at the bottom.

Opinions found in columns are the opinions of the individual columnists, not the whole newspaper as a whole, just as the opinions in Mail Call letters and Reader's Opinions are only the opinions of the individual writers.

The Battalion does not regulate the topic choices or viewpoints of our columnists.

Well, that's it—Page 2 in a nutshell. Keep forming opinions, and happy reading!

Ellen Hobbs is a senior journalism major.

### The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

Member of Texas Press Association American Collegiate Press

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### 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.

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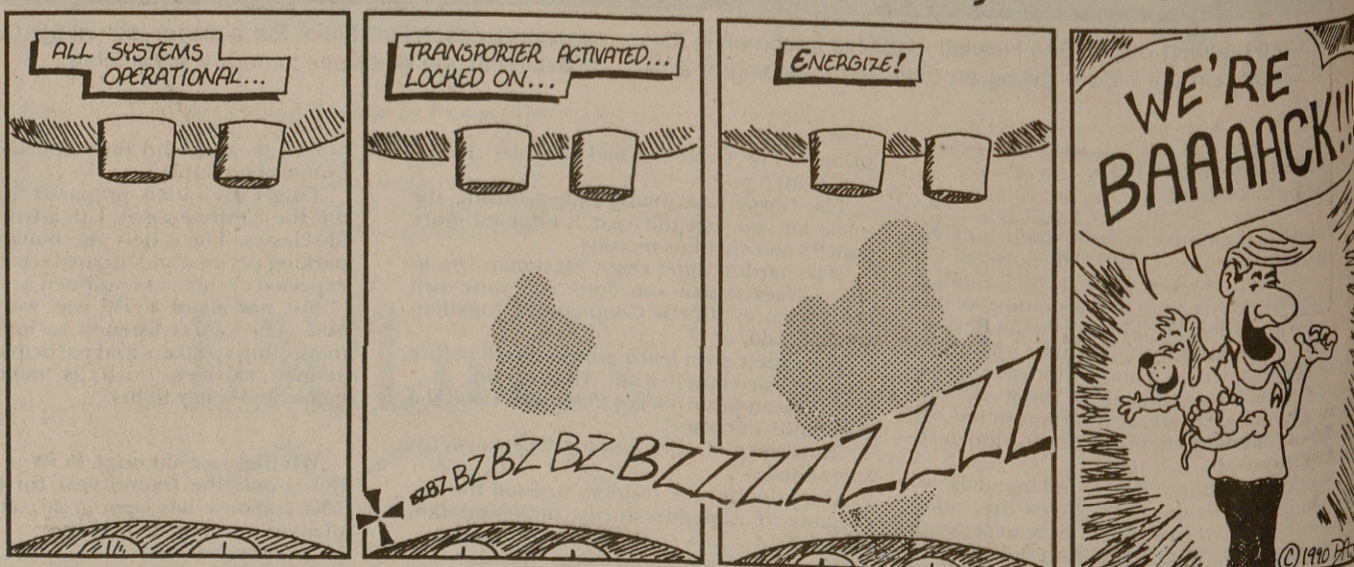
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### Adventures In Cartooning

by Don Atkinson Jr.



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