

Mail Call

Don't shatter the tradition

EDITOR:

On the evening of November 29, the 1990 edition of a Texas Aggie tradition will take place. Students, alumni and friends of Texas A&M University will gather on Duncan Field for bonfire and to encourage the Texas Aggie football team for a victory over the Longhorns.

Don't let alcohol spoil this event. Remember, people will judge Texas A&M and its students by the behavior of those attending bonfire. Let them see the finest student body in the country. Have consideration for the safety and property of others. If you drink, drink in moderation. Do not bring alcoholic beverages to the bonfire site. Let's keep alcohol from shattering the tradition.

See you at Bonfire.

Larry J. Ringer  
Mayor of College Station

Drinking threatens bonfire

EDITOR:

Most Aggies believe the environmentalists, the Aggies Against Bonfire, and other so-called "two percenters" are the biggest threats to our beloved traditions; however, people who act irresponsibly at bonfire and yell practice are ruining the traditions for everyone and will be the ones to blame for the loss of these traditions.

Many of these "Aggies" come to bonfire or yell practice drunk. Many of these drunks stumble into the stadium and to bonfire with bottles of alcohol out and open as if they are showing off. I have even seen some corps guys with open bottles at yell.

It seems a little hypocritical that a Corps member cannot have their shirts untucked and yet they can disgrace this University and destroy the image of the Corps by being publicly intoxicated. If this risky ostentation of their immature habits continues, it will surely result in the eventual removal of bonfire and yell practice.

As a result of this drunkenness, fights and other asinine events occur. People have even lit roadside flares at yell. These people must either be drunks or t-sips, because a sober Aggie would know the tradition of using a small,

hand-held lighter.

Another repugnant venture shared by these drunks is urinating in peoples' yards during bonfire. The homeowners must be sick of this and could become a loud voice against bonfire.

When the students, faculty, administration and homeowners, as well as the parents of these delinquent children, decide to end this destructive and embarrassing behavior, they are not going to be willing to compromise. So instead of harassing those who are concerned about the environment, the yell leaders need to be telling these pathetic drunks that "HIGHWAY 6 RUNS BOTH WAYS!"

Gregory Douglas Harper '93

Witness, please step forward

EDITOR:

There are Aggies and those who call themselves Aggies. One of the latter rear ended my van in parking lot 12 recently then fled the scene.

Fortunately, a witness left me a note with the suspect's description, car model and license number. I appreciate this gesture very much, but I would need the witness to identify him or herself so I don't have to pay for the damage myself.

If you left me the note or if you happened to see the incident, please give me a call at 845-2186. A smug student thinks she has gotten away with it.

Roger Crockett  
Modern and Classical Languages

WIC saves you money

EDITOR:

David Helms' letter of Monday Nov. 19 shows a failure on his part to understand Tang's column and many social programs in general. He thinks that the WIC program costs him tax money but it actually saves him money.

Children from poor families are under nurtured, leading to a high degree of premature births. The typical health bill of a premature baby is \$2,000 per day. If the parents can't afford simple birth control, do you think they can afford intensive care? They don't pay for it, everyone else

does through higher health care costs.

Mr. Helms, you state that scraping by on welfare hand-outs is not healthy for the child, does that justify forcing it to live in poverty? Approximately one-third of the children in the United States live in poverty. Does this justify your not paying more taxes just so you can buy another item of consumer electronics, or another car?

Mr. Helms, did you know that the largest cause of poverty is being born in poverty? Not everyone has the chances that coming from a middle class background allows. Do you really blame your living in difficult economic times on children, many of whom are lucky to get one meal a day?

Mr. Helms, what are you going to say to this child 20 years down the road when you are running a business and you need to hire a work force? The poor children of today are the work force of the future. A premature child has a much greater possibility of having learning difficulties. A poor child typically has a much poorer education. What you get is an uneducated work force.

The lower level an education a person has, the lower their lifetime earnings are going to be. What are you going to do 40 years down the road when you are ready to retire, but the economy is in ruins because it can't compete?

Are you willing to risk such a future? The WIC program doesn't cost that much, it costs less than 1 month of Operation Desert Shield, whose main purpose is to assure cheap gas for fat Americans. Why don't you complain about that, Mr. Helms? That is just a hidden tax, you have to pay for it in the end, why not at the pump?

Mr. Helms, you should try to think about the consequences of your actions. Which is worth more to you in 20 years, \$1 spent on a glass of beer now, or \$1 invested at 20% interest? These are things for you to decide, but just remember that not only do you have to live with the consequences of your decisions, but so does your family.

John A. Shoemaker '87

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.

Letter writers don't deserve at-home harassment

This is my last column as Opinion Page editor. I know there are some of you out there who are glad to hear that.

I've been the editor of this page for two semesters, and it's been quite an experience. I've learned a lot from you readers; I've heard a lot of fresh ideas; and I've had a lot of fun working with this page. It's definitely one of the best places to work here at The Batt.

But ... There have been a few things about working on the Opinion Page that haven't been that great. And,



Ellen Hobbs  
Opinion Page Editor

These readers believe their opinions are strong enough and important enough to be printed with their names. These readers invite public scrutiny and criticism of their ideas. They aren't afraid of seeing how other people will respond —

unlisted phone numbers and addresses. Even the cartoonist gets calls at home.

Most of these people write letters or make calls anonymously, unlike the poor letter-writer. And after seeing the things these people mail in, it's quite obvious why they are scared to send it into The Batt with their name on it.

They realize their opinion won't stand up to public scrutiny and that

Opinion Page readers will tear it apart. And though they think they have a right to express their opinion, and that the letter-writer's opinion doesn't deserve to exist, they are such cowards they are afraid to sign their name.

It's not the place of any reader to harass the writers at home. If you want to express your opinion, use the Opinion Page. That's what it's for. You have no right to invade the

privacy of writers just because you don't believe the same things they do.

If you're one of those people who chooses to express your opinion to the Page 2 writers anonymously at home, you're a coward. And no matter how off-the-wall and looney you think their opinions are, at least they care enough to print it in the paper, and that's better than you did.

Ellen Hobbs is a senior journalism major.

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just as many of things that have been good about it have come from you, the readers; the things that are distasteful have come from you too, the readers.

I'm not talking about encountering opinions I don't agree with, or answering 10 to 20 calls a day from people who don't understand why their letters haven't run, or dealing with people who think we're just a bunch of liberals (or just a bunch of conservatives — that happens just as often). Those are minor frustrations. I'm talking real sleaziness here.

Many readers write into The Battalion to utilize the forum for readers' opinions, the Opinion Page. Those people are required to put their names on their opinions; we just don't allow anonymous letters and columns.

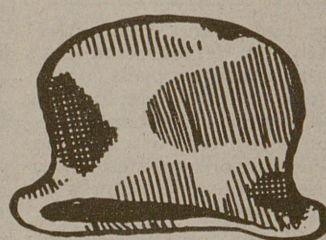
though they expect to see those responses printed on the Opinion Page.

But a few readers (quite a few, certainly too many) don't respond by sending letters into The Batt. Instead, they harass the author of the opinion at their home.

Yep, that's right. If you've got an opinion and the urge to express it in print, you take the risk of getting phone calls and letters from people who get your number and address from the student directory or the local phone book. Maybe, if the addresses and phone numbers are available, they'll even get in touch with your parents, too. And if you're real lucky, the phone calls will be obscene.

It's not just readers, of course. I now suggest that all columnists get

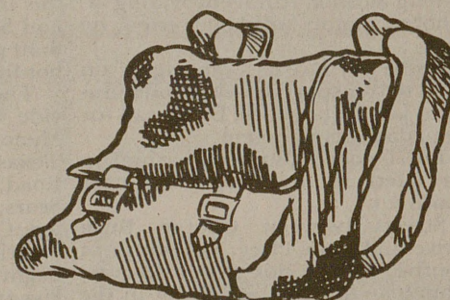
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Helmet



Fatigues



Backpack

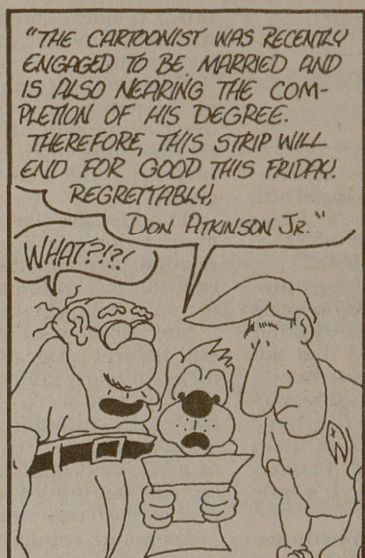
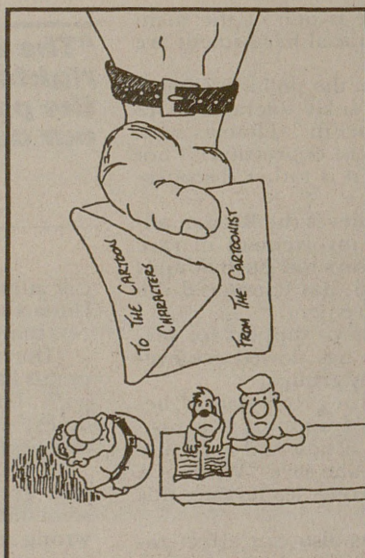


Policy

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NEW JERSEY

Adventures In Cartooning

by Don Atkinson Jr.



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(USPS 045 360)

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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.

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.