

EDITORIALS

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

A&M boosts conservation efforts

The Battalion Editorial Board applauds the Texas A&M faculty, staff and students leading the efforts to create and improve campus recycling programs.

The Physical Plant's white paper recycling program and the Environmental Issues Committee's aluminum can recycling receptacles are good examples of initiatives to conserve resources and landfill space.

In addition to leadership, A&M needs the help of everyone on campus to make conservation programs successful. We believe all departments, buildings, dorms and colleges should participate in these programs.

Recycling and conservation programs at a university as large as A&M can make a big difference in our earth's future. If everyone helps make these programs productive, other organizations and universities will follow our example.

The Battalion Editorial Board

MAIL CALL

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers and welcomes all letters to the editor. Please include name, classification, address and phone number on all letters. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Because of limited space, shorter letters have a better chance of appearing. There is, however, no guarantee letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

Love your enemy

EDITOR:

This is in reply to the Feb. 18 letter of A.L. Wright. I hold to conservative values in my lifestyle. I support the war with Iraq for their blatant aggression. But I hope and pray that supporting my country will never blind me to the deaths of innocents. Even the President, whom you so blindly support (I support him too, but for reasons) has said our argument is with Hussein and not his people.

Have you been locked in a closet for the past four weeks? Have you noticed the media reacted just as strongly when the bombs fell on Israel, an innocent bystander? They are reporting news.

A free press is not only our right and privilege, but our duty. It is our only agent by which we can monitor the bad jobs AND the good jobs our military performs. Freedom is the right to criticize our government without being labeled as a traitor, even if someone disagrees with our fighting in a war. Do the Iraqis support Hussein in their hearts or are they just afraid of what will happen if they speak out?

As for your suggestion to "quit worrying so much about harming Iraqi civilians," may I first remark that that is one hell of a foreign policy you have. Yes, civilians get killed in wars. Yes, the U.S. military apologized. Should we pay them for damages? How do we settle on a price?

Is it so wrong to grieve our enemy as well as our loved ones?
Brad Freeman '92

T-sips are apathetic

EDITOR:

I am one of those "frail" people who "can't cope with 'the itch,'" as Mr. Eric Pierson so eloquently labeled us in his letter to the editor. I'm only sad that by writing this letter, I am perpetuating this debate, bringing more notoriety to Nito.

Let me hand it to Pierson for his insight on yet another reason why I'm glad I'm not at t.u. If cartoons with "very explicit insinuations" occur "everyday" in the Daily Texan, good for them!

Just because the t-sips have sickening cartoons doesn't justify our having them! Maybe their student body is too apathetic to respond to things that offend them. At least we have people here trying. I surely hope Pierson is not suggesting we all grow numb to things that offend us, as perhaps those at t.u. have.

I don't want to condemn Nito. If semi-fame is what he's looking for, he is surely getting it. I can say with a clear conscience that I don't like his actions. Because of the First Amendment, Nito can do anything to promote his ideas. This doesn't mean we have to look at it.

For the people who'd like to change things, you probably should stop complaining about the cartoonist and start complaining about the people printing this stuff.

If Nito weren't printed in The Battalion, maybe he

could get printed in a magazine or other publication suited to his style of humor. Then again, why should The Batt take out anything that stirs up interest for their paper?

Maybe I am "frail" and maybe that's why I don't read "the itch," if I can see a naked body in it by just glancing. Maybe every person who doesn't like "explicit insinuations" is frail. I don't think so.

The very strongest people I know stand up for what they believe in and stand up to things they think distasteful. I don't believe for a second that "society is headed for a downfall" because people like me are coming into it trying to change things for the better. If our society ever does fall, I believe it won't be because of the people trying to get rid of filth — it will be because of corruption and perversion.
Jennifer Agee '93

A&M gets an 'F'

EDITOR:

Since I moved here five years ago, there has been a lot of noise in the Batt about pesky, bothersome protesters. Over the years, many letters have been written saying that people who don't like it here should just leave; or better yet, we should force out these un-Americans!

In fact, many of my foreign-looking friends have been verbally abused, even spat upon right here in this so-called "world class" University town, merely for the crime of not looking American enough. I won't even mention what abuses have been heaped upon those who dare to have un-American ideas!

Of course, The Batt also has printed some responses pointing out how un-American it is to wish to censor any protests and that freedom of speech is one of this country's greatest ideals. But it is clear that this opinion is that of the minority here.

Certain Batt columnists have even gone as far as to judge the personalities of the protesters. Larry Cox has decreed that many protesters are not nearly as interested in their cause as they are in getting attention. Therefore, we don't have to worry our little conformist heads about these people who dare to have opinions.

I find it inconceivable that an institution of higher learning would be full of so many foolish, fearful, ignorant and intolerant people. Of course, everyone has a right to an opinion. However, imposing these opinions on others by censorship is not only unconstitutional but also incompatible with intellectual freedom.

I have attended universities in California, Massachusetts and Europe. Never before have I seen such censorship and imposed conformity. There is something drastically wrong if we censor most of the universe out of the University ... A&M has FAILED. We are not world class, we have never been world class and we never will be world class until the ideals of intellectual freedom are cherished rather than disgraced by this population.

Joseph Kachmar
graduate student

Responsibilities, rights require more balance

Individualism has stood as a philosophical rallying point for Americans for generations. It has survived attacks by both communists and fascists. But this social doctrine now might be on the verge of grappling with its most formidable challenge.

Individualism went down in the same flames that destroyed ancient Rome. Hundreds of years later, the Protestant movement reintroduced the system to the Western world. Rebellious against the papacy, men like Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and the rest preached that humans were responsible as individuals before God. This theory helped produce the capitalist revolution.

The Pilgrims came to this country with a blend of Protestantism and capitalism that has remained deeply embedded in American culture. Individualists glorify the early days of our country's history. Due to a lack of government intervention, freedom of personal choice was maximized.

Historian Christopher Lasch claims there is a missing link in our thinking about the history of our country. In "The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics," Lasch claims our forefathers emphasized survival of community over survival of individual.

He shows that "the prophetic tradition, embodied in ... Jonathan Edwards ... emphasized responsibility rather than freedom; and limits rather than choices."

This raises important questions about the health of our society. Is responsibility possible without freedom? I don't think so. After all, only individuals effectively can take care of other individuals. Responsibility by coercion ceases to be humane.

On the other hand, is freedom possible without responsibility? Of course it is. We call it anarchy! And anarchy leads to the most totalitarian of states.

The point should be clear: Freedom and responsibility must be inseparable, or individuals and society alike suffer. Take the Congress for example. For years it has relished in the "freedom" of spending without the responsibility of paying. What is the result? A budget deficit that threatens to seriously limit the choices of later generations.

I assert that we as citizens are run-



Tim Truesdale
Columnist

ning a social deficit in this country threatens our well-being far more than any budget deficit. When it comes dealing with society, all we talk about is our "rights." When is the last time you heard anyone clamoring about a lack of responsibilities as citizens? Aren't we trying to take out more than we put in? Benjamin Franklin said, "Gentlemen, either we must hang together, or we will hang separately. Likewise, Pilgrim villagers were required to band together for survival."

We no longer face the humiliations of being ruled by a foreign power. We no longer must worry about Indian attacks. But, are there no society-wide crises which threaten our civilization? Is there no drug, illiteracy or teen pregnancy crisis? Are there no problems with homelessness, or crumbling infrastructure, or people who don't belong anywhere?

As Jesus said, we always will have the poor among us. There will indeed always be problems to deal with. But as long as individuals demand rights without responsibilities, we have no effective mechanism for dealing with these problems.

The Roman empire was built on the foundation of duty. It fell on the principle of self-seeking individualism. Given our current values, why should we expect society to meet a different end? Those who refuse to learn from history are condemned to repeat it.

Cancer kills people when some grow out of proportion with the rest of the body. People die when their cells upset the balance. Individualism is part of a healthy society. But when it grows out of balance, it can bring the whole society to its ruin. Just ask the Romans.

Tim Truesdale is a graduate student in urban planning.

The Battalion

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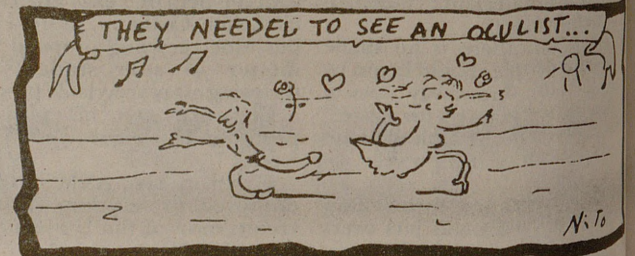
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