

# What is freedom? Road less traveled by makes life meaningful

Two roads converged in a wood, and I...  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.  
— Robert Frost

"The gate is wide and the way is broad that  
leads to destruction... but the gate is small  
and the way is narrow that leads to life, and  
few are those who find it."  
— Jesus Christ

Well, the war appears to be over. That's certainly something for which we can all be thankful.

Thousands of Americans have given up seven months of their lives to a desert war zone. Some even have given their lives. They sacrificed to protect our freedom. But were their sacrifices made in vain?

I don't doubt that we live in the freest country in the world. However, I don't see many people demonstrating an awareness of this freedom.

In the first place, what is freedom? Is freedom choosing not to vote for candidates of virtually identical parties? Is freedom choosing between a Ford Mustang and a Mazda Miata?

Is freedom choosing to study medicine or business? Or is freedom choosing to get wasted on beer or tequila?

If this is all freedom means to Americans, then those brave soldiers have risked their lives in vain.

**"How do we measure success in life? Can it be measured by the size of your bank account? Well, congratulations to all you Aggies who will become millionaires. You certainly have what it takes to jump through each and every one of society's hoops. So much for freedom."**

On one hand, we glorify individuals who make their own way in this world. When's the last time you saw a movie or read a novel in which the "hero" was a conformist?

On the other hand, when we actually meet nonconformists in our day-to-day lives, we are quick to point our fingers and say "weird."

The truth of the matter is most of us do exactly what society tells us we must do to be "successful."

Furthermore, most of us think exactly



Tim Truesdale  
Columnist

the way our peers tell us to think to be accepted.

How do we measure success in life? Can it be measured by the size of your bank account? Well, congratulations to all you Aggies who will become millionaires. Congratulations in advance! You certainly have what it takes to jump through each and every one of society's



## Freedom?

hoops. So much for freedom.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. Do you have the freedom to say no? I mean, at the next party you go to, can you REALLY choose not to drink if you don't want to? When you wake up tomorrow morning and decide what to wear, will you really have a choice in the matter?

Or has society already chosen for you, and made you feel free because you "get to" choose between red and plaid?

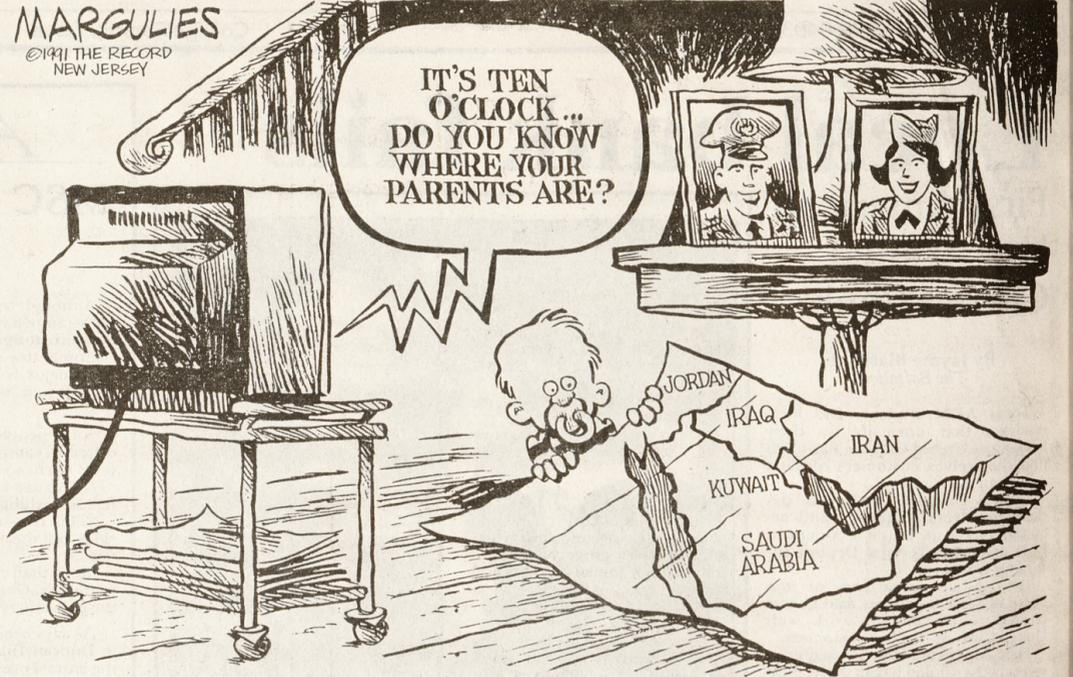
The automobile industry asserts "it's not just a car... it's your freedom." Are they right? Does your freedom run on unleaded?

Who are you? I don't mean what's your major, what's your hometown, who do you hang out with or what kind of car do you drive? When all of those things are stripped away, is there anything left? Does it matter?

In the end, is freedom really about having choices? Or is it about taking the less-traveled road?

Tim Truesdale is a graduate student in urban planning.

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## 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.

### Ags fought to gain freedom

EDITOR:

This is in response to Andy Yung's article in the Feb. 26 edition of The Battalion about our "violent culture."

As I read the first three paragraphs of your article, I saw a couple of ideas that I can agree with to some extent. There were some ideas I don't agree with, but that's to be expected when reading someone else's opinion.

It is true that, sadly, some barbaric, senseless violence does exist in our society. This fact I'm sure most anyone would attest to.

But as I continued down the column, I became more and more appalled at your examples. Just where do you get off calling those men memorialized in the MSC "good ol' racist Aggs?"

For God's sake, these men served alongside black men to defend freedom in other lands so that those people could speak their minds as you and I do today!

Yes, they are noble men, and I find no evidence that any one of them was a racist; and obviously neither can you, as I see none published in your article.

Then you said, "No, for some reason they (the men) are indiscriminately honored for one facet of their lives — they were made to or willingly participated in war and were killed."

There is absolutely nothing objectively noble about that simple fact... they might have been noble men, but... not because they were Aggies and died in a war."

Perhaps, Yung, you should learn how to gather facts before using them. If you would take time to read the plaques commemorating these men, you would learn that not all of them died.

Furthermore, they are commemorated because they are Aggies who went on to earn the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest award a soldier can earn. The reason we honor that here is because when they graduated from A&M, it was a military academy.

It is uncouth to make malicious, false statements about deceased people who can no longer defend themselves.

I'm sure these men are respected by a vast majority of the campus population, and it is unjust to degrade them or falsify information in order to support your own pacifist opinion. This is misuse and abuse of the press; leave these men alone and let them rest in peace!

Finally, the Corps of Cadets is not a pawn to be misrepresented as a pro-violence organization.

I am personally offended at your false generalization of an organization you obviously know nothing about nor

have any respect for whatsoever.

You can think or say whatever you want about our nation, our government or this war. This is because of the Constitution and the society and military that defend it.

The First Amendment still stands tall because men and women have risked and often lost or ruined their lives to ensure its prosperity.

Those that you have degraded are such men. They risked (and some lost) their lives in a terrorizing, painful, inhumane way so you and I and others like us can speak freely without fear.

Too bad not all of us appreciate it.

Jeff Stein '94

### Aggies support yellow ribbon

EDITOR:

I would like to address Thursday's editorial published by The Battalion Editorial Board.

I honestly do not know where to begin. You say you support the troops and their families. You even say you support the display of yellow ribbons for the men and women in the Middle East and their families at home.

Yet you claim that a ribbon tied around Bryan-College Station and Texas A&M's main campus in support of these very troops and their families is a "trivialization of war."

When I contacted The Battalion about this story, my main concern was not to get my name, A&M's name or the cities of Bryan or College Station in the Guinness Book of World Records.

The fact that when Aggies do something it's usually the biggest and best around is something I'll just have to live with.

Also, I find it interesting that the Cable News Network finds such an event newsworthy, and yet the famed Battalion finds it trivial.

I support our troops and their families 100 percent; and with the many phone calls I've received since this event's exposure, I know the students of A&M support them too.

With or without The Battalion's support, I know this Aggie is showing up at 9:30 in the morning at Sul Ross this Saturday to show my support.

You're all welcome to attend.

John Ansbach '93

## Yung clarifies previous column

A few nights ago, I spoke with a student I previously was unacquainted with. John confirmed a concern I had over the publishing of my "eradicate hate" column in Tuesday's paper. We talked for a time, and he exhibited all the innate qualities of a gentleman. At the same time, we disagreed on many points, but we both were grateful for helping clarify each other's position.

Still, I recognize that I was perhaps ill-advised in stating my belief: "There is absolutely nothing objectively noble about (an Aggie dying in a war)... they might have well been noble men, but it is not because they were Aggies and they died in a war."

This is an academic/intellectual/rational and highly principled statement. I believe it is true and ought to be pointed out. I, however, am sorry I might have hurt some peoples' feelings. This was not my intent. One ought not go around apologizing for every raw nerve they happen to set off with others. There are some truths (i.e., all people are equal) that need to



Andy Yung  
Columnist

I have great respect for all people who valiantly worked for the betterment of the world. Our country has many distinguished veterans — and rightly so. Veterans are astute people, and I am certain many of them recognize the veracity of my claim: Not all veterans and/or Aggies are necessarily noble.

I, myself, have been the recipient of many honors and awards for my writings and speeches from both the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the American Legion. I am certain veterans will be the first to be in support of a refocusing of values — let's emphasize negotiations and peace over mere military might.

And finally, the Texas A&M Corps of

Cadets can and mostly do act as a highly valuable and precious contribution to the University. If there must be a defense force, then I want

America to take great care in developing the leadership, developmental growth and compassion of its officers... A&M has a great opportunity to fulfill this truly noble challenge.

I simply was calling attention to the great disparity of funds and respect at TAMU given to efforts to preempt violence (the peace and diplomacy institute which is so evidently absent) and the military-gear activities.

The sine qua non of what I was trying to convey was best explicated by John F. Kennedy: "War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige that the warrior does today."

Andy Yung is a junior political science major.



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"Wow, I may already be a winner!..."

### The Battalion

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