

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.

Help save the Earth

EDITOR:

We seek the best of everything for ourselves and our children. Yet we find little time to save the health of the Earth, without which, little else would be of importance.

Butterflies and blue skies have been traded for noise and cancer-causing air. Rainforests, inhabited by thousands of plants and animals, many new and unstudied, are being destroyed at a rate comparable to a football field per second. These forests hold wealths of information and potential cures for cancer and AIDS.

That once destroyed are forever lost. ... Our heavy dependence on oil and lack of serious implementation of alternative fuels and conservation will, in the future, cause us not to wonder whether we can get gas for our cars, but whether essential uses for oil, such as food and medication processing, can be accomplished. What a shame. Is it lack of knowledge? Or lack of care?

Despite all that we have lost, there remains much to be saved and we all must take part. Green Week begins March 17, leading to TOTEM, The Oklahoma and Texas Environmental Meeting. Hosted by the Texas Environmental Action Coalition (TEAC), TOTEM will be at Texas A&M from March 22 to 24 and involves more than 100 groups from Texas and Oklahoma.

To register to attend TOTEM or for more info, call Mary (846-6767), or stop by one of the registration tables March 18 to 22 in the MSC, Sbsia or near the Chemistry Bldg.

Get involved and involve any organization you are in, because if you live on this planet, you cannot afford not to take part in her safekeeping.
Bang Huynh

Don't tell me to leave America

EDITOR:

I would like to comment on the article in which Nito attempted to explain the motivation (Euro-Culture) behind "the itch."

I very much disagree with the view that minorities expect to be made fun of, and that if they are offended they are insecure.

Although I have traveled to only one European country, England, I have seen the tension that exists between Indians, Pakistanis and Anglos. I have read about how other minorities are treated in other parts of Europe (Turks in Germany, Moroccans in France and Spain etc.).

These cartoons may be harmless if the audience has a rich schemata filled with cultural awareness and will not use the few (and derogatory) glimpses offered by the cartoon to make generalizations about all minorities. Therefore, I am not amused when my ethnicity is made fun of, and resent statements aimed at "normalizing" this kind of behavior.

Now, I would like to tackle the issue of sexism that manifests itself in the cartoons. The reason I feel so strongly about this issue is because I have seen battered women who are the victims of their spouse's/partner's attitude that women are objects of pleasure and need to be ruled: These attitudes culminate in violence when accompanied by feelings of insecurity and low self-esteem. After reading the April/May issue of Ms. Magazine, I was appalled to learn how a civilized society like ours continues to tolerate the dehumanization of women.

Finally, I feel compelled to add: Please don't tell me to get the hell out of America if I don't like it, because I do like it. I enjoy the challenges offered by America. I love the pizza places, libraries, campus activities and McNeil/Lehrer News hour among other things.
Haneef Mohamed '91

Rationale for death penalty

EDITOR:

I'd like to take issue with Andy Yung's column "Death penalty damages morality of Americans."

I would reply that my rationale for the death penalty is not because of deterrence, retribution or savings, but one of just punishment for the crime. When capital offenses are committed, I feel the perpetrators have placed themselves in a position of forfeiting their own lives by unjustly taking the life of another. I've heard this called "the principle of forfeiture." If not a single offense is deterred, nor any retribution gained nor a penny saved, justice should still be carried out.

I realize that the administrator of justice can be discriminatory: But then shouldn't the discrimination be the fault, not the just punishment? Yung also said that no credible evidence ever showed the death penalty to be a deterrent, yet he did not reference any, nor the other "studies" he used to support his statements.

The trial by jury is a fundamental right of all citizens, even the worst offender. The jury (not the government) has the last word on the application of any law. The pronouncement of "guilty" or "not guilty" is the most powerful I know.

When a jury of 12 pronounces a verdict, that verdict must be upheld or what hope do any of us have of seeing justice? The system is not perfect, but I know of no other that I would want to be tried under.

If I knew I was innocent, yet pronounced guilty, I definitely would be very disheartened, yet I also know that physical death would not be the worst that could befall me. Also, I definitely would not say that the process was unjust and needed a change.
David Panak
graduate student

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.

Athletic program needs examining

For the second straight year, the University is looking for a new men's basketball coach. It's time administrators set aside their rhetoric and uncover the real problems in the athletic department.

Losing teams and weak fan support have been attributed to the poor facilities at G. Rollie White Coliseum. The special events center is supposed to alleviate those problems. But we think the real problem is internal.

If Texas A&M coaches still are committing NCAA violations, then the University is failing to communicate its intolerance of such actions to these coaches. If the University is communicating its intolerance adequately, then why is a stricter system of checks and balances not in place?

Coach Kermit Davis Jr.'s "inappropriate actions" began last May. The University did not begin its investigation until December, after published accounts of the violations appeared in national newspapers.

We call on A&M President William Mobley to take a more aggressive, investigative look at the athletic department as a whole. Only with a healthy department can we ever expect to have coaches who emphasize honest playing and honest winning.

The Battalion Editorial Board

Congratulations to University for award-winning performances

Not only is it Academy Award night, it's time to give some awards for outstanding performances on the Texas A&M campus;

The Biggest New Erection on Campus: The as-of-yet untitled statue of a roughneck that has been erected on the corner of Ross and Spence streets. And we thought *bonfire* was a phallic symbol? Geez, this thing is a good candidate for those new extra-large condoms!

The Best Destruction on Campus: The "Planned for the Future" statue by the Memorial Student Center is gone! Whoop!

Most Tasteless T-shirt: This was a tough one — the war in Iraq prompted the production of literally dozens of tacky T-shirts glorifying the destruction and death inherent in war. However, it wasn't as hard to pick a shirt as one might have hoped.

The award goes to "Open Season on Saddam Hussein; Give Force a Chance" T-shirts that were sold in the MSC. Maybe instead of buying a shirt you could just have "warmonger" tattooed on your forehead.

A&M Sports Team Most Likely to be on Probation Next Year: The Ultimate Frisbee team. No, no, just kidding. It's the men's basketball team.

Least Surprising News: An A&M Student Government report has said the University is overcharging for food and other retail items. Apparently, Student Government spent quite some time on finishing this report — it only took a few minutes in the Underground Market for me to figure that out.

Least Surprising Denial: A&M officials refuted the charges of overpricing — now, really, are you surprised?

The Upcoming Event Likely to Annoy Students Only Slightly Less Than the Parking Situation: Student Government and Yell Leader elections. There is little that is more irritating than living in a dorm and having a



Ellen Hobbs
Columnist

stranger knock on your door every five minutes to ask you to vote for them. Certainly, one of the nicest things about living off campus is avoiding that.

And while we're on the subject of student elections: Remember, candidates, when the elections are over it is *time to take your signs down*. Nobody but perhaps certain students interested in climatology and erosion want to see what happens to those big wooden campaign signs after they sit outside in the weather for a month after the election.

Silliest Desert Storm Support Effort: The world's longest yellow ribbon. A&M just must have the biggest everything, you know. Just ask the people who erected the roughneck statue.

Best Desert Storm Support Effort: Squadron 1 cadets headed a campaign to get cards and letters of support from A&M students to the family of a former squadron member and Air Force pilot listed as missing in action.

Most Disturbing Realization About Life at A&M, Besides The Overabundance of Republicans: Most freshmen here don't remember the bowling alley in the MSC, that Aggie Bucks used to be called Point Plan or that at one time the Underground Market sold cigarettes and condoms.

Ellen Hobbs is a senior journalism major.

The Battalion

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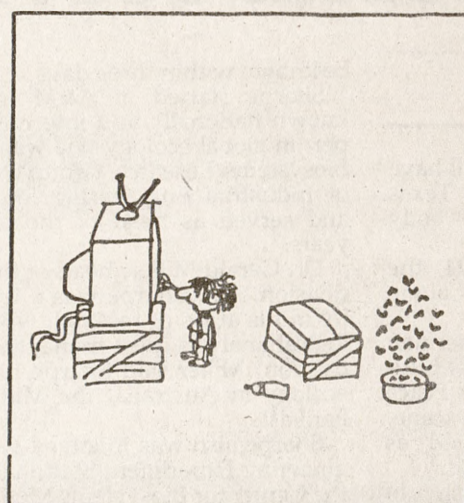
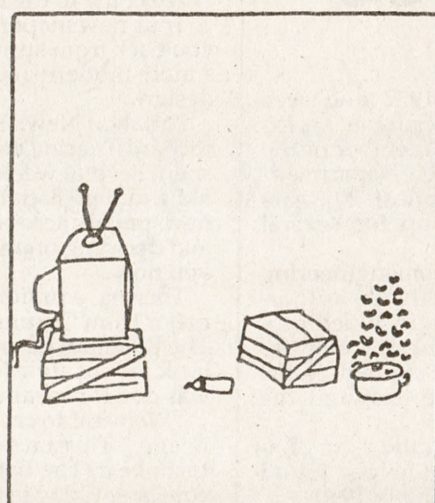
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