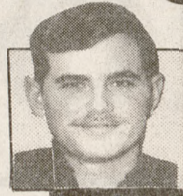


A few parting shots on the state of Texas A&M

This is the last week for the Spring 1991 Battalion opinion columnists to put their opinions before the student body. Instead of writing one of those goofy parting columns listing the Top 10 reasons why I love (or hate) Texas A&M, I decided to throw out a few random thoughts which have been kicking around in the hollow expanses of my head.

Wouldn't it be nice if all the professors on campus actually spent a majority of their time teaching and researching and publishing instead of trying to advance their perspective on whichever issue might be bugging them to the papers or TV? Instead of concerning themselves with the academic and research integrity of our University, the Faculty Senate has spent time speaking out against the



Larry Cox
Columnist

hiring of Norman Schwarzkopf as our new chancellor because he doesn't come from academia (and probably doesn't care one whit about faculty club elitism).

They've spent endless hours debating bonfire and other student traditions that are way outside their zone of influence and really have no bearing on teaching and academics.

And a number of professors have spent endless hours trying to convince the rest of the world that homosexuals lead healthy lifestyles and are worthy of protection above and beyond that given to other faculty. If they spent as much time in front of the lecture

podium as they did in front of the TV camera, their job security would be much more stable — I'm sure.

I wish that liberal protesters on campus would give up the facade of unabated growth and just form one protest group, called Politically Correct Protesters. I mean, every month a new group shows up on campus called Students for the Namibian Rainforest Guerrillas or something like that, and when you see them on TV or in the paper it ends up being the same nine people who were at the Sandanista benefit concert last week and at the Meatless Monday protest the week before.

Wouldn't it be more environmentally correct to put up flyers for one club instead of 10? Or better yet, just call the other nine activist types and save all those paper products completely.

Speaking of the environment, I've watched with interest the proliferation

of self-styled environmental "experts" culminating each year in the Earth Day celebration. It never ceases to amaze me how actors, liberal organizers and everyday activists become experts on toxic waste, the environment and the merits of complete vegetarianism one day a year.

Meryl Streep testifies before Congress about residual effects of pesticides, thousands gather for concerts which leave behind tons of trash — this is supposed to be saving the Earth? There are numerous things that individuals can do to improve the environment — beginning with recycling and energy conservation.

The only long term solutions, however, are going to come from trained experts and the adoption of futuristic technology to combat environmental problems. These are in reality political solutions. This is the arena that concerned individuals

should be focusing on. How about National Write Your Congressman About the Environment Day?

I've been at A&M for seven years, during which time everything which has been done has been in order to advance our "world-class" status. Fraternities have spread like the plague. Traditions are relegated to the "Remember when ..." category for the most part, except for those which are fun or social. Politically correct liberalism is now the norm instead of the exception at campus gatherings.

The place is huge, and it's harder and harder to find those bastions of friendly traditionalists which were a strong selling point of the University. World class?

We're getting there — if world class means just like everybody else.

Larry Cox is a graduate student in range science.



Learn from the past, stop further racism

It was around 2:30 a.m., Thursday, April 18 of this year when a friend and I were walking across campus for a nightly stroll. As we were beginning to return to the Commons, a campus police car came around the corner. And then another. And another.

Soon, the three cars had come to a complete stop across the street. A female officer stepped from the first car, shining a light in our faces, asking, "Are you students here?" Answering yes, she asked us for identification, telling us that some criminal mischief had just occurred and we fit the "description."

By the way, my friend and I are both black men. I was so angered by this, by the way she interrogated us as to where we came from, where we were going and why, I forgot to get her name. I could only stand there and grin at her, making her feel as uncomfortable as possible.

I had heard of such things happening to friends, to others but not to me. I've heard the stories about how Caucasian women walk about at night, see a black man and quicken their pace, if not run, just to escape a "threat." Or how about the guy who lived off-campus but had to walk across campus at night to get to work? He was stopped and asked whether he lived on-campus. When he answered no, they gave him a ticket and told him this was a closed campus.

Since when did Texas A&M become a fortress? Will there soon be armed guards with dogs patrolling a stone wall surrounding the campus, enforcing a 9 p.m. curfew? Will there be a reenactment of the now infamous L.A. police beating here in Aggieland? When did it become illegal for a man to walk across this campus?

Perhaps the only law we break is being black. Then if that is a crime, throw me in prison for life and throw away the key because I'm going to be black until I die.

Racism disgusts me. The very existence of it causes anger to build up inside of me. I am even angered sometimes by those "stray" jokes that

Reggie Allen
Reader's Opinion

are meant in jest but do nothing but prove the ignorance of the teller. For example, a so-called friend of mine told me a joke the other day. How do you get a black man out of a tree? Cut the rope. Not funny.

Am I to believe that because I am black, my lot in life is to be a heretic, ridiculed, lynched, excluded, persecuted, harassed? If so, America need not worry about the Japanese and Europeans buying up the country, eating it up from without. At this rate, we will revert back to the chaotic race riots of the '60s and eat ourselves up from within.

To quote a Living Colour song, "Why you keep giving me that funny vibe?" I am only different from some of you in the color of my skin. Because I am black, do you believe me to be of lower intelligence? Do you think my favorite pastime is selling drugs, listening to rap music and creating trouble? Do you think that I hate you because you may not be black? I may have the same likes and dislikes that you have, but you will never know until you stop running from me and get to know me for who I am and not what I am: A human being who thinks and feels, who has a different culture but is willing to share that culture with you.

We stand at the doorstep of a new century, a door that is cracked enough for us to force the forthcoming era. It is an era in which enlightenment and reasoning of the world around us will lead to a tripping of the old foundations of ignorance: One in which high technology will work, not only with us, but for us on an everyday basis; one in which information will create a second renaissance in which everything can be learned about with minimal effort.

Let us learn from the past and not relive it. I have high hopes for our generation. All I ask of you is to not disappoint me.

Reggie Allen is a sophomore general studies major.

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.

Bored with the opinion page

EDITOR:

As Bart Simpson would say, I have an announcement to make: I'm bored.

With what, you ask? I am, and have been for several semesters, bored to tears with the junk I read on the opinion page of The Battalion.

Has anyone else noticed that the liberal/conservative ravings of most of The Battalion columnists, Andy Yung and Larry Cox in particular, have all been done 100 times before?

This semester has confirmed my theory that every issue that causes friction between liberals and conservatives (capital punishment, gun control, politics, taxes, religion, homosexuality, environmentalism and, most recently, that old favorite, abortion — again, thanks to Yung) is recycled every few months to stir up new controversy within the student body.

And (this is the part that stumps me) people keep falling into their trap!

There are people who have been here for four years, seen the same crap two or three times every single semester and don't realize they are getting mad and writing in

about the same stuff they got mad and wrote in about in September!

Right now, I'm thinking of starting a pool to bet on when Cox will write next about gun control, eco-terrorists and/or anti-hunters.

Uh-oh! Now, someone's going to write in on the evils of gambling. Then someone else will write in saying that the person who wrote in before is an idiot. And so on, and so on, just like that old shampoo commercial. I'd laugh if I wasn't yawning so damn much.

I have two theories as to what motivates Yung and Cox both. Either they simply lack creativity and writing ability or (and this is my guess) they are actually the same diabolical person who thinks of the stupidest, most cliched things in the world to write about in what is actually just a prolonged, sick joke at our expense.

Think about it — has anyone ever seen these two guys out in public at the same time?

Perhaps if they added some personal insight to an issue or a new way to look at something, like Matt McBurnett does in his better opinion pieces, instead of repeating the DOS every other good liberal and conservative says, I might not turn the page every time I see their smiling little faces on page two.

Ron Garza '91

The Battalion

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