

## Many other countries accept homosexuality

As trends. Those little indicators of change can oft describe a bigger picture of the world in which we live. Today, trends are used by a multitude of organizations and professionals as forecasting tools. While trends may predict the future, they are, in many instances, ignored or even suppressed by society.

Case in point: homosexuality. In many other countries, the adaptation of a gay or lesbian by individuals has long been an accepted practice. That is not the case here in America, where our strong religious culture, at one time, didn't even acknowledge such a sinful notion. In fact, the field of psychology classified homosexuality as a mental illness until the early 1980s. Today, however, the winds of change are beginning to blow, and there is a new trend in the air.

Once ostracized, homosexuals are becoming more visible, vocal and influential. Across the nation, they are beginning to make their presence known. For example, in San Francisco and New York City this past fall, hundreds of thousands of members of the "Queer Nation" (I'm not making this name up, it's their chosen name) marched and shouted for gay and lesbian rights. Even in our capitols, homosexuality is present. Massachusetts Congressman Barney Frank, who is admittedly gay, was recently given a reprimand by the House Ethics Committee for his relationship with a gay prostitute.

As for the Texas legislature, it just swore in its first-known gay representative, Glen Maxley, a Democrat from Austin.

Homosexuality is also crisscrossing the nation in the form of "art." It doesn't matter whether you attended the exhibits because you got to see them anyway in newspapers and magazines recounting the conflicts between conservatives and museums. And if you didn't catch enough of the photography of Robert Mapplethorpe in print, I'm sure you were able to catch his various 'homo-erotic' works on the network news.

Furthermore, we only have to flip the channel a little bit to see gays portrayed in TV shows such as "Three's Company," "Soap," "Saturday Night Live" and "Cheers." The topic is also covered extensively on daytime shows such as "Geraldo," "Oprah" and "Donahue." Plus, even if we could avoid TV, we would still be inundated with accounts of homosexuality in the movies, in sports and even at work.

Wait! That's not all. Hold on to your pews folks, because our churches, the last bastions of conservativeness, are beginning to change as well. The most recent example: Last month's ordination in New Jersey of the first gay Episcopalian priest. And over the last three months the Presbyterian Church USA has gotten into the act too. It seems that the church not only accepts homosexual members, but also ordains them as officers, works with them to eliminate sodomy laws and reject homophobia. Most shocking of all, however, is that "special worship material" is proposed for Presbyterian gays and lesbians, presumably for weddings.

Even here in Aggieland, the issue of homosexuality has had center stage ever since the debate over faculty sexual preference became the

Trey Jacobson

Columnist

Battalion's topic of the month. However, not only do we have gay and lesbian professors here, but there are also a significant number of homosexual students as well. They even have their own student organization. And while homosexual men and women are not very visible at A&M, on other campuses around the state they play active and prominent roles.

Take, for example, the University of North Texas, where the gay-lesbian group is one of the largest and most actively recognized student organizations. Not to mention that last year's t.u. student body president was an acknowledged and outspoken lesbian! And, as difficult and disturbing as it may be for some, this is only part of a national trend that portends an increased prevalence of the homosexual subculture.

Knowing that homosexuality is alive and well, it is therefore foolhardy for us to suppress the fact that homosexuality flourishes in our society. While I am disgusted by the concept of members of the same sex sharing intimate relations, I do believe that we will be forced to recognize that a large number

“However, not only do we have gay and lesbian professors here, but there are also a significant number of homosexual students as well.”

of homosexuals help make up the populace. Rather than beat homosexuals into submission or hiding, we should begin to comprehend the reality of their orientation.

To some degree, academia has provided this understanding. Forgotten in all of the hoopla over gay and lesbian acceptance is the fact that many courses at A&M in the social sciences frequently discuss homosexuality as a way of life. But beyond that, we seem to have run into a roadblock of the mind. For some reason, many A&M students seemingly believe that by not recognizing the existence of gays and lesbians, they will simply disappear. However, as noted above, indications are such that not only will it not go away, but that homosexuality will become increasingly visible.

Discrimination can't help either. As much as Bible-thumpers might entertain the notion, to isolate this group of individuals will not advance any cause. Instead, any further discrimination against gays and lesbians will only prevent them from reaching their fullest potential as members of the work force and society.

So, regardless of your feelings about homosexuality, it should be evident that we need to lift blinders from our minds and recognize that the Queer Nation thrives in pockets of our communities. Shouldn't we accept these individuals as what else they are: Good and productive citizens? Perhaps a better question is, can we afford not to?

Trey Jacobson is a graduate student in public administration.



## 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.

### Library needs to check own staff

EDITOR:

So Sterling C. Evans Library lost \$43,000 last year because students at Texas A&M have a habit of stealing books. Of the 420 books declared missing so far this year, I can tell you at least four are due to the incompetence of the library staff. Before Irene Hoadley accuses the students of this University of stealing her precious books, she should search for books lost by her own staff.

Kirk Bruce '91

### Lecture receives poor attendance

EDITOR:

On Apr. 12, I attended the Wiley Lecture Series titled "A North American Community Within Reach." The topic provided valuable information on the future of the state's and nation's trade policy.

That night, I became very disappointed. Rudder Auditorium was one-third full, the great majority of whom were not students.

This is just one example of how poorly motivated we students are. Texas A&M not only offers us classroom education; it has a lot more to offer.

Being a foreign student probably gives me a different perspective of how valuable these opportunities are.

Let's not waste these privileges we have to accumulate knowledge and become better people.

Andre La Faye '88

### Former student breaks honor code

EDITOR:

I am writing this letter in response to Mr. Ken Orton's letter of April 3. In his letter, Mr. Orton states his son was

unable to gain admission to Texas A&M (or should I say Mr. Orton was unable to pull enough strings to get his son in). If either one of them had read a catalog, they would have been aware of the requirements for transfer students.

Speaking as a graduate of Texas A&M and a maroon-blooded Aggie, I would like to assure Mr. Orton that we still have a fish pond, the 12th Man and Midnight Yell. Aggies do care about one another and the Aggie family. As a former student, Mr. Orton should know the pride most Aggies have in their school and they would not want the integrity of this fine University compromised by lowering the standards of admission.

The requirements are established so that students who are accepted have a reasonable chance of graduating. In my opinion, someone who can only make a 2.5 at a junior college is not ready for Texas A&M yet!

Attacking Mr. Orton's son is not my objective here and I apologize if it sounds like I am. I would merely like to suggest he take a little more time and put forth a little more effort to raise his grades. Maybe by attending that community college in Lubbock, Mr. Orton's son will be able to accomplish this.

What is so surprising is the way Mr. Orton responded to the denial of his son's application. There exists at Texas A&M a code of honor which states, "Aggies do not lie, cheat or steal, nor do they tolerate those who do." Mr. Orton violated this code by attempting to circumvent the system and expecting his status as a former student to get his son accepted.

Then, when this did not work, he turned and lashed out at the Aggie memorabilia. And may I suggest to the student body here at Texas A&M that we establish a fund to buy back Mr. Orton's ring, since he obviously wishes to have nothing else to do with Texas A&M.

James Kaaz '90

accompanied by 12 signatures

## Mobley's rewording seems inadequate; statement should truly protect everyone

Dr. Mobley has been given just cause for changing the University Statement on Harassment and Discrimination. Otherwise, I doubt he would have spent the time to consider it. Why fix something if it "ain't broke?" Thus, one must assume that in his opinion the old statement was inadequate and that his good intentions are reflected in the new statement.

Indeed, something should be done. In the past two years I have been here, I have seen many incidences of harassment and discrimination. I have seen faculty treated unfairly when it comes to tenure and reprimanded without due process.

But perhaps I have not paid close attention to the specifics of the case I have seen. If I had, perhaps I would be able to understand why Dr. Mobley believes that the way to prevent similar injustices in the future is to remove the specific language of the old statement.

In addition, I personally cannot understand why our president believes that by removing the specific language from the Statement on Academic

Joseph Varrientos

Reader's Opinion

Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure, he has helped the individuals whom those words were designed to protect: the people we work with who are not exactly status quo.

If Dr. Mobley were to give us some examples of how the new statement would help in cases where the old statement could not, more of us would be convinced of its ability to more adequately protect us all. It would appear that in the opinions of those involved in the legal profession, the new wording will not help and might possibly provide less legal protection than the old statement.

Dr. Mobley himself has denied tenure to a faculty member, even after the review by the proper committees recommended that tenure be granted. That, of course, was an individual case. But now, Dr. Mobley's recent decision on the wording of the statement affects every single person affiliated, employed and educated by this institution.

That ought to give him a great deal to think about. Lots of opinions have been voiced and understandably so: Dr. Mobley's decisions affect people's lives.

The majority of those speaking out against the new wording of the statement know what it's like to be harassed and denied equality. They understand this better than any of the rest of us who are happy being part of the status quo.

“By changing this statement, Mobley will allow bigotry and prejudice to grow and fester at this University.”

By changing this statement, Dr. Mobley will allow bigotry and prejudice to grow and fester at this University — a University located in a region of our country where these biases can be prevalent. It is bigotry and prejudice that are the real threats to the integrity and stature of this University.

Joseph E. Varrientos is a graduate student.

### The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

Member of  
Texas Press Association  
Southwest Journalism Conference

#### The Battalion Editorial Board

Timm Doolen,  
Editor

Todd Stone, Managing Editor

Krista Umscheid,  
Opinion Page Editor

Sean Frerking, City Editor

Jennifer Jeffus,  
Callie Wilcher,  
News Editors

Jayne Blaschke, Sports Editor

Richard James, Art Director

Rob Newberry,  
Lifestyles Editor

#### 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 daily, except Saturday, Sunday, holidays, exam periods, and when school is not in session during fall and spring semesters; publication is Tuesday through Friday during the summer session.

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, 216 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.