

## EDITORIAL

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### Leaders need to make education top priority

Last week, students at Anderson Elementary in Houston did the unbelievable - they asked for more class time to prepare for state examinations.

For them, there wasn't enough time to learn it all. Their actions should be an inspiration to leaders nationwide.

As local, regional and national leaders fail to re-establish education as a major priority, the next generation is suddenly showing the way. Education is the future, but our leaders still lack the vision of our children.

The Dallas Independent School District drastically cut its faculty, and the Texas Legislature took funds from higher education - public education's only strength. Meanwhile, President Bush told the nation the responsibility for improving education lies with the parents, not the federal government.

Until we get our priorities straight, let's hope today's youth will forget our leaders' lack of foresight, and forge a greater future on their own.

The Battalion Editorial Board

## Discrimination at A&M should not be shrouded

### Women deserve more respect from University

When I found out a reporter from The Battalion was working on an investigative story about Texas A&M female professors' salary inequality, I was excited because it was a hard-hitting, substantive story - the stuff journalism is made of.

But when I read the story in Tuesday's issue of The Battalion, I was angry. It's ridiculous that the University has been keeping the settlement with 19 female professors under wraps, and female professors contacted about the story felt pressured not to talk about the salary wrongs, probably for fear of retaliation. To me, these actions mean women at this University still are being put down and are considered inferior to men. What are female students supposed to think when they hear that because of their sex they might get a smaller paycheck than a male colleague?

Most people have role models they try to pattern their lives after,

years of salary inequality, I think everyone, especially women, should be concerned the University is sending the message that women should just be satisfied with what men in power give them, and be quiet about it.

I think most women faculty realize the general feeling that prevails on campus. The University in the past has taken steps to show it is concerned with gender inequality on campus, but it's no credit to our institution that at least one woman took her salary gripes to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission instead of straight to her employer. She obviously must have thought she'd get a more sympathetic ear with the EEOC. And that's the attitude I'm talking about - in a place of learning and growth, women should feel like their University cares more about them than a federal agency does.

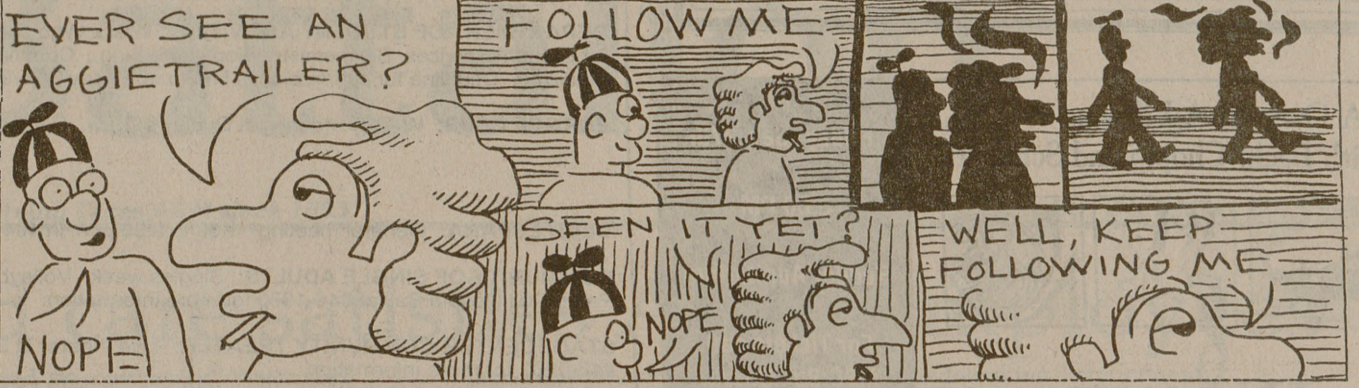
The settlement with the 19 female faculty could have been a wonderful

"The message - be it unintentional or not - being sent to students on this campus is that men are better thinkers and better teachers at the higher education level."

whether it be a famous historical figure or a grandparent. Members of minority groups, like women, often find it more difficult to do this just because there are fewer people like them they can look up to. Few women at Texas A&M are in positions of authority; therefore, there are few female role models for women on campus.

Consider this: almost half of our student body is composed of women, but only 10 to 15 percent (roughly) of our educators are women. There is only one female dean, and no female department heads. The message - be it unintentional or not - being sent to students on this campus is that men are better thinkers and better teachers at the higher education level. After reading the story about the settlement offered to the 19 female professors for

## Cruel Tricks for Freshmen No. 9 by Bingo Barnes



## Comforts of government have made us apathetic

We are Americans of the 20th century. We have our Bill of Rights that guarantees us our liberties. We have our government to protect us and provide for us. We have our credit cards that buy us new clothes, new CD players, new car, new furniture. We have our industries that offer us whatever we want, before we even realize we want it. We have our huge television, our VCR, our comfortable couch to sit on and watch sit-coms, football games or dramas, with our friends and a beer close by.

We have our responsibilities as well. But everything else we have is far more important, so we just postpone our responsibilities. We push them in the background, we pocket our credit card, and we drive to the mall to take advantage of the 18th of September extra savings.

It is, for that matter, inconvenient to waste valuable time in the process of voting. Think of all that energy that has to be wasted to take care of this responsibility! We would have to spend time getting acquainted with the different candidates and their agendas. We would have to spend time thinking and discussing our opinions with friends and family. This could lead to the revelation of other opinions (contrary to ours) that perplex us and force us think and discuss more. We don't need all this nonsense! We have other worries and more important things to do.

For these reasons, it is not at all surprising less than 50 percent of us voted in the last presidential election. It just shows we are a nation of busy people. After all, why should we make it our problem to have to vote? The government will be there anyway.

All this crud about the environment is also such a pain! For so many thousands of years the Earth was doing just great, and now all of a sudden we get all these people who have nothing else to do, shouting and screaming about the dolphins, the whales, the rivers and the ozone layer. Even about grapes for God's sake! What are we supposed to do? Die in the heat to conserve energy? Stink like hogs to conserve water? Take the bus to work to limit pollution? Use no hairspray to protect the ozone layer? Eat no tuna to save the dolphins? Eat no red grapes to save the immigrant workers? GIVE US A BREAK! What kind of life do they want us to live? It's not our fault anyway.

On top of all these, we have the homeless to worry about. What should we do with the homeless? Why don't they go get a job and learn how to be responsible? All they do is lay around all day, beg and steal; they have nothing to worry about. They are just lazy. We are the ones who have the real problems, not them. They are such a bother.

Not only are we expected to help and assist these lazy bums in our country, but the rest of the world wants us to help when there's trouble. We have to send money to the U.S.S.R., Bangladesh, the Philippines, Ethiopia and Israel, to name but a few. And in the mean-

time, we have our own debts, which are growing larger. Why should we care about all these people? We have problems of our own.

All these things drive us crazy. To calm down, tonight we will pick up a couple of action movies and watch them with our kids. Some will complain that we don't talk much with our kids nowadays, that we don't have much interaction. That's wrong! We often watch movies together, we watch TV together, we live in the same house, we even buy them all they want to show them our love. How can anyone accuse us of little interaction!

Yesterday on the radio someone was also accusing us of forgetting about the future generations. What does anybody know about the future generations? There might not be any future generations. Why should we sacrifice our pleasures, our comforts, our happiness of today, for something we have no idea about. Why should we save our money if we don't know how it will be used by the bank. For all we know, it could be used to finance illegal transactions like drug deals, so why should we not spend it ourselves on something we know we want today. And why should we not buy all we can on our pocketful of credit cards? This way we can buy more, faster, and we can pay later, or never. What's the problem with this?

The sad truth is that we are acting like spoiled children. We want more from our government. Better schools, better health care, more police protection, more safety, better infrastructure. But we are not willing to give anything in return. We sternly oppose any tax increases, even though taxation levels in the United States are among the lowest of all Western countries. We are always too busy to volunteer to help in state programs even though our cities and states are already strained for funds. We have turned into monsters with bottomless stomachs and voracious appetites. We see the government as the hen that lays unlimited quantities of golden eggs. We believe the government has an unlimited amount of money to share, and we need not be bothered, save or demand less.

And when we are at fault for something, we always try to throw the blame on someone else. If we steal from the company we work for, it is because we are not paid enough. If we are on drugs, it is the pressure from society. If our rivers are dying and our air is foul, it is our neighbor's hairspray and car. Better still, it is the other countries, not us.

The reason we cannot repay our debts is the high interest rates. The reason so many teens graduate from high school but cannot do simple arithmetic, read or write is the messed up system. We sadly cannot see we are the ones who make up this system, this society.

It is our avoidance of responsibility, our lack of recognition of the importance of learning to be responsible that leads to this mess. And unless we realize this, nothing will change for the better.



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## Mail Call

### Pay attention to traffic laws

Now that classes have settled down there are a few things I would like to point out to certain groups of people.

To all pedestrians: You may have noticed Texas A&M has generously put in bike lanes on campus.

They are for bicycles; please try to walk on the sidewalks.

When you do step out into the bike lane, watch for bicycles. Many do not have good brakes and some hesitate to use them.

You might also consider the fact that shuttle buses cannot stop on a dime before you walk out in front of one.

To all bicyclists: You may have noticed the bike lanes around campus; use them.

And please remember you legally are supposed to be obeying traffic laws. That means riding on the right side of the road, stopping for stop signs and going when the light turns green, not when the walk light comes on.

Watch out for shuttle buses too; remember you are the one who is going to get splattered on the pavement.

To all motorists: Doubtless, you

have noticed the bike lanes around campus too.

They are bike lanes, not parking spaces. Please do not park in them even for "just a minute."

That "just a minute" it takes you to drop off someone blocks traffic on narrow campus roads.

Simply pull off into one of the numerous faculty parking lots and take a chance; it's "just for a minute."

But if you must park in the bike lanes, please watch for bicycles when you open your door. The consequences are not pretty.

And as you drive down the road, remember bicycles are vehicular traffic and are not supposed to be riding on the sidewalk. Be sure and look for cyclists when you make a right turn; sometimes they are not turning right and never see you until they run into your front fender.

### Have an opinion? Express it!

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers. All letters to the editor are welcome. Written letters must be signed and include classification, address and daytime phone number for verification purposes. Anonymous letters will not be published.

The Battalion reserves the right to edit all letters for length, style and accuracy. There is no guarantee letters will appear.

Letters may be brought to 013 Reed McDonald, sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111 or can be faxed to 845-5408.

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