

## Adults still make immature decisions

Scientists should concentrate research on techniques to lengthen life span

Today I offer you the solution to all problems of our world. The reason for all the problems we face, not only here in America but throughout the world, lies in the short span of our life. Longevity is the answer!

Studies show that the average life of humans ranges from around 40 years in some underdeveloped and impoverished countries to around 80 years in others. Let me explain my theory using the United States as an example where the average life expectancy is in the early 70s.

During our short life, we are expected to go from playing around, to growing up, to maturity. We separate our life in distinct periods as if it were a calendar, and we are expected to grow to fit into these periods. We are infants, preschoolers, pre-teenagers, teenagers, etc. We assign different acceptable behaviors to each period, and we are expected to conform. We are given more responsibilities as our body grows older.

But is our mind ready to comprehend these responsibilities? Are we mature enough to live up to our responsibilities and act accordingly?

Unfortunately, even though our body develops relatively fast, our

politician will seek to find out the public opinion on the matter and will use this as the catalyst for the subsequent decision.

The public has a short-term orientation and is easy prey to subdued and refined propaganda by the trend setters, the public relations specialists of conglomerates, the marketers, the lobbyists of different interest groups. Consequently, the public will influence the politician's decision. The politician, being human also, will guard his interest and will not go against the will of the public. So the vicious cycle continues.

Today, by the time we mature, we are old enough to die. Our short life gives us short-term orientation. Even if we think long-term, we are not around for long enough to live with the consequences of our decisions.

But consider for a moment how it all would be if we all lived for 200 years. After a youth characterized by folly and frolic, there would be plenty of time to become mature decision makers since we would be around to experience the effects of our actions or inactions.

If we lived for 200 years, we would have time to grow up without the burden of more responsibilities than we could handle maturely. Then once we reached age 50 or 60, we still would have many years left to experience our decisions. Thus, we would make more responsible decisions. The world would, really become a better place.

This is truly a challenge to all of you botanists, herbalists, biologists, geneticists, chemists and traditional shamans! Save humanity by fabricating the magic potion, the magic pill, the magic gene!

Only when we are able live to be 200 will we have time to take life seriously. By the time we have fun, cars, TV sets in every room of our house, cellular telephones, fancy clothes, a challenging job, our body grows old. But our spirit is just starting to mature.

Once we are old, we have very few years to cultivate our spirituality, to think of matters of global importance, to become aware. In effect, we die just as our spirit gets out of infancy. With 200 years to live, our spirit would have the time it needs to grow too, and we finally would become responsible human beings.

To all of you shamans of science and of tradition: The fate of mankind is in your hands. Give us the means to live for 200 years, and we'll give you a better world and the gratitude of all future generations!

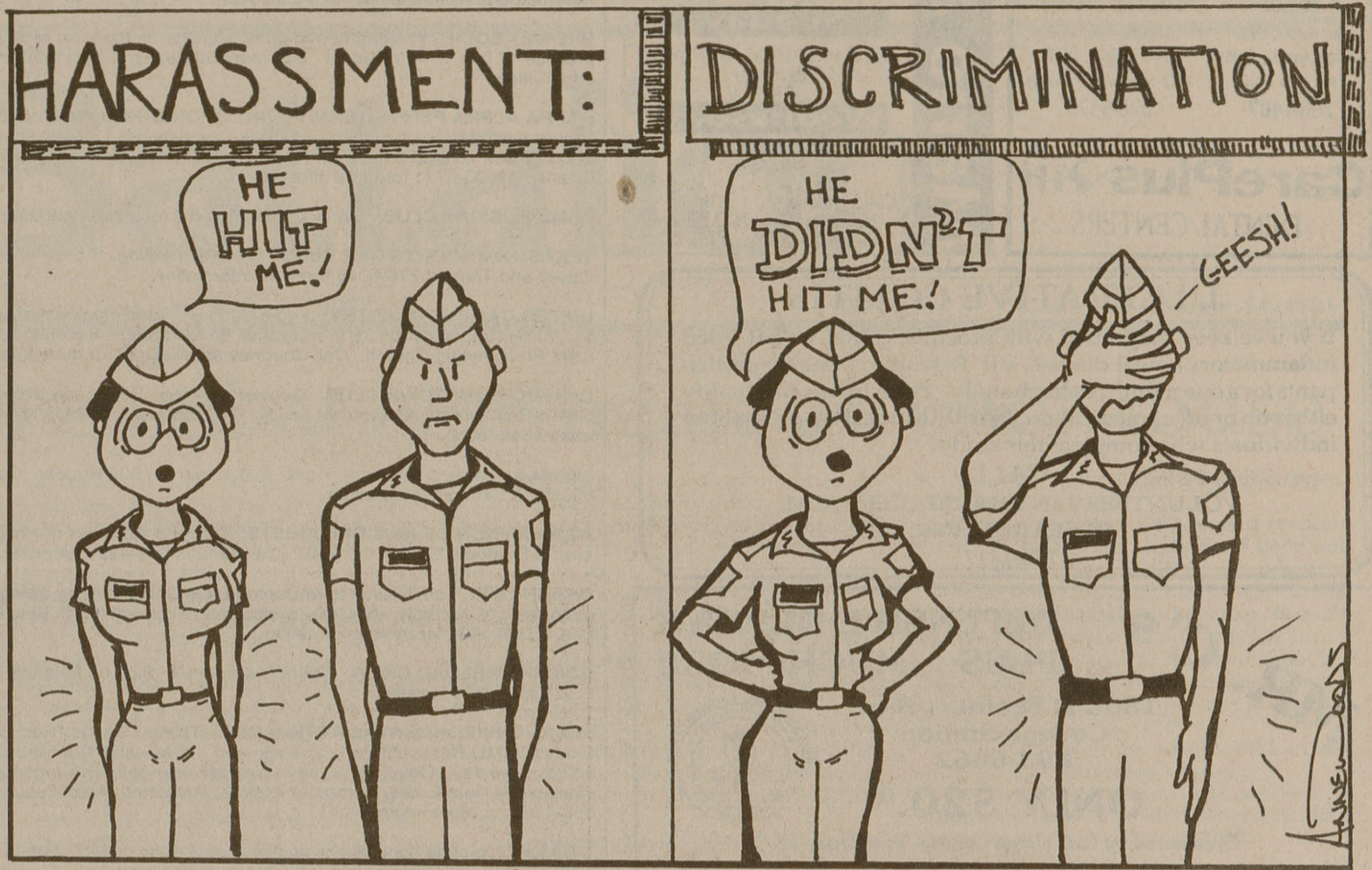


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*"The fate of mankind is in your hands. Give us the means to live for 200 years, and we'll give you a better world and the gratitude of all future generations!"*

spiritual development is much slower. We are, for the majority of our life, preoccupied with satisfying materialistic desires that revolve around making us feel or look better. We maintain a short-term perspective, and we usually don't care what happens to this world once we die. We are vain and egocentric. We guard our self-interest vehemently.

Our politicians find themselves in the awkward position of having to make decisions that will have repercussions for years after they die. Our legislators have to vote on laws that might be unpopular in the short-run but would benefit the earth in years to come (like environmental protection legislation). If a legislator votes pro-legislation, the powerful, industrial lobbies will do all they can to make sure this legislator is not re-elected. If he votes anti-legislation, he will retain his position but will contribute to the environmental problems of the future. In most instances, a



What if A&M traditions did not begin with Corps?

## Adopt indifferent attitude

I have been writing columns for The Battalion for over two years. From the beginning, I vowed never to author a column on the Corps of Cadets. Why should I? Tradition dictates that the opinion page will go through at least one phase per semester during which it is fully dedicated to detailing the debate between supporters of our cadets and those who are rotten to the Corps.

In addition to not wanting to add to the monotony, I simply do not give a damn. This apathy is exactly why I have broken my vow and dedicated newspaper space to the subject. I want everybody to be apathetic!

The recent incidents involving Corps have sparked another of those periods highlighted by Mail Call letters about good Ags, good bull and how many percentage points one must possess to travel the proper direction on Highway 6.

Yesterday, a letter detailed a horrible picture of what our campus would be like sans Corps. Get rid of this bunk folks and concern yourselves with more important issues such as Redd Foxx or The Great Pumpkin or anything!

It can be said that our campus would be quite different if our Corps were like any other ROTC outfit, and if they were treated as such.

Indeed this can be justified, but would this difference be bad? Would our football team be ranked any lower? What would we lose if our ROTC outfit were normal?

Fish Camp taught us that Aggies are special because we say howdy and have traditions. Without our reverence for the Corps, many of these traditions would have faded away. But Aggie traditions are simply school characteristics which are repeated over and over. We cannot assume our particular set of characteristics are better than those which would replace them, and that their passing would hurt our school. Quite the contrary in many cases!

Last Friday, I was involved in a petty but pathetic incident. I made the mistake of parking by the band practice field. While returning to my car, I was slightly disoriented and quite rushed so I proceeded to run directly across the field. From the response I received, an outsider would have thought I shot George Bush.

I was squarely in the middle of the field when some guy told me to "get off of the field now!"

What was I supposed to do, fly to the other end? I proceeded on the path to my car to a chorus of jeers generated by quite a few Corps persons. Some guy chased me to my car to take my name and to inform me that I could not read the signs surrounding the field. I figured he was either going to turn my name into the principal or make me go back and walk around.

Whatever the case, I came to the conclusion that something really silly was going on. I could not find the logic. Maybe they were concerned with the 30 or so footprints I left. After all, they might get mixed in with the hundreds of thousands they leave each time they practice.

Actually, it was simply an example of how a normal ROTC outfit would have changed our campus. Granted our band would be considerably different, but maybe change would be good.

I do not see why being in the Corps is a prerequisite for being in a college marching band. The Rice University Marching Owl Band, which is easily found to be as entertaining as our band, is open to all students, not simply ones who want to wear uniforms every day and get up early each morning. But our reverence for the Corps precludes this. This standard applies to numerous other school characteristics.

I am not implying Texas A&M should drop everything and attempt to emulate other colleges.

I simply want our school to have the freedom to develop new characteristics as these other schools do.

But what about Reveille, "Howdy," yell leaders, elephant walk and numerous other things the Corps initiated? These things are wonderful, but we cannot assume the characteristics that would have developed without the Corps would be any less so.

Essentially, my apathy is based on that premise. The Corps is not important to me and I, most assuredly, am not important to the Corps. If this attitude were the prevailing one, it would prevent many problems including the one of a periodically boring opinion page.



**Matt McBurnett**  
McBurnett is a senior electrical engineering major.

## Mail Call

### Alcohol may have sparked civilization

Since last week was National Alcohol Awareness Week, I'd like to share a theory I once heard concerning the origin of civilization and beer.

According to many historians, man stopped his wanderings and gatherings to settle down and plant crops so he could have food to feed his family (tribe). This is the theory that is generally taught and accepted as the origin of civilization. However, many theories exist which, though not widely accepted, are just as plausible.

One theory suggests that while gathering, a tribe accidentally left a barrel of grain when they moved on. A year later, this same tribe of people came upon this barrel of grain which had fermented into beer. Thinking that this liquid was fine to drink and being really thirsty from walking around all year long, they heartily gulped down this fluid. Finding it surprisingly refreshing and stimulating, they decided they should make more.

A few years later, they had grown so accustomed to this liquid that they could not get enough of it. And because their backs were so sore from carrying kegs of beer, they decided they should settle down to a particular area and

cultivate grain so they could produce more beer.

Another theory suggests that the fluid was fermented grapes and berries instead of grain. These two theories have been argued over vehemently in bars, taverns and pubs throughout the ages. There is no doubt this conflict will wage on into the future. But whatever comes of this issue, one constant will remain: Man will continue to grow grain and grapes.

In some respects, beer and wine may have been the stimulant for civilization. So the next time you're enjoying a beer or a wine, remember that these potent potables could be the reason you're not wandering somewhere on the plains of this earth.

Nhai Cao  
graduate student

### People must change traditional attitudes

I read Ty Clevenger's religion-shrouded column Thursday, and I just had to write.

I don't want to do a point-by-point breakdown of his opinions, because I know someone else will. What concerns me most is this overwhelming flood of intolerance and hatred we are witnessing in this region.

Note the current stories: we have the Corps' treatment of women, the death threats to members of the GLSS, the mass-murder in Killeen where the murderer wrote that he wanted to remind everyone that "[He has] civil rights too." And, though the motives behind the Killeen murder will forever remain unrevealed, it and these other events show a growing level of social tension and a willingness to act aggressively.

The fact that Mobley backed down on discouraging discrimination this summer by changing the University discrimination policy into the piece of political garbage that it is today has not helped matters here on campus much. Diversity in the University community is something that should be more than just tolerated, it should be encouraged. Every organization should have members from all minorities, which include women and gays. (Unlike Clevenger, who likes to pick and choose who he wants to consider a minority, my dictionary defines a "minority" as "a portion of the population subject to discrimination.")

At the risk of sounding naive, I don't see why we can't live together harmoniously. If that requires shedding a few traditional or religious beliefs, then so be it. If those traditions entice us to make life more difficult for someone, they are not worth having. And if the god defined by our current religion requires that we ostracize certain groups of people from society, then maybe we need to be in the market for a different religion.

People cannot change their gender, race or orientation, so if we are going to have any hope for peaceful co-existence, it's our traditions and beliefs that are going to have to be changed. And before someone starts spouting phrases like "if there are no moral absolutes, there are absolutely no morals," let me admit that I believe there is at least one absolute moral from which all others can be extrapolated. That would be the golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have done unto you." All I am saying is that we should treat other people the way we wish to be treated. You wouldn't want death threats or exclusion from certain social institutions simply for being who you are.

It's time for a change.

Kenneth Brobst '93

### 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.