

## The Battalion Editorial Board

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The following opinions are a consensus of The Battalion opinion staff and senior editors.

## Fight back

### Women must speak out, prosecute rapists

During spring, when the number of rapes tends to increase, this reprehensible crime is grabbing attention again. With 15 reported cases of rape so far this year in Bryan-College Station surpassing the total of nine for all of 1991, the problem seems to be getting worse instead of better.

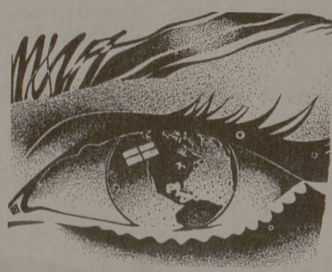
The frightening thing is that most sexual assaults and rapes go unreported, raising the possibility that there has been on average of as many as two or three actual incidences of these crimes each week.

If word got around that women were no longer bearing their pain in silence, but were stepping forward and reporting their assailants and that rapists were no longer able to laughingly brag to their friends about their latest conquest secure in the knowledge that they would never answer for their actions,

we would see encouraging strides in the fight to curtail these crimes against women.

Of course, none of this is yet reality. Because not all victims are aware of their blamelessness in these situations and because others do not feel that they can stand the idea of dragging their ordeal into a public arena, some choose not to report these assaults or to press charges. Since the rest of us cannot understand the feelings of rape victims, we must avoid condemning their silence as cowardice or weakness.

However, we must do what we can to encourage women to speak out; to forge a path for others, showing them that the court ordeal can be overcome; to convince society of the seriousness of this issue; and ultimately, to put more rapists in prison where they belong.



## Good example

### Prairie View students fight for right to vote

In a time of low voter turnout among college students, the actions of some Prairie View A&M students offer good examples of how seriously the right to vote should be taken.

More than two weeks ago, 14 people, a majority of them Prairie View A&M students, were indicted on illegal-voting allegations. Grand jurors indicted five people on charges of both illegal voting and aggravated perjury. The other 14 people were indicted on the charge of illegal voting.

As a result of the indictments, other Prairie View students came out later that week to picket the Waller County Courthouse, where the 15 were indicted. An estimated 100 students took turns during the protest carrying signs, marching and sitting outside the grand jury room.

Questions have been raised about the validity of these indictments. Students and the attorney representing them raise questions about the "good-old-boy" network in Waller County that is trying to prevent them from voting.

"These students, if they vote, hold the balance of power in Waller

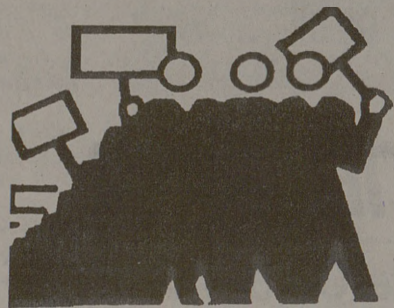
County," said attorney Gene L. Locke, who is representing the students. "The good-old-boy network of politics in Waller County is threatened by the young voters of Prairie View A&M University."

With the previous investigation still going on, students of Prairie View are still taking part in their voting rights and the voting rights of their fellow students. Just last Thursday, a crowd of 200 students marched six miles from the Prairie View campus to Hempstead to vote and show support for the indicted students.

They carried signs with messages saying, "Waller County what are you afraid of?" and waited patiently outside to

vote. Such a show of support and belief in their right to vote is inspiring. Those participating in the march and court case understand the importance of voting, unlike many college-age students as well as people in general.

Such a display of togetherness and support for such an important act makes us wonder if students at Texas A&M would do as much in support of a national right.



## WHEN IT ABSOLUTELY, POSITIVELY HAS TO GET THERE OVERNIGHT :



## Gadhafi crazy ? Like a fox

### Libyan leader wants isolation to maintain power, avoid scrutiny

Something terrible is going to happen! Libya is isolating itself from the rest of the world.

Oh horror, utter sadness and despair . . . what is the world going to do without Libya? How can we the world live without that country? It has contributed so much . . . rich oil resources . . . ah . . . ahhhh, rich oil resources, well it has contributed something.

Frankly, the world will do fine without Libya. The world is not going to drop off the face of the earth because Libya will not talk to it anymore.

Although I am originally from Libya and the majority of my family still lives and suffers in that country, I do not care what happens to the government, especially Colonel Muammar Gadhafi. My only concern is for my family and their friends.

Libya's decision to isolate itself is exactly what Gadhafi wants. In the last two years, Gadhafi has changed Libya through a series of reforms. These reforms have been nicknamed "green perestroika" from Gadhafi's Green Book.

The book discusses a "state of the masses" or Jamahiriya, direct popular democracy, in which government is organized by several congresses. The congresses deliberate on all matters of local, regional, national and international interests. Gadhafi's responsibility is to help guide Libya to Jamahiriya by "revolutionary agitation."

Many Americans are surprised that a leader such as Gadhafi would support a democratic system. Well, he has not supported or done any such thing in Libya. If he truly believed in democracy, my family's land,

possessions and money would not have been stripped from them.

Furthermore, anyone who thinks he is a crazy lunatic then truly does not know the abilities of this man. Gadhafi has not survived for over 20 years in power by being a lunatic. For instance, in February 1989's World Press Review Gadhafi said, "Mohammed, Jesus, and myself were all great prophets who had come from the desert and were uneducated." These are not words from a great leader nor a crazy lunatic, but a devious and clever fiend. He says these things to keep the world on the edge. Whenever he does something that the Western world perceives as politically stupid, we all blame it on his lunacy. He can be ruthless, cold-hearted and evil and everyone blames it on his lunacy. Even I fall into that pit sometimes, but Gadhafi is quite aware of what he is doing every single second.

One of my cousins living in Libya explained the cleverness of this man. Gadhafi only holds the title of "Revolutionary Guide." He has no formal title or office. Whenever the country prospers or something good happens it is because of him or his Jamahiriya that it happened; on the other hand, whenever something goes wrong, Gadhafi blames the people, for he is not the one in power, they are supposedly in power. For this reason, Gadhafi gets the best of both worlds. He is not truly responsible for anything wrong, but anything good is because of him.

Gadhafi's purpose for his reforms or "green perestroika" is still not clear, for it goes against all his principles and beliefs written by him in his Green Book.

Yet Gadhafi saw a need to change his domestic policies in order to keep his ideology, the Green Book, intact and to revive the economy, not reform it.

Gadhafi's change in domestic policies brought Libya from a state of near collapse. The new policies have

opened the country to imports from Tunisia, Turkey and Japan. In addition, Gadhafi restored private enterprise and lifted restrictions for Libyans to travel abroad. These changes were necessary to revive Libya's economy. Gadhafi's ideology has not changed. Gadhafi's main reason for his new policies are because he has no economic means of keeping Jamahiriya intact due to lower oil prices and an oil embargo by most Western countries.

The most obvious proof is the unending propaganda on television, radio and billboards. In addition, Libyans still fear discussing politics in public or with foreigners. In the past, when there were objections to Gadhafi's domestic policies or ideology, many suffered dearly. For example in April 1976, three students were hanged in Benghazi for objecting to Gadhafi's Jamahiriya.

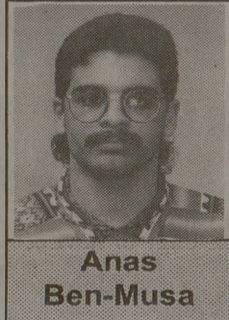
The majority of Libyans realize that these changes can be only temporary and with any excuse Gadhafi would revert back to a pseudo-democratic position.

Some might ask why does he want to isolate himself from the rest of the world.

It gives him the best opportunity to install his form of government without outside interference or close scrutiny. There would be no influence of Western ideology or culture to prevent the installation of Jamahiriya.

He is that clever and that evil. I know because my grandmother told me a few years ago that she had saved money for retirement and to buy gifts for her grandchildren, but because of Gadhafi's policies she had nothing to live on or to give. That is all she wanted to do. My grandmother only wanted to spoil her grandchildren. To me, money is not important, yet at that moment I felt Gadhafi stole something far worse from my grandmother . . . her dignity.

*Ben-Musa is a sophomore history and journalism major*



Anas Ben-Musa

## Mail Call

### Women must fight sexual jokes

I fully agree with Toni Garrard's article about societal attitudes towards women. But I would like to add a few thoughts.

Men aren't the only ones who keep this attitude alive. When men tell sexist jokes in the presence of women, if those women don't voice their disapproval of this casual form of sexism, then the women themselves become perpetrators of the attitudes against our sex's intelligence and integrity. By passively accepting the joke, we all become guilty. I realize it's difficult; even around my close male friends, I feel that it's too hard to speak up against a simple joke aimed at a blonde, a sorority member or any other female stereotype. So I swallow my pride and try to laugh convincingly, even though I find the joke degrading. After all it's only "in fun" and who wants to create an uncomfortable moment about a joke?

Until women can confidently set the example for society as a whole by voicing our disapproval and disappointment in the sexism displayed in joke, commercials or T-shirts, how can we expect

society to do the same.

### Change rapists, not the rest of us

Thinking men and women who value your autonomy, unite! For there are, in fact, two enemies lurking among us and neither one is any behavioral threat.

The first of our enemies is not the rapist but rather the mentality that seems to justify rape. There is no way of identifying this enemy in advance. This mentality cannot be attributed to every y-chromosome, every rabid right-winger who thinks women shouldn't be sexy or independent, or every rabid left-winger who thinks women shouldn't be much different from men. But the victim is all of us: all women afraid to walk alone at night, all men afraid to kiss or even flirt with women too much for fear of a misunderstanding.

I am tired of hearing the endless justifications. She was dressed provocatively. She should not have gone to his room. She should have fought

harder, screamed louder, made her objections more plain. Most of all, I'm tired of hearing that it couldn't have been rape because she already had a sexual history. If I invite people into my home and give them expensive gifts, it's a far cry from someone breaking into my home and stealing my stereo.

We shouldn't have to make concession to end this problem, but apparently we do. The solution is not marches, or awareness, or re-education. The problem is too extensive for those measures to work. While I respect and applaud NOW's motives for holding the Take Back the Night program, I'm enough of a realist to recognize that the only way to take back the night is by force. Rapists need to learn a fundamental law of physics: for every action, there is an opposite and equal reaction.

So women, here's our solution: dress just as provocatively as you like. Wear miniskirts with thigh bikinis, if that suits you. Walk alone at 3 in the morning, go back to men's apartments, and have whatever sexual history you're comfortable with. But always wear clothes that allow you a full range of movement. Take self-defense classes, lift weights, carry tear gas or a stun gun. Be prepared for a fight, and recognize the fact that you can't count on being safe anywhere—your apartment, the library, the MSC, even your

church. If we have to make concessions to prevent rapes, let it be on our terms and not theirs. We shouldn't be the ones hiding to avoid this situation; the rapists should. We should give them ample reasons to avoid it.

*Jane K. Linnstaedter Class of '91*

### Have an opinion? Express it!

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers.

All letters are welcome. Letters must be signed and must include classification, address and a daytime phone number for verification purposes. They should be 250 words or less. Anonymous letters will not be published.

The Battalion reserves the right to edit all letters for length, style and accuracy. There is no guarantee the letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 013 Reed McDonald, sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111 or can be faxed to 845-2647.