

## EDITORIALS

### Parking madness

#### Department ignores problems

Another semester has started, bringing with it the almost inevitable article on the Department of Parking, Traffic and Transit.

However, far from whining about trivialities, we mean to call attention to a situation that is not only unacceptable, but completely avoidable.

If you have been one of the countless students who spent hours in line to obtain your bus pass or parking permit, you may share our concern.

One letter writer this week who said he waited in such a line for an hour and a half seemed to have been unable to get a satisfactory explanation for the long wait.

That may be because there simply is no reasonable explanation, given that:

These lines appear every fall and come as no surprise to anyone --

PTTS should have records indicating the numbers of permits issued each year and could be expected to be able to anticipate the demand after factoring in the number of permits they mail out --

Ten parking tickets would likely pay for one temporary employee for the first week of school who could assist in selling/distributing passes

and hangtags to speed up the line --

And, finally, an hour and a half to two hours is just far too long to have to wait.

The situation is made worse by the fact that PTTS discontinued the grace period during the first week of school for those without permits that was given in years past.

Students have been ticketed this week for the lack of a permit that they could not obtain without missing the very classes they came to campus to attend. And no nonsense about riding the bus or parking in a garage -- the large number of students needing permits could never fit on the buses and in the garages along with those who normally use them.

PTTS had to know that drivers would, for all practical purposes, be forced to park without permits, yet they issued tickets without regard for the hopeless situation they created. And if they did not know, somebody should be directed to a less demanding job.

A good move would be for PTTS to rescind all tickets issued for lack of a permit this first week.

A better move would be for them to show a little more concern for their "customers."

### Look before you leap

#### Ignoring traffic is pointless danger

Some issues are flashier and more exciting than the lack of attention thousands of Texas A&M students are giving to their own safety when crossing the streets on and around campus.

No empirical data, no body count, can be cited as the basis for this concern, yet the issue of pedestrian safety is important nevertheless.

Long ago, our parents went through great pains in an effort to teach us to "look both ways" before crossing the street. If a child playing in front of the house ran into the street to fetch a wayward ball, there was hell to pay from mortified adults.

Yet every day, hundreds of A&M students blithely ignore oncoming traffic before crossing the streets of Aggieland as if magically protected.

There are many reasons why students may not be paying proper attention to their safety as pedestrians.

The life of a student can be hectic, with classes, tests, homework and domestic chores. Commuter

students are often running late for classes and thus are more prone to take risks at red lights and intersections.

Another reason for the lack of student concern could be the misnomer of "right of way." Right of way only exists when someone chooses to yield it to you. The morgue is filled with people who had the right of way.

On the other hand, some students just try to cross University Drive after one too many pitchers at Northgate.

All these reasons will seem quite trivial the moment you disappear beneath the wheels of a car.

Perhaps this will all be construed as paternal preachiness. After all, we are all adults here.

On the other hand, nobody wants to be the one to run someone over, either.

Remember that all College Station drivers are not as alert or competent as one would hope. Don't let one of them involve you in their first auto-pedestrian accident.

Silver Taps plays often enough.

## Sky's the limit on gratuitous sex

### Advertisers seem to rely too much on titillation

by ROBERT E. VASQUEZ

Birds do it. Bees do it. Models wearing Calvin Klein jeans do it. "It" is sex. And it's the hottest word in advertising.

From high fashion fragrances to laundry detergents, advertisers are taking advantage of the marketing rule: Sex sells.

Half-naked women romp across bedrooms, singing the praises of a new shampoo. Beefy models display the virtues of colognes in magazine ads that contain no actual scent, yet reek of sex.

Something stinks. Though bare flesh has long been recognized as one of the surest ways to sell -- well, anything -- the last decade has seen the rise of advertising innuendo reach a fevered climax.

Calvin Klein raised (or lowered) the standard when he aired a commercial with a 15-year-old Brooke Shields purring (on hands and knees) that nothing comes between her and her Calvin Klein jeans -- "nothing." Sales of those jeans skyrocketed.

"Jeans are about sex," Klein said in an interview. "Calvin Klein ads are about fantasy. And people love both. Depending on the product I'm advertising, I want it to be controversial, I like for people to notice."

Klein may be innovative, but he's certainly not alone. Other jeans-makers have taken their cue from Klein's success and launched their own brand of sex-for-sales campaigns.

"Guess" jeans hired model Claudia Shiffer to romp in their clothes while the camera flashed. Again, sales skyrocketed.

Media critic Sylvia Spring said the ad displayed sexism, not jeans. "What I saw was a Bridgette Bardot look-alike," she said. "It's a different way of packaging her, but it's still a woman as a sex object. She's a plaything."

Although objectifying women is often considered a sign of a cave man mentality, ogling men as sex symbols seems to be a popular pastime of the modern woman.

Again, it was Klein who led the industry into the beefcake era. This time men became the subjects in exploitative ads. In some ads, nude or nearly nude men were placed next to fully clothed women to reverse the traditional erotic imagery.

Even television ads, long known to be more conservative than those in magazines, began to soften the standard against bare flesh in network commercials.

In 1987 the three major networks would allow men's underwear to be advertised, but only in hand; they could not be worn. One commercial showed a woman, clad only in lingerie, holding a pair of Fruit of the Loom briefs across her boyfriend's midriff. He was wearing pajama bottoms.

Advertising executive Pam Freir wrote in Marketing magazine, "Sex is a fact of life. Despite the fact that it's been known to topple governments, cause earth tremors and trigger sudden headaches, people, for the most part, are in favor of it."

Maybe so. But gratuitous sex in advertising tests the limits of good taste. One Canadian commercial showed two people kissing heavily in a convertible. After a few heated moments, a narrator spoke the brand name of the car's stereo and said, "It's the second best form of entertainment in a car."

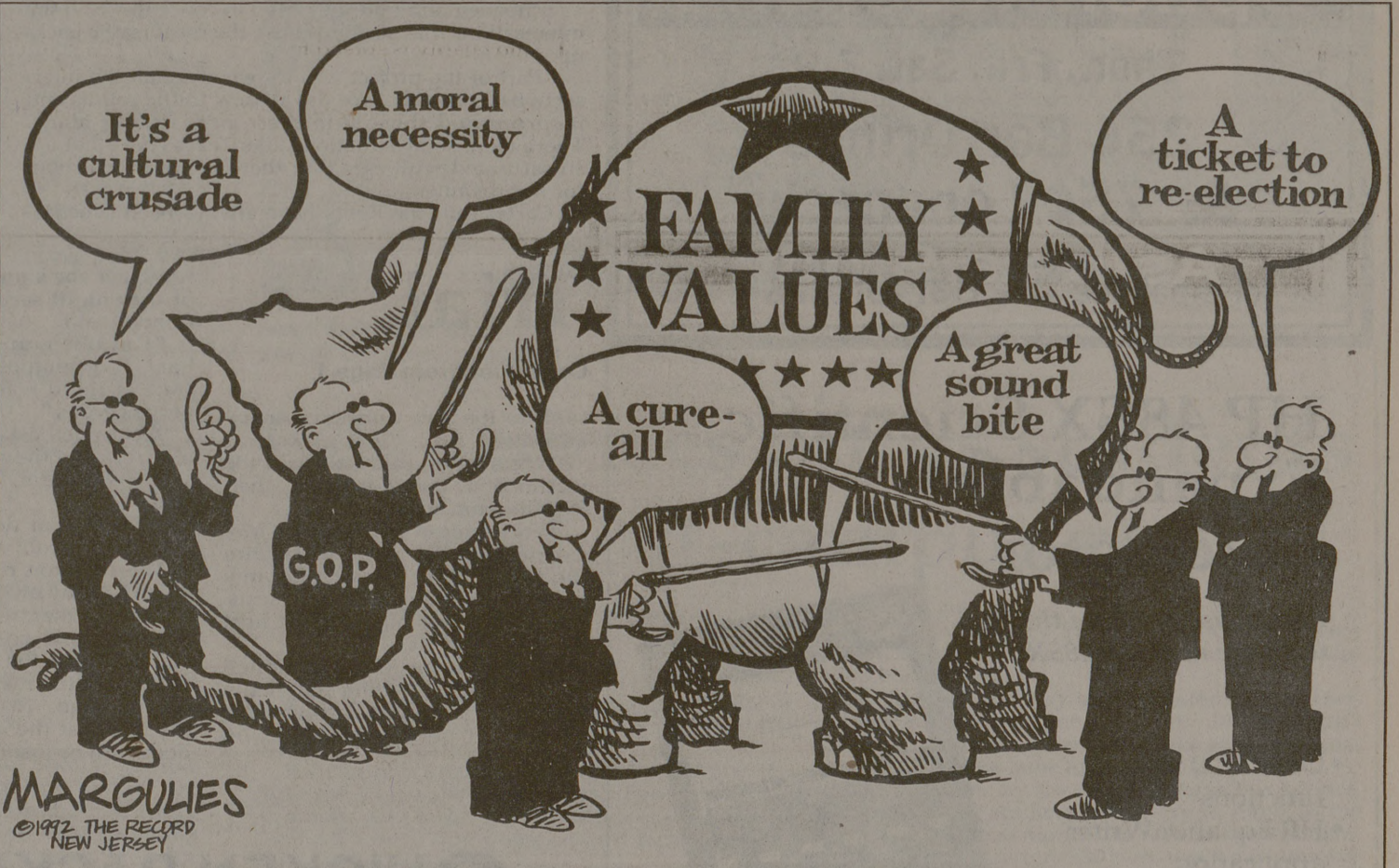
Certainly, sex can be entertaining. But to use it so freely in advertising, simply because it is a natural process, makes one wonder what other natural processes could be used to sell merchandise.

Sure, advertising with sex can be fun, but a little self-restraint goes a long way.

Consumers can speak up by refusing to purchase products sold with gratuitous sex in advertising.

Or they can do nothing, as Freir suggested. Sounding much like an Aggie former student who once ran for governor of Texas, Freir said, "Instead of becoming upset, maybe we should all just relax and enjoy it."

Vasquez is a senior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion



## MAIL CALL

### Avoid religious indoctrination

During the next few weeks, every religious organization on campus is going to try to get you to attend a "free" social event or rally. This is a letter of warning and an appeal for sanity to all incoming students. Be wary, all that smiles and is friendly is not necessarily looking out for your best interests. As an ex-"Bible thumper" I believe that I can offer a unique perspective on this situation, and possibly prevent another brainwashing or two.

It seems that Christ sets the believer free only to have the "church" and religious organizations bind him again with rituals, guilt, absolutes and social manipulation. The key to retaining the gift of freedom is found in the distinction between Christ and the Christian religion. The distinction is very clear, and yet it is obscured by both non-believers who see no difference, and religious leaders who

don't think of themselves as religious.

If you truly believe that those organizations who are chasing you are loving, accepting bodies, simply try to espouse something contrary to their leaders (e.g. are you a "good Christian," and do you believe and do the "right things"). This is the complete opposite of the unconditional love of Christ, who they claim to "worship" (yet, another religious concept.) One quickly discovers that conditional "love" is not love at all.

I don't want to say that religion has no social value, because for many people, church is only social life they have. All I wish is that these radical religious groups would separate their religion and social events from Christ, and stop claiming to have a call from God to be a morality watchdog when all they are doing is promoting religious indoctrination.

So, before you sacrifice your freedom for some religious group, remember that God does not belong to any religious group. Before you sacrifice your studies to attend some religious meeting, remember that the fear of God is the BEGINNING of wisdom, not the end of it. And, before you sacrifice who you are for the mythical "ideal Christian," remember the wisdom of David, who said, "I am what I am by the will of God," (Psalms) instead of the religious alternative of "I must be what my leaders and friends say I should be."

### Honor needed in football, too

I am writing in regard to one play during the Pigskin Classic. From the view that was shown on the television, it was clear that your defensive man did not intercept the football, but instead scooped it off the ground acting as if he had caught it.

I'm troubled that your player not only came up as if he had intercepted the ball instead of leaving it on the ground, but that he never made any motion to correct the call.

My main concern is not your team's apparent attitude of "Cheat if you can get away with it," but that several young people watch these games and look to you players as role models. Is this an image and/or attitude we wish to put forth? Is playing fairly, correcting bad calls and being honest not a part of good sportsmanship? Do our actions on the playing field not carry over into other areas of life, i.e. taxes, relationships, etc.?

In closing, I would say that while I am not an Aggie, I have been impressed with the code of honor that is an Aggie tradition. Therefore, I ask, "Does this code of honor pertain only to the classroom and the Corps and not to the athletic department?"

Kenneth Brobst  
Class of '94

Judith Classen  
College Station

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