

## EDITORIAL

### Force-fed education Multicultural classes can't be forced

While being hailed as a great leap forward in education, multicultural curriculum is at best a flawed non-scientific verifiable argument and at worst, propaganda which can only serve to further polarize America's melting pot.

Dr. Leonard Jefferies, chairman of the black studies group at the City University of New York, also serves on New York State Board of Education's multi-cultural development committee. Jefferies claims that the white race consists of "ice people," whose endless savagery is due to a lack of melanin, the chemical that turns blacks into benign "sun people" with intellectual advantages. Is this to be viewed as progress or retribution?

This is no better than when, in the 1930's, American public schools were teaching that the black race evolved from apes, while the "higher" non-black races were created by God.

New York State education commissioner Thomas Sobol appointed a special task force to adopt a curriculum of inclusion, aimed at, among other things, exposing students to "historical heroes of minority cultures."

We think that's a great idea. Except for the fact that the task force has recommended the likes of Pedro Albizu Campos, whose contribution to American society was the attempted assassination of Harry S. Truman.

It seems as if some of the content of multicultural classes is at least as flawed as the traditional teachings it is supposed to correct.

This certainly does not mean that other cultures, especially those of

American minorities, are not worthy of study. Classes in minority studies and culture should be an option for any who wish to attend them.

The question is whether such classes should be required of all students.

If so, which classes, or in other words, what races or ethnic groups should be studied? Can any be left out, or must we include them all?

The answer, we think, is that such classes should not be requirements. While some schools have submitted to demands and pressure from small but vocal groups, many others have agreed with that position.

One notable example is the University of Texas, which has repeatedly defeated attempts to mandate a multicultural curriculum in the last few years.

Western culture is not necessarily better than other cultures by any means. All cultures have their share of glory and of tragedy, of accomplishment and of injustice.

Traditional courses in Western culture simply have the benefit of being able to explain the foundation and development of the nation in which we live. As other ethnic groups have made their contributions, those contributions should be included in material taught to students.

That is not to say that instruction in other cultures must be given equal emphasis or supplant traditional instruction.

There can be no doubt that the history books must be more inclusive. Let's fix them without making them irrelevant.

## Great Commission has no secrets See group for yourself before believing cult charges

by TIM THORNTON

Guest columnist of The Battalion

I noted with great concern Matthew Dickerson's column in the September 2 Battalion in which he rather casually labels Great Commission (A&M Christian Fellowship) as a cult. I have been involved in and have been familiar with the working of AMCF for over six years, and have seen nothing in the local organization that would justify Dickerson's claim.

Dickerson mentioned that Dr. Ronald Enroth's recent book, Churches that Abuse, contains references to Great Commission. Enroth related very specific charges against the organization; however, his charges are based on claims made seven years ago by Jerry MacDonald, who left the organization eleven years ago. The Great Commission movement has been around for 22 years. At the time MacDonald left, the organization's total membership was only about 1,000; it now numbers close to 15,000.

MacDonald was involved in a Great Commission Church in Norman, Okla. This was a church that Great Commission readily admits had some serious problems. Enroth, however, took the alleged experiences of MacDonald and projected them onto the entire organization. In the paper, "A Brief Analysis of Ronald Enroth's Book Churches that Abuse," Great Commission lists three basic concerns about Enroth's treatment of the organization:

1) It attributes to Great Commission practices and teaching that, if true at all, were isolated incidents and not characteristic of all of the churches;

2) The severity of the problems in particular churches (including the one in Norman) were not to the extreme portrayed in the book;

3) The reader may interpret that some of these alleged practices are condoned and present in the Great Commission movement today, which they are not.

The paper doesn't just complain about Enroth's book, though; it deals point-by-point with the allegations made.

As a movement and an organization, Great Commission has matured greatly over the last decade, especially in the last few years. A major milestone was reached a year ago when the national organization published a paper entitled, "A Statement Recognizing Early Errors and Weaknesses in the Development of the Great Commission Association of

Churches." It is a very frank and humble self-examination of the movement's history; it gets specific about many of the problems that the movement has had in the past, and it discusses the steps taken to correct these problems. It is in recognition of this progress that Dr. Enroth concludes by saying, "One of the most encouraging evidences of change appears to be taking place within the Great Commission Association of Churches..." The current leadership (which includes many of the original leaders) has been consulting with evangelical pastors, lay persons, former members, and various well-known Christian organizations in an effort to chart a new course. I have met with several of the national leaders on two occasions, and I am convinced of their sincerity in wanting to begin a process of restoration and healing, as well as their desire to chart an organizational change.

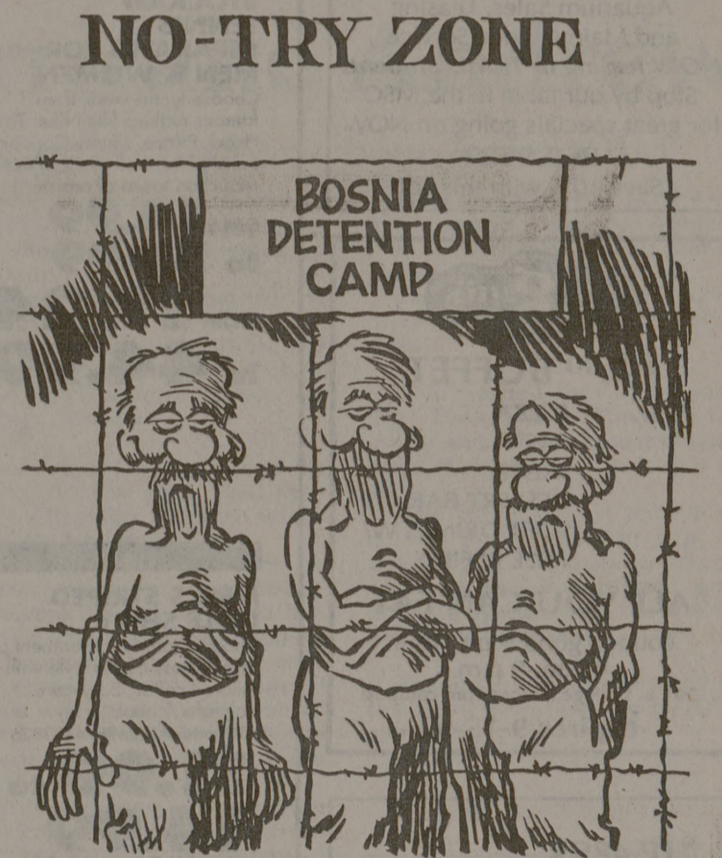
Earlier this year Dickerson wrote an article that viciously attacked Great Commission in particular, and evangelical Christians in general, for the local magazine The Touchstone, which calls itself a "progressive/left journal." Among the things he accuses us of is — are you ready for this? — evangelism.

He levels the criminal charge that Great Commission believes the Bible is true. He then goes on to present in a twisted manner the beliefs of evangelical Christians. The specific charges against the local Great Commission group are, I believe, just plain wrong or are grossly exaggerated. The more I read, the more I become convinced that Dickerson's beef isn't just with Great Commission, but with the whole belief system of evangelical Christians.

To my point: You shouldn't take Dickerson at his word any more than you should take me or Dr. Enroth at our word. These are very serious charges that Dickerson levels, and the best way for you to come to any solid conclusion is for you to investigate for yourself. You can talk to people you know in AMCF, maybe attend one or two of their meetings. Ask them for a free copy of each of the two above-mentioned Great Commission papers.

Wear your skeptic's hat as long as you need to. Great Commission — including the local organization — has nothing to hide concerning its past or its present.

Thornton is a former student and former member of the A&M Christian Fellowship



## MAIL CALL

### Multicultural classes a must

As a member of the student group that approached President Mobley following the Los Angeles riots last spring, I feel that there are some points in the September 1 Battalion interview which need clarification.

First, a one-hour required colloquium on multicultural issues was proposed as a short-term measure until the University could infuse multicultural viewpoints throughout the curriculum, which was our long-term goal. The group realized that implementing such a plan would take time, so we suggested something that the University could do in the meantime. The class is not meant as an alternative to infusion, but a time-filler.

The idea of the class was to teach A&M students about the dominant minority groups in American society, Blacks and Hispanics, because it was

evident after the riots that race relations in America are atrocious. The class was not an attempt to culture anyone as much as it was an attempt to educate. Education is the key to eradicating the diseases of racism and discrimination which have plagued American society for so long. Also, the class was not an attempt to educate students on international cultures, but on the African-American, Hispanic, and Native-American cultures America still misunderstands and misrepresents after hundreds of years.

And, while I am sure that the Study Abroad program is an excellent one, it is not a feasible idea to send A&M's 42,000 plus student body overseas so that they can learn to appreciate different cultures. It would be much easier to appreciate the different cultures we have right here in America.

Finally, America will never move forward until it comes to terms with the evils it has committed in the past and develops positive solutions to the problems which grew out of those evils. President Bush learned, to his and the American economy's regret, that you cannot concentrate on foreign policy and ignore domestic problems.

Thus, President Mobley, while you are creating "globally-literate individuals," make sure you create domestically literate individuals because at the end of the business day, people still have to come home.

Joseph Gourrier, President  
Texas A&M Chapter, N.A.A.C.P.

### Faculty member grateful for help

I would like to publicly thank the students who helped save my position from the budget axe this year. Thanks to your conversations with key administrators, the decision to cut my job was reversed, and I am here another year. I hope your actions serve as an example to other students that the university is open to the needs of students whenever those concerns are expressed with dignity and pursued with diligence. Thanks again.

Greg Moses  
Visiting Lecturer, Philosophy

### No good news in real world

In an article in the Houston Chronicle, Bill Cosby said some of the biggest dummies in the world graduated from college. He's right. I've checked out the real world during the summer and found that it takes skills, skills you don't have. I want to warn the freshmen that if you cannot get a 3.0 or higher in your major, your degree is largely — but not entirely —

meaningless. Only the brightest lights make it in the real world. It is very competitive.

If you possess these qualities, you might make it in the real world. You must be beautiful, bright to very bright (3.0 - 4.0), sorority or fraternity or Corps member, strong interpersonal skills (can't be learned), excellent writing skills, excellent communication skills, and be experienced commercially in your field (no McDonald's or minimum wage jobs in your resume). If you have the above, then maybe, just maybe, you might make it.

Brent Overturf  
Class of '92

### Why no women in ramp dorms?

Are there any women on this campus interested in saving money? Female students who can stand to live on campus could save \$472 per academic year if Law, Walton, Hart or Puryear opened up a single ramp for women. Some of these old, male-only, non-air dorms are scheduled to be razed to the ground in 1994. Tearing down perfectly useful, cheap housing is an abominable waste that forces those of us who are not rolling in "Daddy's money" to live in more expensive

dorms. Giving women no cheaper alternative than corridor dorms when men have the option of saving bags of money is insane and discriminatory.

Is it just that women can't stand the heat? Do you have to have air conditioning?

I am not a "femi-nazi" trying to force men out of their homes. I just want to save money because I am not tripping over bundles of cash or anything... Look, I didn't start this whole "women-at-A&M" thing. If it is a problem, talk to the guys who opened the university to women. I have written to the university to ask about rounding up all of us thrifty Ags and asking for a ramp, and I was informed that no one has ever asked about females in the cheap dorms. Why, Aggies?

Julia Stavenhagen  
Class of '93

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