

## EDITORIAL

### Knee-jerk response

#### Auction restrictions hypersensitive

The Battalion applauds the swift action taken against Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity for the racist overtones of their recent "Jungle Party."

We are confident that Sigma Alpha Epsilon will learn from the experience and that other organizations will profit by their example.

The sanctions put forth by the Interfraternity Council and implemented by the University demonstrate that racism, even that resulting from ignorance, will not be tolerated at Texas A&M.

Though the swift and severe punishment of the SAE incident once again proves A&M's commitment to ethnic diversity and multiculturalism, this instance of insensitivity must not serve as a pathway to the perils of politically correct tyranny.

The Department of Multicultural Services determined that the idea of a "date auction" fundraiser for the United Way could possibly offend members of the campus community.

Brandishing the sword of sensitivity, the Department of Student Affairs and the Department of Multicultural Services issued an ultimatum to Eppright Hall, the sponsor of the event: reformat the fundraiser in a "PC" fashion, or postpone the Date Auction.

One might make the questionable argument that the auctioning off of celebrity dates for charity is culturally offensive because it reminds us of earlier slave auctions.

However, the fact that Eppright Hall spent a great deal of time and effort on the event, and the fact that the celebrity dates willingly volunteered to participate in it both seem to have been ignored when the Department of Multicultural Services issued its eleventh-hour ultimatum.

Erica Davis, National Miss Black and Gold for 1992, said that her understanding of the event did not include hints of cultural insensitivity. This further weakens the case for forcing changes in the auction.

We appeal to the University not to submit to this sort of "destroy the village in order to save it" mentality.

Such a "sensitivity Gestapo" approach stifles the very atmosphere of intellectual freedom that characterizes world class universities.

### Privatization of campus food services a losing deal all around

I have been hearing a lot about privatization in the local newspapers and from some of my friends. We know that the University has been taking bids from the Marriott group and ARA and that ARA has entered the superior bid, offering \$2 million to be paid over a five-year contract.

GUEST COLUMN

LYNN P. PYE

They wish to take over operations of Billy Mac's in the airport and to renovate the Underground Market to make it similar to a mall eating area, with a Burger King Express, a Chic-Fil-A, a Blimpie's, a Mexican restaurant to be named in the future (probably Taco Bell), Easy Go (basically a self-serve refrigerator), I Can't Believe It's Yogurt, and Gretel's Bake Shop. People have spoken vaguely of the consequences of privatization of food services at A&M. Well, I did a little investigation into the facts of the matter and the results were a bit startling.

First, I would like to address the little matter of privatization being problematic. A prime example can be found here on campus. Barnes & Noble took over the operation of the MSC bookstore last year. This privately owned company is profit-oriented, and thus searches out the best opportunities to make money instead of the best opportunities to save money for the students. Also, any money that is made in profit goes back to the mother company in New York instead of staying within the University to be used for the students' good. Finally, any suggestions or complaints must be sent through a bureaucratic jungle of red tape before being acted upon, if acted upon at all. This was not the case when the University was running the show.

Secondly, I do not believe that any of us on campus would like to be required to purchase a meal plan. This, however, was the result in several cases where a privately owned company was allowed to come on campus to run just a few private fast food outlets. At Indiana University, the Marriott group, ARA's opponent in the bid war, gained total privatization. ARA has total privatization on campus at the University of Texas at Arlington and at the University of Missouri at Columbia. In each case, meal plans

are mandatory and food prices are higher than before privatization. Also, the fast food service outlets (the places that supply their meat, etc.) use a lower grade meat than does the service outlet that A&M uses. If ARA or any other company is allowed to come on campus, the net result will be dissatisfaction with the food services offered.

Finally, it is my opinion that ARA has plans to take over operations of the Food Services Department here on campus. Forgetting for the moment that they have done so in several other instances, their numbers simply do not add up.

They say they will pay the University a guaranteed \$2 million over the life of the five-year contract, which should tell us something about the profits they expect to make. This means that they will pay roughly \$400,000 a year. A decent return on investment would be 10 percent. Assuming this is the figure they are using, this means they plan to gross \$4 million per year.

Let us assume they operate year-round, without mentioning the inevitable drop-off in business during the summer and the lack of business during the winter vacation and spring break. This means that they plan to gross roughly \$11,000 per day. Income such as that could only be generated by about 2,000 customers per day, about 75 percent of Sbis's current business. Realizing that they will be operating in the Underground Market and Food Court, which currently has a seating capacity of 156, it doesn't appear that ARA can possibly make a profit.

So what does it mean if a large profit-oriented company decides to take a loss on an investment? It means they plan to get cut taking a slice of the pie, with the assurance they can get the whole thing if they wait. Just as in other situations, ARA will try to take over the food services here on campus if they get a foothold, with the likelihood of the aforementioned consequences.

One final thought: I have not heard whether this issue will go to a vote before the students or simply be decided upon by the administration. If it is to be voted upon, the voters should be made aware of the ramifications of privatization. If the issue is not to be voted upon, it would represent a serious slap in the face to the student body of this University.

Pye is a sophomore computer science major

## If at first you don't succeed ...

### Enthusiasm, perseverance offer keys to success

Albert Einstein flunked algebra. Vince Lombardi was still a line coach at the age of 44. Thomas Edison tried more than 2,000 filaments for the electric light bulb before he found one that worked. Walt Disney went broke seven times and had a nervous breakdown. Bill Clinton lost his first re-election bid before serving another four consecutive terms as governor of Arkansas. Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team.



DWAYNE PURVIS  
Columnist

In the words of that great American philosopher Zig Ziglar, "The only difference between a big shot and a little shot is that a big shot is just a little shot that kept shooting."

These successful people understood that persistence is our most powerful tool for achievement. Unfortunately, we can't fight every battle. But we can learn to persist in those battles we do choose to fight.

When I was in junior high school, my father told me in the proper fatherly tone, "Son, choose your fights carefully." Dad understood that you can't fight on every front and expect to make progress on any.

The goals we adopt, those gauntlets we pick up, should pass three tests. Goals must be specific, meaningful, and possible. Seneca wrote, "Our plans miscarry because we have no aim. When a man does not know what harbor he is making for, no wind is the right wind."

If a task is not meaningful, don't bother with it. We humans have limited strength and time; we can't afford to waste it.

Greek mythology tells us about a man cursed to spend his entire life trying to push a boulder up a hill and out of a valley. Every time he pushed the huge stone near the top of the hill, the gods knocked it away from him, and the boulder rolled back into the valley. The mythical Tantalus spent his life on a meaningless and impossible task.

Goals must be possible, even if the possibility is very narrow. More importantly, you must believe your task is possible.

Our beliefs and feelings are really the most important factors in determining whether or not we will endure. Two specific attitudes, two sides of the same coin, enable us to persist.

To keep fighting, we must believe that we can accomplish our goal. We must have a good perspective on failure. Warren Bennis, a nationally recognized expert on leadership, observes that the vocabularies of the most successful people in America simply do not include the word "failure." Successful people talk about problems or setbacks or hitches but never failures.

The second necessary intangible is enthusiasm — the belief that we will accomplish our goal. David McClelland completed a comprehensive, long-term study of Harvard University graduates and discovered that motivation played a very significant role in determining how successful a person becomes.

The word "enthusiasm" evolved from the Greek word "entheos." Translated literally, it means "God within." To maintain a positive and enthusiastic attitude, we must have an intimate relationship with a Higher Power. We each need a secret place where we find peace, hope, and joy. Each need a quiet place to nurture the spirit, to imbue us with the energy to continue the fight.

For some people, the secret place is an intimate relationship with a spouse. For others, the holy place is in a sailboat or on a horse, on a mountain or beside a river. I find that the most fulfilling and uplifting experiences come from an intimate relationship with our personal and loving Creator. Isaiah, the ancient Hebrew prophet, agreed. He wrote, "But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings as eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

Though you may be plugged in to a good power source, the time may come for strategic retreat. Redirecting your energy can be the best option.

Let me tell you a story to illustrate. Rocco grew up the son of a poor immigrant, Italian family. He dropped out of high school to take a job, but his passion was baseball. He dreamed of playing professionally.

One day, he got his chance. A scout invited him to try out for a professional team. Rocco was a good batter. He had a quick and hard swing, but his fielding left something to be desired. The coach had to cut Rocco. When the scout complemented Rocco's swing and explained his deficiencies, Rocco took to heart the coach's praise.

He walked away from baseball and into another sport. The promoters changed his name. Rocky Marciano fought 42 professional bouts, including five title matches, and never lost a fight.

Calvin Coolidge also understood this power of persistence when he wrote: "Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men of talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent."

Choose your fights carefully. But when your cause is just, persist. When the importance is great, persist. Though forces seem mounted against you, persist. And don't forget those inspiring words of Winston Churchill: "Never, never, never, never, never, never, never give up."

Purvis is a junior petroleum engineering major

Submitted for your approval:

Our new nickname!

# THE FIGHTIN' TEXAS A&M

## AGGIES!

Politically-correct, multi-cultural, environment-friendly, socially-conscious, alternative-lifestyle, neo-liberal, solar-powered, ethnically-diverse, recyclable, user-friendly, non-ethnocentric, non-phallogocentric, human/animal symbolic scholastic representatives for athletic and non-athletic competitions!

Sponsored by the Thought Police, oops, Multi-Cultural Services

## MAIL CALL

### Intolerance at A&M a minor problem

Recently, I have seen two letters in The Battalion complaining of intolerance to those espousing "alternative" (punk, new wave) dressing habits. To all of those people with enough cajones to look different on this campus I would like to pass on some hard-earned advice: You've got it easy, so relax and enjoy it.

I was a skinhead (non-Nazi) from 1981-1985 in Providence, R.I. Back then, all New England punks knew each other and banded together to keep from getting our butts kicked. Fortunately, I escaped the beatings, but most of the guys, and some of the girls I knew there took it hard and often. Same goes for the Boston punks bat-

ling with the "southie" rednecks. Club bouncers would frequently instigate riots. New York and Los Angeles were insanely violent.

I am not complaining, mind you; it added a certain sense of urgency and excitement to the whole situation. Instead of sucking up, try doing something to freak people out when they give you a hassle. Nacho cheese poured on your Doc Marten boots? Try loudly questioning their sexual virility. Creamed corn has many wonderful attention-getting qualities too.

Enjoy it now, because you may have to "sell out" when it comes time to get a job, like I did.

Andy Rosenholm  
Graduate student

### Clinton up close -- not a pretty sight

Growing up in Arkansas has given me the distinct horror — I mean honor — of knowing Bill Clinton. I have listened to the governor flat out lie to the people of Arkansas, humiliate a high school student at Arkansas' Boys State, and watched him raise taxes 128 times.

Economic performance in Arkansas

was given a "D" and Arkansas development capacity received an "F" for youth trying to find work in the state, good luck. In 1990, the youth employment rate was 23.1 percent, second highest in the nation.

During Clinton's tenure as governor, the people of Arkansas have endured Clinton's flatulations of being the education governor/president. How can one boast of educational success when one's record proves otherwise? The magazine ranked Arkansas 45th in pupil spending in 1983, 46th in 1984 and 50th in 1989. Clinton has raised taxes to increase teachers' salaries. Teachers' salaries ranked 50th in 1989 and remained 50th in 1989. Would you think it more than just a coincidence that he raised the salaries during his premiere bid for the presidency? Moreover, the increase was intended for two years, but once Arkansas passed Mississippi, Clinton believed the 49th place was good enough. "Last funding" halted this year's raise.

As far as environmental initiatives let the facts remind you — Arkansas ranks dead last in environmental initiatives. If passing through the state member to only look at the beauty just don't inhale.

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