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The Battalion



100 years at Texas A&M

A&M women, the joke's on you

Laugh this one off: Candidates choked on gender



STACY FEDUCIA
Opinion Editor

This column is usually a haven of half-hearted humor and subtle satire - or at least I tend to think so. Some people have different sense of humor than I, and some people have no sense of humor at all. But this week, I have a topic guaranteed to make everyone laugh: women's issues!

HA! HA! HA! TEE! HEE! HEE! HEE! Wait! Wait! There's more! Not just any women's issues - women's issues at Texas A&M. BAAAAH! HA! HA! HO! HO... HA... ha. Huh?

That's exactly what the candidates for student body president said when I asked them THE question during the Battalion endorsement interviews: "What is your position regarding gender issues on campus?"

Slack-jawed, the candidates pondered quietly. This question was obviously not covered in their piles of pat answers and campaign rhetoric. "Could you repeat the question?"

Sure, I'll repeat it, but first I will define gender issues in small words and big type so everyone can understand. Gender issues are those issues which pertain to men and women as culturally defined entities. For example, a male gender issue would include dispelling the myth of the macho man which discourages men from showing their emotions. Women's gender issues include things such as rape, sexual harassment and discrimination. The neat thing about gender issues that they affect both women and men.

And that's what bothered me as I watched the Student Body President candidates squirm: They hadn't really thought about these issues. They hadn't considered things that directly affect up to 50 percent of their prospective constituency - and indirectly affect the entire student body.

But that's why I am here - to offer suggestions on women's issues to the incoming regime, and I'll do it in small words and big type and simple suggestions so everyone can understand and implement them with alacrity.

Rape: The University offers a lot of services such as escort services and Dial-A-Ride to protect women and men, but more can be done.

- Increase night patrols on campus. This would benefit all students who were walking across campus late at night. Just having a UPD officer drive by more often might discourage potential muggers and rapists.

- Increase lighting and emergency phones on campus.

- Increase the number of self-defense classes offered by the University. Six classes will be offered in the fall, which is an increase over this spring - but this class is in high demand every semester.

- Pressure the University to maintain awareness of rape. Last summer, University officials tried to remove the descriptive posters of an alleged rapist because they were concerned about the public relations effect these posters would have at Freshman Orientation. Let the campus community know that Student Government will not sacrifice personal safety to the god of public relations.

Sexual harassment is another problem, one that made us the laughingstock of the nation last year. Though the issue has blown over - which could be part of the problem - that the candidates didn't even think about it is the biggest joke. But before you bust a gut with that knee-slapper, here are some suggestions to help combat this issue.

- Incorporate discussions on sexual harassment and discrimination in the multiculturalism programs that Student Government is considering implementing.

- Offer programs on recognizing, combating and preventing sexual harassment to campus organizations.

- Publicize heavily the channels through which women and men should take their sexual harassment complaints and make that process more efficient.

Though rape and sexual harassment are by no means the only problems confronting women on campus, they are two of the biggest. In the long run, these two problems can be overcome by improving the representation of women in our society as a whole and on our campus in particular. The leaders of the student body can set the pace for the campus by encouraging and emphasizing women's issues.

- The Student Body President should use the prestige of his position to support women's issues. The presence of the Student Body President at such events as the NOW Rape Speak Out that was held last fall would show the campus that Student Government is committed to women at A&M.

- Finally, create a women's bureau within Student Government to help women develop their leadership skills and abilities and to encourage women to share their ideas. It could provide a reference point for women throughout the campus and could ensure that women's issues are kept in the public eye and on the agenda of Student Government. It could also encourage more women to run for Student Body President.

These of course are merely suggestions. And excuses about money and power could prevent them from being discussed. And then again, we could all still be doubled over with laughter: As women on campus, the joke's on us. It's obvious by the neglect in addressing women's issues during the campaign that the men who ran for president aren't too concerned about our issues. If they don't handle them; it's high time that we do. What is your position regarding gender issues on this campus? You heard that here first.

Feducia is a senior English and history major.

Good luck, Walker

Many issues face president-elect

Congratulations to the new 1993-94 Student Body President Brian Walker.

Although Walker's term does not officially begin until this fall, there are several issues for which he must quickly and aggressively prepare.

First, Walker must re-establish the credibility of student body elections. Last week's ballot tampering shattered the integrity of the election. Walker must encourage stronger guidelines for the election process and tougher penalties for those who violate those guidelines.

Further, most students feel detached from Student Government and consider it just a small, anonymous group of self-indulgent individuals who are working for their resume titles, not the students that they are supposed to serve. Walker must bridge the gap between student government and students.

Another concern is the question of openness and diversity for minority and ethnic groups on campus. Some groups have complained that traditions shut minorities out of the A&M culture. Whether that accusation is true must be explored with vigor.

We applaud Walker's call for a larger Greek staff to help members of the Greek system avoid racial incidents such as last year's "jungle party." Currently, there is only one adviser for the entire Greek system. Walker has said expanding the Greek staff will assist fraternities and sororities with problems such

as legal issues and zoning rights. We agree.

Since three Texas A&M System schools were given the A&M name last month, unsubstantiated rumors have surfaced that other schools will now be able to wear the Aggie ring. Walker has stressed throughout his campaign that he will fight any action that would allow students from other schools to purchase the Aggie ring.

While we agree that other schools are not a part of A&M and should not be allowed to purchase the Aggie ring, this is an issue that serves best on the campaign trail, not on the agenda of Student Body President.

Certainly, Walker was right on target in stressing the need to prepare for a possible special legislative session this fall. While legislators tackle higher education issues such as the student regent, budget cuts and tuition increases, the next student body president must be prepared to represent A&M's best interests.

Walker has previously testified before the state legislature and seems prepared for the task of representing the needs of students.

There are plenty of other issues for Walker to consider such as improving faculty relations, textbook costs and sexual assault on campus. Of course, not one student body president cannot do it all, but as long as Walker raises these issues, he will have served the students well.

Campus Elections

ARISE! Resurrection Week explained for all Aggies

"What's with this Arise thing? Is the class of '93 coming back out of the grave?" - This quote was offered by a member of the '94 Boot Dance Committee. Others have been asking similar questions about the hundreds of blue shirts that boldly say "Arise!". Many of you probably know that these shirts are just a visible part of Texas A&M's first Resurrection Week.

BOBBY DEAN
Guest Columnist

The purpose of Resurrection Week has been to call attention to the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and to celebrate His saving grace available to all people. This week will culminate in thousands of Aggie Christians worshipping Christ on Easter Sunday. Since we don't have classes tomorrow, Resurrection Week ends today. Many skeptics of both Christ's resurrection and of evangelical Christians may be very thankful of this

fact, but I am proud to proclaim that the impact of Resurrection Week is just beginning.

Some have said that this week has been planned by Christian student leaders in order to unify Aggie Christians from all walks of life and from different denominations. The truth is this week is a result of Christians who have been unified for some time now. In recent years, many Christian campus organizations have placed less emphasis on their organizations, denominations, and activities and have placed their primary emphasis on helping students KNOW Jesus Christ through a personal relationship through Him.

The unity that exists between Christians on campus is not just a result of our common experience by accepting Christ as our Savior and Lord but is a result of the common struggles and issues we face. Being a Christian who refuses to compromise the message of Christ is becoming more difficult in our society. The problem lies with the fact that the Bible says Christ is the ONLY way to salvation. This unpopularly correct message has been difficult to vocalize without the Christian being deemed "culturally insensitive." These

common struggles are drawing Aggie Christians together while we learn that our unity gives us strength.

However, unity is not the only source of the Aggie Christians' strength. God has given us His spirit which strengthens, guides and encourages us daily. It is almost like an adventure. On average, we begin each day with prayer. During this quiet time of conversation with God, we are reminded that He will lead us throughout the day. Going into the day, we follow Him - wherever He leads; we speak what He puts upon our hearts. We trust He will not lead us anywhere that He can't handle. When we come home, after a day filled with peace, we can sing "He's never failed me yet!" This is the Holy Spirit, which lives inside of us - He leads us.

The peace God gives Aggie Christians is unique to no others. It surpasses all understanding. It is because of this peace and the knowledge of who Christ is that we desire to share our message - Christ's gospel.

Learning how to proclaim this message to non-Christians without offending them or belittling them is a great challenge to Aggie Christians. What is harder

still is proclaiming Christ in this age while not living perfect lives. The cliché "Christians aren't perfect, just forgiven" remains true upon our campus. We don't pretend to be any better than any other Aggie. We just live under Christ's blood which gives us God's grace.

So unified Aggie Christians organized Resurrection Week to celebrate Easter and to "convert" other people. What's the big deal? What will be the impact on Texas A&M? Truthfully, Aggieland will probably not be radically different next week. For the most part, those who attend yell practice, Muster, and bonfire will still participate in those events. Also those who believe that life revolves around the Chicken, that protected sex before marriage is all right, that abortions are an adequate way to silence an "inconvenience", and that homosexuality is an appropriate sexual orientation will not change their ideas or lifestyles as well.

Aggie Christians don't believe what people do is the problem. What Aggies do is just a result of who they are on the inside. All people are either dead spiritually in their hearts or they are alive in Christ. Non-Christians, being dead spiritually, just respond out of who they are.

The greatest impact on Texas A&M will be on individuals and on the Christian community. Individuals who prayed to accept in their lives are now born again and truly alive spiritually. They now have the wonderful peace of the Holy Spirit and will never be the same again. They will not forget this week.

Resurrection Week will impact the Christian community by making it realize the size and scope of its mission. Aggie Christians may continue to see that the number of Christians that are willing to stand for Christ is much larger than the number of members of the Corps of Cadets.

Only this Christian Community is the keeper of THEE Spirit. Its motto also is PER UNITATUM VIS - Through Unity Strength. These unified Christians may continue to share the gospel of Christ and show Christ's love year round and not just during Resurrection Week. The impact remains to be seen. One thing is true, people that have Arisen will make a difference on this campus.

Dean is the Corps Chaplain. He is a senior speech communication major.

