

The Battalion Editorial Board

Steve O'Brien, editor in chief
Jason Loughman, managing editor
Todd Stone, city editor
Stacy Feducia, opinion page editor
Susan Owen, lifestyles editor
Kyle Burnett, news editor
Dave Thomas, news editor
Don Norwood, sports editor
Darrin Hill, photo editor

The Battalion



100 years at Texas A&M

EDITORIAL

Has justice prevailed? Public can't assume role of jury

The verdicts in the trial of the four Los Angeles police officers accused of violating Rodney King's civil rights reveal two things. First, under the right leadership and with a show of force, mob rule doesn't have to exist.

Second, even though guilty verdicts against two of the officers seem to have aided in keeping the peace, serving justice is still the most important thing. And contrary to what many political leaders are saying, only Rodney King, the police officers and people involved in the case know if justice was served.

It was only one year ago that riots tore apart south central Los Angeles after the four officers were acquitted in a state trial. Frustration over the verdicts led to the riots. A videotape that showed police beating King seemed to make a conviction in the case certain.

Blame for the riots was also placed on the depressed economy of California, a lack of hope in the inner city for many young people and a history of police brutality.

Whatever the reasons, new L.A. police chief Willie L. Williams mobilized all available L.A. officers and more than 600 National Guard troops and called for calm and restraint when the verdicts were handed down in the civil rights trial.

Last week, when two of the officers were found guilty of violating King's civil right and two were acquitted, there were no riots. The city of Los Angeles can thank chief

Williams and other community leaders including mayor Tom Bradley for law and order.

Even though peace prevailed, it doesn't mean that the officers were given a fair trial. It only means that many of the potential rioters found the two guilty verdicts acceptable.

President Clinton and other political leaders jumped on the media bandwagon and congratulated the jury for its hard work and said that justice had finally been achieved.

But Clinton doesn't know if justice prevailed, and it is not his place to become involved in the case politically. It seems as though people wanted the officers found guilty so riots could be avoided.

It may be true that the officers violated King's civil rights. That should be left for the jury to decide and no one else.

Sure, the videotape of King's beating is shocking but so is the violence we see every day. And many times, that violence is directed at police officers. It may be easy to convict the officers of violating King's civil rights if the only evidence used is the videotape, but there is probably more evidence that should be used to reach a verdict.

And unless Clinton or other community leaders are familiar with that evidence and everything involved with the case, they should not make any judgement about the verdicts. Leave that to the jury and hope that peace prevails in L.A. regardless.

Turn out the lights; the party's over Feducia explains point of her columns, her work

With all due respect to poet Allen Ginsberg: "I have seen the whines of my generation, naked, bloated on TV." We squeal; we moan; we decry; we bemoan the state of our fate. Deficit-spending will bankrupt our nation; Social Security won't be ours to collect. The environment will choke us with its toxins. Our starting salaries won't be as big as those of our parents.

WAH! Let's just quit our whining, shall we? After all, we are in college. We can wrap ourselves in the comforts of our diplomas when its cold outside, and that's a lot more than most people have, or will ever have. Maybe we won't be warm and secure tomorrow, maybe not next year or five years from now. But we are a hell of a lot better off than the other 75 percent of our generation that isn't in college.

Two years ago, I wrote a column about manual labor being a great form of birth control, and what I said then is still true today.

That summer, while fulfilling my duties as grunt worker in the plastics factory and subsequently discovering the meaning of life, "I ground up over five million defective tampon tubes - not used, mind you - defective. Regular, slender regular, super, super-plus - you name it; I ground it. . . People actually get paid for this. People actually support their families by doing this. And we take ourselves way too seriously, but that's a different column."

Well, this is that column, the moment we've all been waiting for - the "What the hell have I been talking about for the past two years?/ Obligatory sentimental goodbye column."

Yeah, yeah. I realize we have three more weeks left and I have one more column left, but my very last column is running on dead day, and I wanted you all to read my very last column so I thought I'd write it today and write about beer and my butt on dead day. So this is goodbye.

Two years ago, when I was still plain old Stacy Feducia, sister of the greater-known Kelly, I read the following words in Mail Call from Ron Garza, an annoyed reader: "I am bored to tears with the junk I read on the opinion page of The Battalion. This semester [spring '91] has confirmed



STACY FEDUCIA
Opinion Editor

my theory that every issue that causes friction between liberals and conservatives - capital punishment, gun control, politics, taxes, religion, homosexuality, and most recently, that old favorite, abortion - is recycled every few months to stir up new controversy within the student body. . . There are people who have been here for four years and have seen the same crap two or three times every semester."

Needless to say I was overwhelmed by the significance of Garza's statement. I too had grown weary of abortion-bonfire-politics, abortion-bonfire-politics, abortion-bonfire-politics.

And noticing that some high and mighty authority in the sky, like the Opinion Editor, had placed the great Garza's letter right below the farewell column of my most un-favorite columnist, I chose to embrace my destiny and immediately apply to be a Battalion columnist.

On my application and later in the paper, I pledged to eschew the pretentious politicking of my forebears and write about important things like beer, burping, buttrucks and boneheads.

Why, you ask? Because I was sick and tired of hearing self-important people write columns about self-important topics like abortion, tree-hugging, gun control, politically correctness, etc.

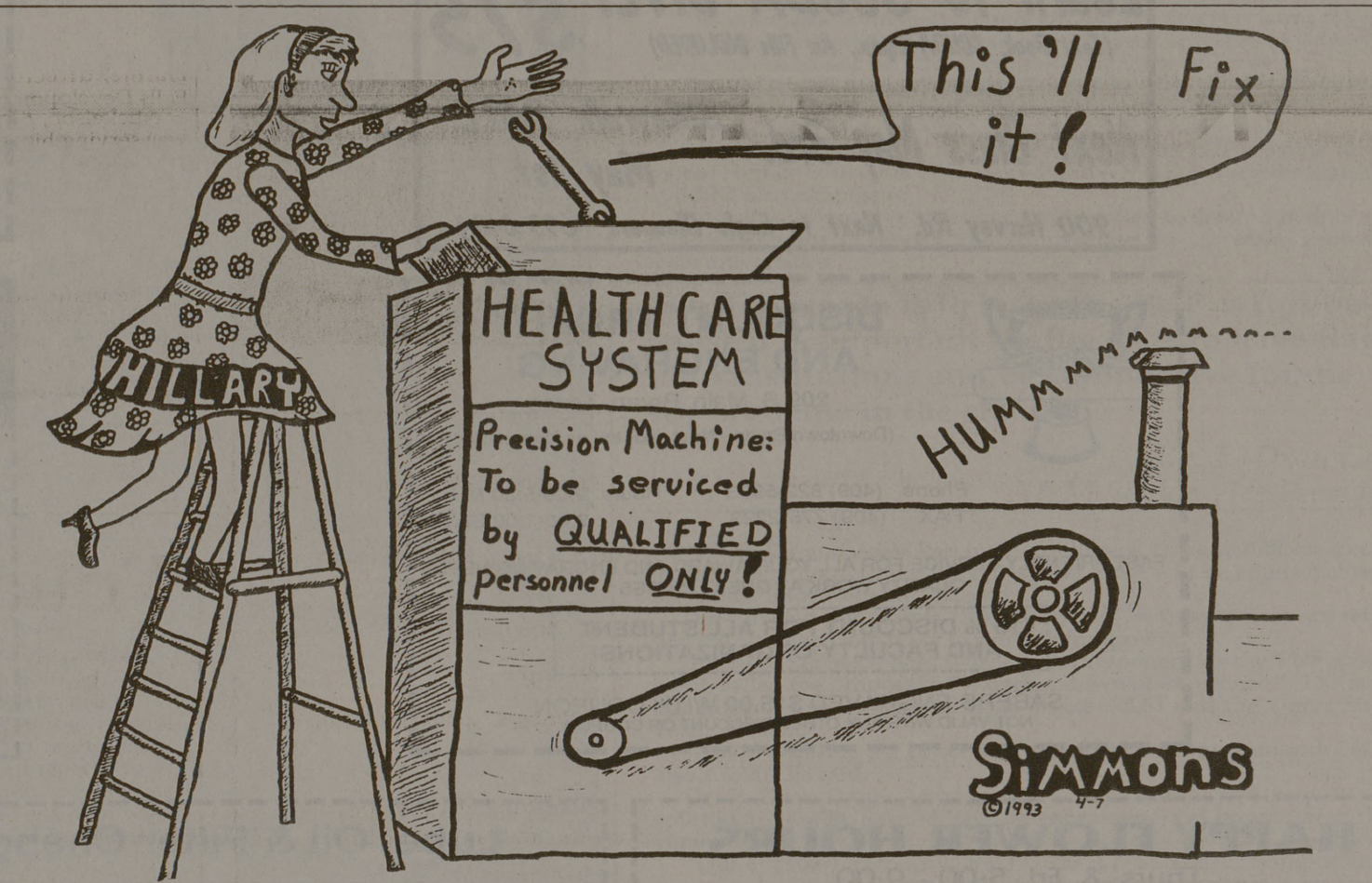
Because I, as a typical college student, felt that the typical college student probably cared as much about these subjects as I did and would only really be interested if the information were going to be covered on a test. . .

Because I felt that these self-important writers with self-important topics really took themselves way too seriously, and I think we still do.

If I've said anything for the past two years, it has been this: We take ourselves way too seriously when we should be laughing. Just laugh it off. Laugh at yourselves, laugh at the world, and if you can't do that, laugh at me and my buttrucks. Quit your bitching; quit your whining; the world turns around you and bows down before your college degrees - or it will eventually. At least we're here.

And please, don't take me seriously, I really don't want you to. Never did, except once two weeks ago. You heard it here first, and now I guess you're hearing it last. I see you on dead day.

Feducia is an unemployed, senior English and history major.



COLLEGE STATION, TX
 APRIL 20
 1993
MAIL CALL

'Campus conservative' sounds like a tabloid

Disrespect runs rampant in society; doesn't it? On the morning of April 7, I witnessed a gross display of disrespect by a reporter from the "Campus Conservative."

Outside of my POLS/WMST 317 class taught by Dr. Nikki Van Hightower sat a student who appeared to be studying diligently. He was not. After the class ended, he approached Dr. Hightower and asked her if she would like to review the article he was going to write about her lecture; presumably to be published in the "Campus Conservative"-whatever that is. She would be allowed to check for any "mistakes."

Is it not common courtesy to ask, or at the least, inform someone if you plan to listen to their lecture for an other-than-academic purpose? Dr. Hightower would not have altered her lecture, and there was plenty of seats available. She has had more experience with the

media than he could even imagine. She has had, and is still having, a very distinguished career both in and out of public life. He would be wise to change his technique. Unless, of course, he plans to continue his present course and write for a tabloid.

Elaine Mejia
Class of '96

Plumer wrong about Bell's baseball skills

I read an article about baseball by Michael Plumer in the Battalion on April 6. Although everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion, I found one comment in the article that had little or no factual backing.

The remark that George Bell's skills are diminishing and that he should be traded to a team in Mexico was completely absurd. Last year, Bell had the second highest RBI total in his career (112) along

with 2.5 home runs. That RBI total was his highest since 1987. He has continued to be an offensive force to be reckoned with in Major League Baseball. I felt that Plumer's remarks about Bell were an unjust insult.

Marvin Simpson
Class of '94

Racial slurs at Olsen have no place at A&M

The Texas A&M baseball team is ranked #1 in the nation, but some of our fans rank right down there with t.u. I really enjoy going to the games and anyone who has ever attended a game knows that yelling at the other team is most of the fun.

Olsen Field, however, is no place for ignorant, racist statements. I was forced to leave the game against Texas Southern University on April 14, because of the actions and comments of a group of so called Aggies. A large number of people in the stands thought it would be funny to make fun of this predominantly black school by yelling, "Hey, Shaka Zulu..." and "Hey Blue, check the ball for Afro Sheen!" Many other references were made to fried chicken and malt liquor.

People go to universities to get an education, but equally important are the lessons most people learn about individuality and the diversity of the human

race. Ask any Aggie, Texas A&M is the greatest place on Earth and there is no room for backward racist simpletons at a world class university like ours. I would suggest to all the people yelling racial slurs, that you attend t.u. - but even they don't deserve you.

Jay Hahn
Class of '96

Student thanks Ags for support, Muster

On April 21st, we will be remembering those Aggies who have gone before us at Aggie Muster. One to be honored, will be my late boyfriend, Mike A. Perez.

As I think back to how I made it through these past months without him, my Aggie friends were right there beside me. Your Aggie spirit came through for me and made my life a little easier.

I want to thank each and every one of you. Your kindness, sympathy, and support in my time of need, helped me tremendously. I couldn't have done it without you all. These Aggie friends are very special and will always be in my heart and prayers. May we always be united by Mike's spirit holding us together as Aggie friends. God bless you all.

Catherine D. Dromgoole
Class of '92

Editor's Note: Because of space restrictions, we will be unable to print any more letters which advocate removing one's hat upon entering the MSC.

We have received over 35 letters sharing this sentiment and printed two pages of "hat mail" on Friday. We feel that we have sufficiently covered that position with respect to this issue.

In the interest of fairness and objectivity, the Opinion Page will feature a similar format on Friday, April 23 for those letters which advocate wearing one's hat in the MSC.

Correction: Steve Duncan's Mail Call letter in the April 19 Battalion misattributed a quote. According to the letter, headlined "Split decision on homosexuality," Leo Olynic posed a question about morality. Olynic was not involved in the letter that Duncan was addressing. Olynic had written a letter about the War Hymn that appeared on the same day as the letter in question. We regret the mistake.

Editorial appearing in The Battalion reflect the views of the editorial board. They do not necessarily reflect the opinions of other Battalion staff members, the Texas A&M student body, regents, administration, faculty or staff.
 Columns, guest columns, and Mail Call items express the opinions of the authors.
 The Battalion encourages letters to the editor and will print as many as space allows in the Mail Call section. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class, and phone number.
 Due to space restrictions, guest columns will not be accepted unless the author contacts the opinion page for prior approval before submitting columns.
 We reserve the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters should be addressed to:
 The Battalion - Mail Call
 013 Reed McDonald/Mail stop 1111
 Texas A&M University
 College Station, TX 77843