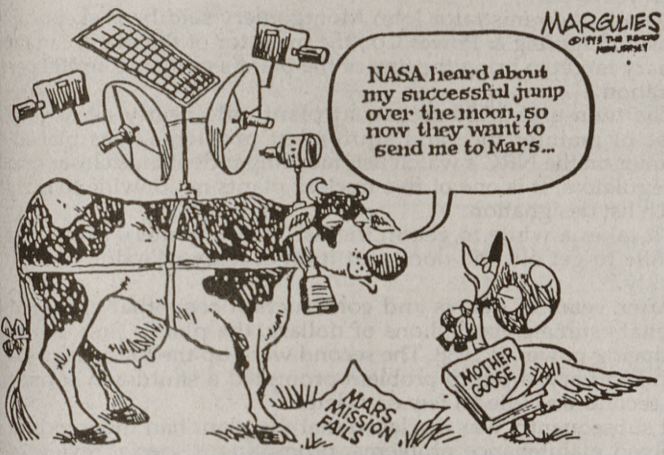


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EDITORIAL Pull together

Aggies must work past infighting

The composition of the Texas A&M student body at what is now the third-largest university in the United States is continuing to change as the school does.

Rapid development surrounding an ever-expanding campus has taken an old, traditional rural campus and turned it into a modern, diverse, and increasingly urban school.

The positive effect of this is that increased development in and around the University offers A&M students better personal as well as school-related opportunities and resources.

The flip-side is that the University may be too big for its own good.

A&M's time-honored traditions are becoming increasingly threatened, as is apparent by the recent dorm infighting at All-University night and the police presence at Midnight Vell practice.

The infighting that has erupted between the dorm, Greek and Corps communities as well as the liberal and conservative ideologies has splintered the campus and affected the A&M's traditional reputation of school unity, casting the

school in the image of a suburban high school: riddled with cliques that isolate themselves from the rest of the campus.

It is only reasonable to assume that as long as infighting continues, it will become an ever-growing threat to both A&M's traditions and its image.

In an age when college students are lumped under the "Generation X" moniker and characterized as cynical, apathetic and derisive, perhaps some of this recent generation of A&M students are expressing their cynicism, apathy and derision in choosing not to honor the past, but to bury it instead.

Even though unintentional, negative reactions and continued rivalry only lessen the value and purpose of the traditions A&M has upheld over time.

The clashing ideas of celebrating diversity versus celebrating traditions do not necessarily have to fight each other, and only when all sides make allowances for others' rights and all sides stop antagonizing each other will the students at A&M be on common ground again.

Clarifying a few Texas A&M myths

Some words of wisdom from someone who's been there

Well, over a week of the new semester has passed and we're still here — behind already, but here.

One of the many enormous myths at A&M is that if a student gets behind he can never catch up. Not true. And as most of you 6,300 or so freshmen already know, everyone, especially parents and older siblings, bombards you with advice on survival in college. The problem is that students need to learn how to get through school their own special way and that all the advice in Texas won't solve any academic atrocities.

As an undergraduate, I completed the Corps, joined a fraternity, and became a non-reg until graduation. In addition, I flunked out one semester, served time at Blinn, withdrew twice from A&M to avoid permanent dismissal and worked to support a nasty sailing habit — not to mention beer.

Now, after three years in the "real world," I'm pursuing a master's degree. With this vast experience, it is my prerogative — nay, duty — to clear up some college myths.

Grades. They matter. They don't matter. It depends on what you want. Good grades are not necessary to get a good job. In fact, your professor probably made better grades than Ross Perot, Roseanne Barr or Mother Theresa. If you consider money to be somewhat

synonymous with success, hard work and determination can be your "grades."

However, students who wish to be employed by enormous investment, engineering, accounting or law firms, not to mention medical or veterinary school acceptance, need excellent grades just to get in the door.

Perhaps things have changed, but as fish in the Corps my buddies and I were constantly told not to worry about our grades because some Ol' Ag would hire us just because we were CTs. Some outfits were more grade conscious than others, but this was still a prevailing notion.

After seeing non-reg, Corps and fraternity friends all hit the job market, it seemed most employers were far more interested in hiring the best qualified individuals, rather than being influenced by their organizations.

Another freshman myth is that if you miss a party or a Saturday night at your favorite hangout, you'll fall a few rungs on the social ladder. Nothing could be more ridiculous. After being at sea for two years, I returned to my favorite watering hole to soak in all the changes and do a little soaking myself. I was certain I would be woefully out of place having not shown my face in so long.

Not only had absolutely nothing changed, but there were still some of the same drinkers there. I swear one of them had remained on the same stool.

Professors don't care. Big myth. Most instructors chose their profession because they didn't really want to leave school. In fact, they are still students themselves, turning in papers and worrying about grades (yours), just like in the Stone Age when they were in school.

As soon as you start to have a problem

with a class, tell your professor. No matter how gruff or aloof they may seem, educators usually get a charge out of helping students who care about the class. This is only a general rule of course, but of the 60 or more professors I've had, only one or two didn't appear to care when I approached them. You can always ream those guys on teacher evaluations anyway.

Texas A&M doesn't know who you are, or give a damn. Little myth. As most transfer students will tell you, Aggie-style cohesiveness is not the norm among many other universities in Texas or elsewhere. Moreover, our campus is certainly one of the more friendly in the country, as told by many a visitor. All of this overwhelming camaraderie and friendliness elicits an aura of belonging and familiarity by the University.

However, we must remember A&M is a business, an enormous business which has to be run like one. Money drives this school at least as much, if not more, than many other colleges. Deans and professors can't know everyone in their department like those of a small school can.

As much as our university seems to love us, try to stop fee payments, crash your grades or get caught hazing, and the love faucet will shut off just like anywhere else.

Most freshmen will make up their own minds about what I've said. But nonetheless, if any of my "wisdom" from making every mistake possible can help any freshmen gain insight — or even want to shoot me, then I've done my job.

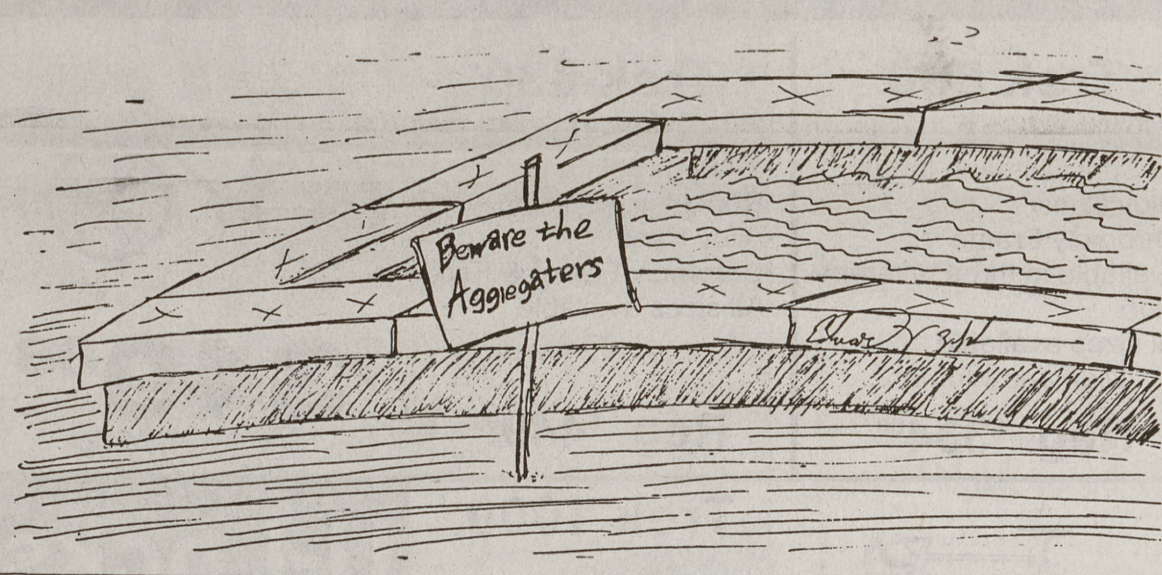
Frank Stanford is a graduate philosophy major



FRANK STANFORD
Columnist

RUDDER FOUNTAIN

NO SMOKIN NO SWEARIN NO SPITTIN NO FISHIN
AND NO SWIMMIN



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Put litter in its place — and watch out for those alligators!

You've probably been wondering why one of the trash cans in the Rudder Fountain area is missing a lid. Okay, maybe you haven't, but since there's an interesting story behind it, I'm going to tell you anyway.

Last Wednesday evening, a friend/ source of mine — hereafter to be referred to as Deep Throat for purposes of concealing her identity — was walking by Rudder Fountain when she saw two "skater guys" peering intensely into the water.

GUEST COLUMN

LYNN BOOHER

looking at, to which one of the guys — we'll call him Joe — replied, "An alligator."

Deep Throat looked in the fountain skeptically and was about to move on when she was persuaded to take a closer look. Sure enough, an alligator about 18 inches long was "floating around the fountain with its little nose sticking out of the water."

Joe, our soon-to-be hero, decided that this particular fountain was no place for an alligator and valiantly attempted to fish it out. After being bitten a couple of times, he changed his strategy to attempting to scoop up the reptile with his baseball cap. Not surprisingly, a crowd began to form.

One resourceful girl took a lid from a nearby trash can (ah-ha!) and began using it in much the same manner as Joe's baseball cap. That too failed, because once the lid was submerged, it was too heavy to lift out.

Suddenly, police began showing up, wanting to know what the problem was. By the time Joe had scooped up the gator (yes, with the cap) and put it safely into the trash can lid, there were three or four

By the time Joe had scooped up the gator (yes, with the cap) and put it safely into the trash can lid, there were three or four police officers and a PPTS officer on the scene.

police officers and a PPTS officer on the scene.

They skillfully handled the crisis by calling pest control while members of the crowd argued, "No! Call someone in veter-

inary sciences!"

Is this beginning to sound like an episode of "Three's Company"?

In the midst of the mayhem, one of the police officers actually picked up the alligator, put it in the car with him and left for some unknown destination.

Soon after, the pest control guy showed up. After being appraised of the situation, he left and the crowd dispersed, including Joe, who was obviously upset that no one had congratulated him on his courageous capture of the beast.

Deep Throat and friends happened to still be in the fountain vicinity a little while later when two guys showed up and began to casually look into the fountain.

"Did you guys lose something?" asked D.T.

"No," they assured her, and continued to peruse the water.

"Are you sure you didn't lose some-

thing?" continued D.T. "Like maybe a shirt, some jewelry ... an alligator?"

"How'd you know?!" they demanded.

Easy, guys — the guilty looks. Apparently, they had found this gator in their backyard. They happened to have it on campus when they decided to go to the bookstore and realized Alli — that's her name — couldn't come in with them. So they stored her in the fountain for safekeeping. As one explained, "We didn't think anybody would notice!"

Here's my favorite part: the guys decided they'd better go to the police before the story came out in The Battalion. And they agreed that the true story would look bad. "We'd better say she was stolen." Well, you know what they say — truth is stranger than fiction.

Lynn Booher is a sophomore English and psychology major

COLLEGE STATION, TX
 SEPT 9
MAIL CALL
 1993

OCA, RHA, ISA hold great Welcome Bash

As one who has always taken RHA for granted, I must say the collaboration with the International Student Association and Off Campus Aggies was simply outstanding!

I could see the hard work put into the Fall '93 Welcome Bash, and my only regret is that more people (especially freshmen) did not experience this excellent event!

Five dollars was a frugal price for free transportation and buffet-style barbecue from Gideon's.

Also, Wolf Pen Creek Amphitheater was the only place to hear the live bands. I especially liked Ballet Folklorico's Saber Dance and the dance Jesusita en Chihuahua.

Were I not graduating in May, I would be looking forward to Fall '94 Bash — but to those who will be here: GO!!!

Antoinette Duffey
Class of '93

Young Conservatives display arrogance

For several years now, I have read about the antics of the Young Conservatives of Texas and the College Republicans. However, today was the first time I witnessed their self-righteous arrogance in person.

I have just returned from the gathering of the YCT that took place in front of the Academic Building. They met to whine about the multicultural requirement that was passed by the Liberal Arts Council and is being considered by the Faculty Senate.

I regret that I added some credibility and excitement to this pathetic "rally" by openly questioning the YCT representative on his views. He said that multiculturalism was defeated at the University of Texas and should be defeated here at A&M. The problem is that there is no comparison between the two issues.

Patrick M. Wilson
Class of '93

Show proper respect during Silver Taps

It appears that either some do not know or they do not display the proper etiquette or signs of respect concerning Silver Taps.

If you live on campus, please turn off the lights in your rooms before leaving for the ceremony.

Please do not hold a conversation or laugh on your way to or when returning from the ceremony.

Lastly, please extinguish your smoking materials until after Silver Taps has ended.

Silver Taps is a funeral, please show respect for those that it honors and treat it as one.

Wesley Price Bringham
Class of '94
Accompanied by 7 signatures