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## Oh, for a chance to study in France

### Rudder Normandy Scholars learn lessons of the past

I was walking through the hall in the Reed McDonald Building this spring when I noticed a wall covered with flyers which offered anything from internships to scholarships to actual jobs. I winced at the salaries listed, realizing that when I finally graduate I will have to sell drugs to supplement my income.



ROBERT VASQUEZ  
Columnist

I turned to hide my face from the fate that inevitably was mine when I saw a really cruel flyer. It said: "Study in France! All expenses paid!" At first, I laughed. How nice that would be, I thought, to study abroad. A few of my friends had done it and always spoke of their experiences with glowing accounts of jaunts to Paris and Rome and London while they were overseas. I sighed.

Those trips are for the rich, I thought. A big vacation for me is a two-day trip to Hearne. One day I'll go to Paris, Texas just so I can say I've been to Paris. Then they'll call me fancy. I'm saving up for that one.

But wait! This flyer said, "All expenses paid." Surely, there was a catch. People don't just pay for poor, destitute students like myself to traipse around Europe out of the kindness of their pocketbooks. Things like that just don't happen to me. There must be something else that would keep me from qualifying.

Good grades. Those scholarships and awards are always reserved for students with grade point averages hovering in the stratosphere. Mine burned up a long time ago as it plummeted through the lower layers of the atmosphere. Somewhere between economics and history, I think.

Actually, my grades aren't that bad. So I decided to call the Study Abroad office and find out more about this cruel joke. For the few minutes needed to fill out an application, I thought I could actually study in France. And maybe after that, I might walk on the moon.

The lady at the Study Abroad office said grades were considered, but not exclusively, or even primarily. There was hope.

She said the Rudder Normandy Scholars Program was established to teach about the causes of war and its consequences. The program's primary purpose was to further the causes of peace, and students were considered for their expressed interests in similar areas as well as academic achievement. All students were encouraged to apply.

That included me. Wow, I thought. I might actually have a chance. So I did what hundreds of other students who saw the same flyer decided not to do. I applied.

After the applications were in, the selection process would take a while, so I put it out of my mind. Every once in a while I would think about it, but it was like remembering a good dream. It was nice while the fantasy lasted, but it was foolish to cling to something that only "could-have-been."

When the day arrived that the list of scholarship recipients would be published, I reminded myself that I was going only to make

sure that I was not chosen. I couldn't allow myself to harbor any hope, just to be let down. I entered the building and saw the list where I was told it would be. I walked up to make sure my name wasn't there.

But it was. I couldn't believe it.

Let me try to explain how I felt when I saw my name on that list:

Have you ever pulled the change lever on a Coke machine and gotten back 35 cents more than you put in?

Have you ever won the Texas Lottery?

Have you ever stood on an oil derrick and been soaked by the crude as it gushed into the air and then came down again; landing on you, covering your very being with the sticky assurance that you would never want for anything ever again? Me neither.

But, all of these pale in comparison to how I felt the moment I saw my name on that list. Well, except for the oil part.

I mean, they weren't giving me a million dollars. But they were giving me the chance to study in Europe. They were flying me to France and paying for my room and board. (I don't know why we need a board in France, but they said they would pay for it. So I'm not going to argue.)

The point is, what was once a dream will become a reality in three weeks, when I board a plane headed for Paris. All this because I filled out some application a few months ago. I still can't believe it.

Sometimes I go back to the building and check the list. Just to make sure.

Robert Vasquez is a senior journalism major



## EDITORIAL

### Save the SSC

#### Industry, state could keep it alive

It appears that Congress is trying to fool taxpayers again. Cutting funding for the Superconducting Super Collider creates the illusion that government spending will be reduced. But according to SSC proponents, little if any of the money saved from the collider's demise will go toward reducing the deficit.

It's nice that Texas Gov. Ann Richards may be able to get a reimbursement from the federal government for the super collider.

Too bad the officials of DeSoto, Texas have declared their city to be in a state of "economic, educational and social emergency" because the cancellation of the SSC has put about 350 local families out of work. And too bad that the nation as a whole is missing out on the benefits of challenging our technology to its limits.

Whatever happened to federal support of the quest for scientific knowledge demonstrated in the space programs or even the Star Wars defense program?

Former DeSoto mayor Roy Orr has asked that the state of Texas take over funding of the super collider.

"The worst we can do is just say it can't be done," he said.

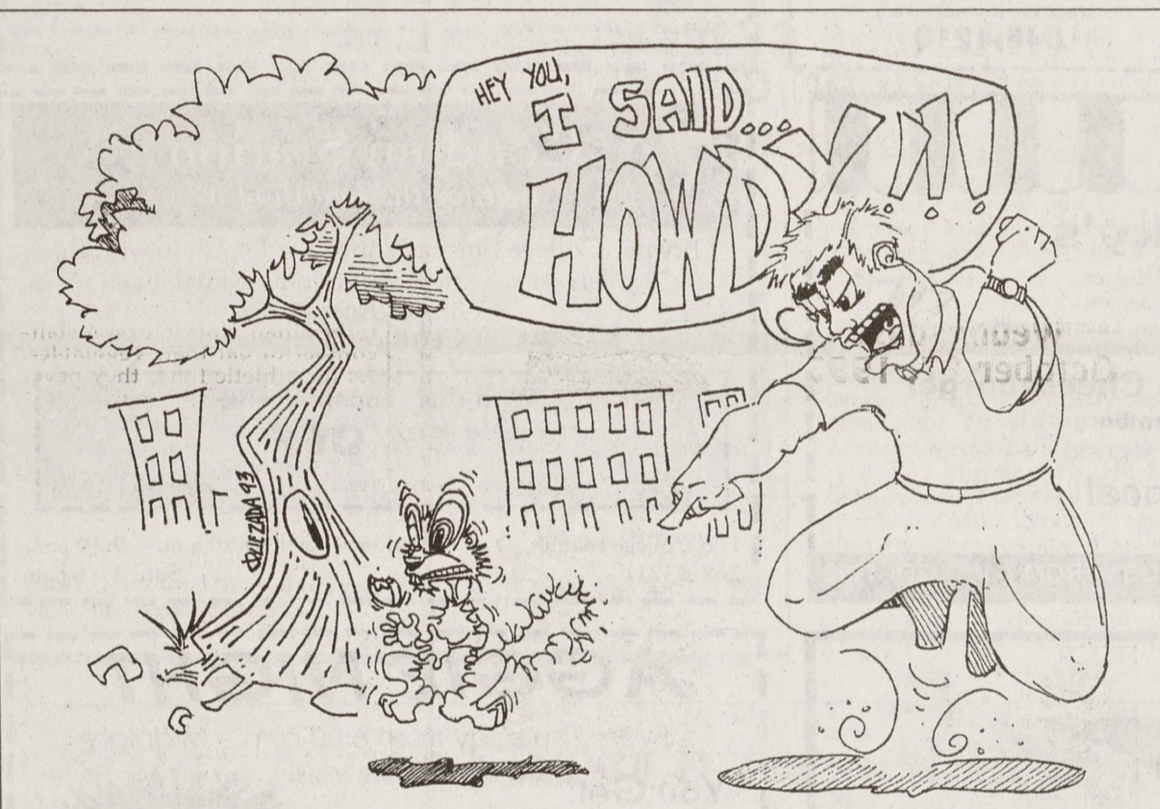
As DeSoto citizen Tom Rozier so aptly put it, "If Arlington, Texas, can build a 65 million-dollar ballpark, then the state of Texas can build an \$8 to \$10 billion Super Collider."

The state should keep the project alive until the federal government came to its senses and resumed its funding.

Another option is private investment. There must be private citizens, corporations and academic institutions that realize the importance of scientific advances and are interested in seeing the SSC completed. They could invest in the project — and probably do a better job at getting the work done and controlling expenditures than the government ever will.

Whatever happens, Congress' reasoning for cutting the super collider is a line of bull. Dr. Peter Rosen, dean of the College of Science at UT Arlington concurs. "All of this argument about budget deficit and saving money is a fraud and a deception upon the American people," Rosen said. "If they're really serious about saving money, there are much bigger programs that produce much less for the future."

Well said.



Editorials 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, cartoons and letters express the opinions of the authors.

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor and will print as many as space allows. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class, and phone number.

We reserve the right to edit letters and guest columns for length, style, and accuracy.

Contact the opinion editor for information on submitting guest columns.

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## Audio books stimulate mind, free listeners' imaginations

I discovered this summer, while driving to Orlando, that audio books are the perfect way to pass the time when traveling cross-country by car.

The drive from my front door to the entrance of Disneyworld was, according to my odometer, 1087 miles, a distance too long to be passed by political and social debates with my parents. So, on the way out of town, my father and I rented an audio book from a nearby grocery store.

After much deliberation, we decided on "Scarlet," the sequel to "Gone With the Wind." Neither of us is very interested in romance novels, but the four tape collection has a running time of six hours, the longest we could find.

Read by Dixie Carter, the book took on



MELISSA MEGLIOLA  
Columnist

life as we crossed Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. As we passed large white houses with massive columns and sweeping front porches, each one seemed to be Tara.

We listened contently for the first few hours but then began to ration the tapes, making certain we would not run out of air time. I was disappointed when we decided to stop in Gainesville for the night.

As the end of our vacation drew near, I began to dread the drive home. We had only rented one book. Twenty hours without a new story seemed eternal. The thought of listening about the life of Ms. O'hara for a second time provided my only comfort.

My father must have been thinking the same thing because on our last day of the trip, we drove into Orlando in search of a bookstore. For \$19.95, we purchased a six hour audio version of "The Client," by John Grisham.

Ever since, I have been sold. Audio books, which were once used primarily by the blind, are becoming a national trend. In Dallas, Talking Books, a rental store for books on tape, has audio books on almost every subject. The books rent for \$5 a week.

Scott, an employee at the rental store, said that most of their clients are between the ages of 30 and 50 and rent the books to listen to while commuting to and from the office.

The uses for audio books are limitless. Housewives can listen to "The Bridges of Madison County," while performing household chores. Our shuttle buses

**I would much prefer to listen to an inspirational short story rather than to catch myself singing off-key to the country music that almost always lofts through the buses.**

could play "One Minute Messages" while circling around campus.

I would much prefer to listen to an inspirational short story rather than to catch myself singing off-key to the country music that almost always lofts through the buses. Anyone who has ever sat by me

on the bus would prefer it as well.

Nursing homes and hospitals should provide audio books for patients who have visual problems or are too tired to sit up and watch television. Nothing is more relaxing than listening to someone tell you a good story, whether in person or on tape. I often play a book when I go to bed, remembering the years when my parents would read to me before turning out the light in my bedroom.

Factories where employees sit all day long performing tedious assembly line work, should have a story hour. Everyday after lunch, the intercom could play a narrative tape for one hour. Each week could feature a different book. The employees could put in suggestions and take turns selecting the literature.

In a society where the average person reads less than two books a year, the least we can do is listen.

Although listening to an audio book does not take all the cognitive skills of actually reading the same book, much of the process is the same. The listener converts words into visual images unique to him or herself. Because most audio books are read almost verbatim, the listener increases

his vocabulary by making sense out of unknown words through their context.

And unlike with television, your imagination is at work. When watching a television show or a movie, it can be difficult to see yourself in the setting on the screen. The picture of the actors and actresses blocks your mind. When reading or listening to a book, you are there. Books promote dreams.

Having recently found the cure for much of society's problems in audio books, I wanted to share my discovery with the rest of the world. But then I remembered men just older than our parents talking about gathering in their living rooms to listen to the World Series. And about their parents who tuned into fireside chats with a president who promised to lead them out of a great depression.

And then I realized... I had just rediscovered radio. Radio as it was before television.

Sometimes we don't realize how good we've got it.

Melissa Megliola is a senior industrial engineering major

COLLEGE STATION, TX  
 OCT 26  
 1993  
**MAIL CALL**

### No need for Battalion to print profanities

I am writing in response to the letter printed in The Battalion which was written by Shea Snyder. I am not only a graduate student at A&M, but I am also a Physical Plant employee.

The First Amendment does give you the right to free speech, and as a U.S. Army veteran, I gave up four years of my life to ensure that you have that right. Yet did you have to print that obscenity in the letter? The word Shi@ could have been modified/omitted without a problem. I did it in one second in this letter.

I am outraged at this gross lack of re-

spect for the thousands who read this paper, most of which are women and undoubtedly some reach the children of this community.

Trash journalism is already in abundance in the Enquirer, Globe and Star. Is it necessary to further pollute the world of journalism with profanities? Shock journalism may work for the masses who buy the corner market rags, but does A&M have to support your rudeness with my tuition?

I will not pay for the printing of obscenities, especially when they are in connection with the hardest working, lowest paid employees that give you the very electricity that you use to print our Aggies' paper.

Shame on you. I believe an apology is in order to the readers who support your staff and their families.

And shame on you, Shea. Do you talk to your mother with that mouth?

Kelly M. Williamson  
Network Manager  
Department of Utilities

### Physical Plant works hard for Texas A&M

This letter is in response to the letter sent in by Shea Snyder. I believe your statement concerning the status of the employees at the physical plant being uncaring because we are not Aggies is totally unfair. Texas A&M has a way of causing a person to be an Aggie at heart, not by actually being a student.

The power plant provides a variety of service to the customers. We provide electricity, air conditioning and heating. We also supply the water you drink and bathe in. We do the best we can day in and day out. We must be on call 365 days a year. When a repair is needed, we must be ready to correct the problem as quickly as possible, be it tomorrow or Christmas Eve when we are with our families.

Our families know this is our job, and they stand by us. Our children feel this daily, especially when they ask, "Why can't Dad coach my team," or, "Why can't Dad be at my birthday party?"

Did you think all of these points through when you expressed your opinion? Maybe you are the uncaring one.

Roy Martinez  
Physical Plant