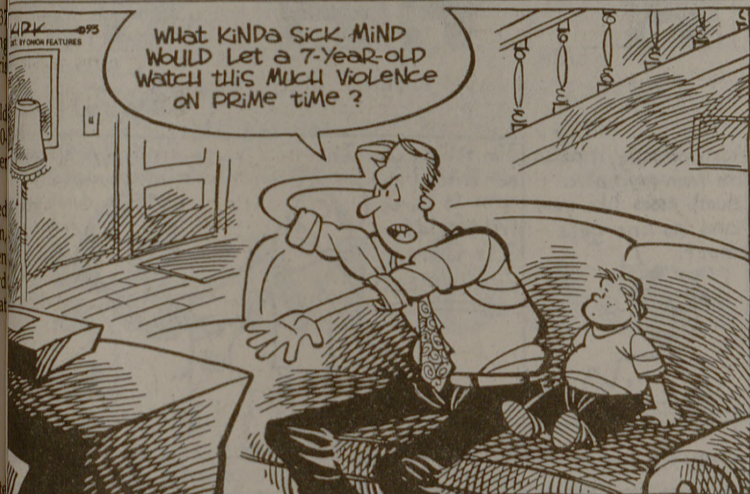


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EDITORIAL

Multiculturalism

New requirement, same classes

When Texas A&M University's Faculty Senate added a new multiculturalism requirement to its core curriculum, it accomplished nothing. The controversy sparked by the proposed requirement resulted in a ridiculously watered-down version of multiculturalism.

Both advocates and opponents of the measure can join together in a resounding new yell: "WHAT?"

The multiculturalism resolution tried to appease every interested group by compromising the purpose of multiculturalism. Learning about other lifestyles, students will not study other cultures at all. Instead, they will take the same old curriculum under a different name.

The new requirement will hardly affect the future Aggies for whom it is intended. How many students don't take at least two classes on American or international cultures?

An incredible number of classes, from history to engineering, may satisfy the new requirement. Furthermore, multiculturalism courses will also satisfy their other core, elective or major requirements.

According to University figures, over 60 percent of 1991-92 graduates had taken classes

which would meet both parts of the new requirement. Students can't lose! They won't be taking different courses; the same class will just fill a different blank on their degree plan.

The Faculty Senate vote caps a long, drawn-out conflict that only served to divide the student body and tarnish the University's image.

Who gains? Certainly not those students who have no concept of people different from themselves, or the misunderstood minorities in American society. Perhaps the University administration, which now has a nice buzzword to include in lists of the required coursework at A&M, comes out ahead.

"Multiculturalism" jumps out at potential students and faculty and implies knowledge and understanding about other cultures. Unfortunately, the multicultural requirement will be hard pressed to give students that kind of education.

Those who worked either for or against the proposal need to step back and look hard at the product. The proposal accomplishes almost nothing, regardless of the various opinions on multiculturalism. This whole situation makes the entire University look bad.

Nazi occupation and the enemy within

What would make a nation collaborate with invaders?

Imagine that the United States were invaded today. Imagine that the enemy began killing the people around you, collecting your friends and family into groups, forcing them into gas chambers, herding them into massive holes in the ground where they would be shot and then buried — alive or dead; it didn't matter.

Now, imagine that your own government was helping them do it.



ROBERT VASQUEZ
Columnist

More than six million Jews died by the end of World War II. Many died in concentration camps. Many were beaten to death. Many were left to live, only wishing they could die.

Survivors remain today who were only children when they were beaten by officers during the German invasion. They watched as their mothers were slapped and pushed to the ground, kicked, and then beaten. And then killed.

Some recall their fathers being dragged away to be beaten, hung upside down, their skin peeled from their bodies, and then left to die.

These children didn't understand why their parents were forced to endure this. Who deserved such treatment? Why were they doing this to them? Who was responsible?

After the war ended, France began bringing back the Jews who had survived the concentration camps. Suddenly, everyone agreed: The war crimes committed against the Jews

were inhumane, barbaric and unforgivable. "Those Germans must be punished," the French tried to say. After all, it was the Germans who had invaded France. It was the Germans who had set up those concentration camps. It was the Germans who sought to exterminate the Jews.

The Germans were wholly to blame for the atrocities imposed on the Jews. Weren't they?

The sad truth is: No, they weren't. The French were torn between the democratic ideals they had worked to achieve and the German rule imposed on them. Should the French government and citizens resist — possibly causing riots and increasing bloodshed for everyone? Or should they do all they could to keep the peace, working with the Germans to the best of their ability?

Yes, the Germans were shipping Jews out of town. But was that so bad? Wouldn't it be better just to live quietly while the invaders did what they had to? There were family members to consider. Should French lives be risked just because the government wanted to ship certain families to another place?

The French government decided to accommodate the Germans.

"We were only working with them to keep France as peaceful as possible," said many of the French officials who worked with the Germans during that period. "We didn't want to do it, but we had to."

Did they really have to? Did the French police really have to seek out Jews so zealously — sometimes more so than their German counterparts? Did they really have to build their own concentration camps to kill more Jews when the German camps were filled? Why were the French so quick to work

with the Germans in removing the Jews from their land?

Much evidence has been uncovered showing that the Germans were not the only ones who sought to rid France of the Jewish people. Many leaders in the France of that day had long harbored anti-Semitic sentiments of their own. They were none to pleased with the Jews in their lives, and the German invasion and the subsequent disintegration of France may have been a convenient excuse for the French finally to move, to act upon their anti-Semitic impulses.

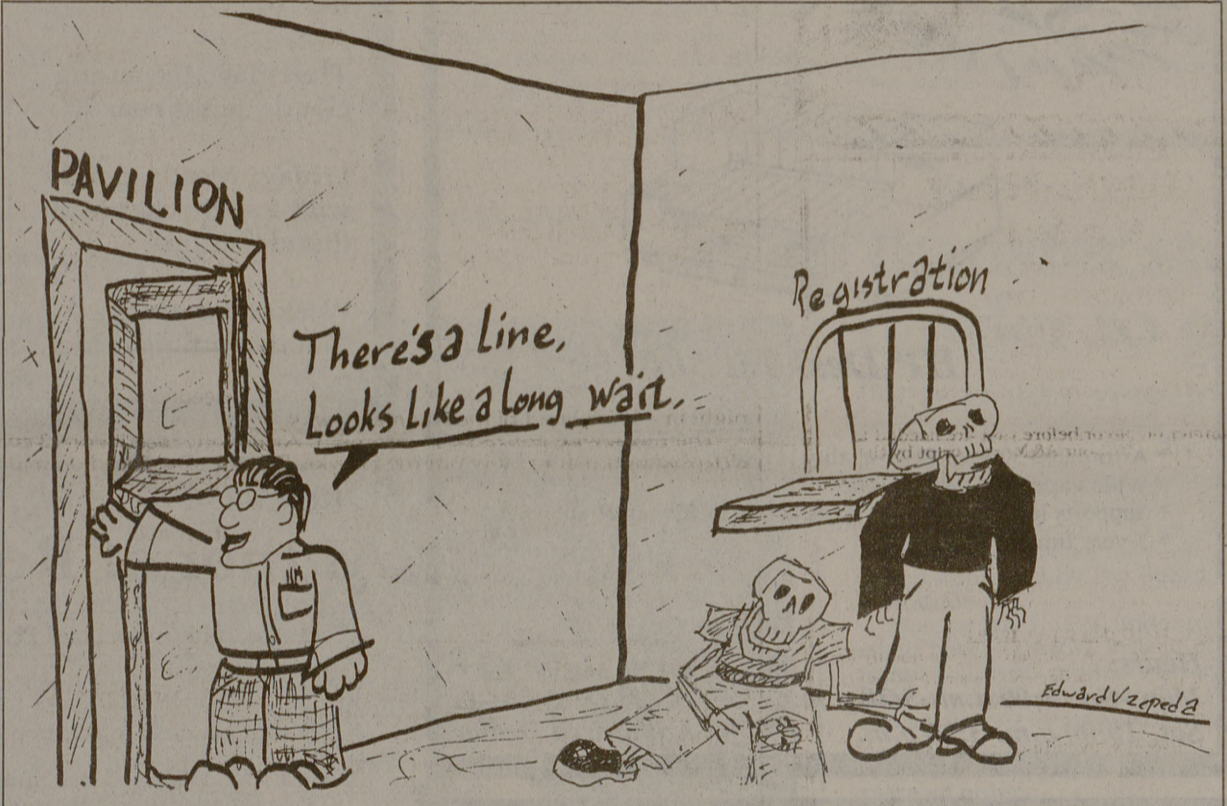
Had the French purposed to exterminate the Jews in gas chambers and through torture, as the Germans finally did? Probably not. However, the government in France was all too compliant if received orders to remove the Jews. The French were too quick to comply. They could have resisted. They should have.

As Americans, it's so easy to judge the French for the atrocities imposed on the Jews. It seems stupid to ask if the United States would have done the same. The United States stands for life and liberty. We hold human life sacred here.

So, why did we wait nearly six years before we finally decided that we should help, storming the Normandy shores to help stop the carnage?

I, along with 24 other Texas A&M students in the Rudder Normandy Scholars Program, leave for France this Monday. I hope nobody there asks me these questions. Because I don't yet have the answers. Maybe I'll find them there.

Robert Vasquez is a senior journalism major



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Parents pass down their shopping habits to next generation

Everyone at one time or another has passed his or her bad back and promised with the most conviction, I will not be like my parents."

But it is inevitable; after 18 years of co-habitation, little bits of Mom and Pop have seeped into the subconscious activities of daily life. I found this out the other day at the grocery store. I was moving down the personal hygiene aisle toward the toothpaste display. Without much as a moment's hesitation, I picked up a tube of Crest and was on my way. Then I stopped — why had I picked Crest? Why not Colgate, Aqua Fresh or...?

No trivial advertising promise, such as



JENNY MAGEE
Columnist

cleaner whiter teeth, a cheaper price or a more kissable smile had influenced my decision. I chose Crest because that is the kind of toothpaste that my mother bought. I have used it all my life, and I figure my teeth will probably fall out if they are ever brushed with any brand other than Crest.

I wonder if advertisers realize that they are fighting a losing battle to some degree. 18 years of parent-enforced preferences are not going to change as fast as the jingle writers and coupon-makers would like.

I once accompanied my friend, Rachel to three different grocery stores in search of McCormick food coloring. Heaven forbid that we just use the generic brand. Oooh-nooo, Rachel insisted that the cake we were making would be an absolute failure if our icing was colored by anything other than McCormick. On our way out of the third store, carrying the prized purchase, I asked Rachel what made this particular brand of food coloring so special.

"This is the kind my mother uses," she said. Who was I to question the maternal

wisdom of food coloring preferences? These little family rituals and consumer-preferences are passed along to children much like red hair or blue eyes.

I once heard a story about a young man who was fixing Christmas dinner for his fiancée. When she sat down to the beautiful, candle-lit table, the first thing she noticed

Here we are relishing our freedom and independence — only to find out that we're still bound to our parents through toothpaste and laundry detergent.

was the ham that sat on a large platter in the center of the table.

As she admired the intricate way her boyfriend had decorated the entree with cherries and pineapples, she realized that large portions on either end of the ham had been chopped off. She questioned her boyfriend about it.

"Well, doesn't everybody cut the ends

of the ham before they cook it?" he replied. "My mom always did."

Years later at a family dinner, the girl questioned her mother-in-law about the culinary benefits of cutting off the ends of the ham.

"I don't know if it does a darn thing to the ham," the woman replied. "I always had to cut my hams before I cooked them because my pot never was big enough for the whole thing to fit."

College life has brought all of these inherited quirks into the limelight. Here we all are on our first permanent flight from the nest, relishing our freedom and independence — only to find out that we're still bound to our parents through toothpaste and laundry detergent.

Occasionally, these inherited traits are passed on to outsiders. My suite-mate taught me her mother's long-held secret of the proper way to fold a fitted sheet. Because she always had to make sure that the elastic corners did not make the folded sheet look lumpy and lopsided, my suite-mate cannot stand the sight of a fitted sheet that has been folded improperly.

Little controversy arises when friends

share their secrets and preferences with other friends. However, the real trouble comes with marriage. Many times, before a starry-eyed couple makes the trip down the aisle, they forget to find out vital information about each other, such as what sort of air-freshener they prefer or how they prefer their French fries cut: straight, ridges or chunks.

Engaged couples usually check their compatibility on issues such as in-laws, child-rearing theories and religious philosophies, but they never think to question each other's consumer loyalties.

In my days as a grocery store clerk, I have witnessed married couples become enraged to the point of violence over which brand of hot dog is the best for barbecuing.

It would be interesting to add a consumer-preference and ritual questionnaire section to the marriage license requirement. That way people could discover before it is too late that their partner-to-be is a loyal Skippy user.

Jenny Magee is a sophomore English and journalism major

COLLEGE STATION, TX
 NOV 9
 1993

MAIL CALL

College Republicans and multiculturalism

I still cannot believe how out of touch the College Republicans are on the issue of multicultural education. They must feel alienated and disillusioned to have recommended the proposals outlined in the Nov. 4 Battalion. They still do not get it!

To ask the College Republicans to describe how multicultural education should be taught is akin to asking a psychology major to explain how quantum physics should be taught. They just do not belong to the same system of knowledge and experience.

Their recommendations are sophomore and hark back to high school classes. To suggest extra credit somehow does justice to the core and foundation of multi-

culturalism reeks of insincerity and gross distortion. This type of recommendation does not belong on a world class campus.

Their last recommendation of erecting a statue or dedicating a building in the name of a minority person is condescending. It is insulting and patronizing.

Where are they getting these ideas? How long did it take for them to come up with such shameful concepts? They are practicing "political correctness" in its worst form — with no intention of promoting harmony or education.

They put forward recommendations as if to say they agree with multicultural education, but their own recommendations pull the cover off their hypocrisy. These people DO NOT believe in any form of multicultural education.

Shame on the College Republicans for sticking their noses where they do not be-

long. I cannot fully express how much contempt I feel for their false pretenses.

They are so confused and misdirected, so completely devoid of any recognition of the present or the likelihood of what is to come that they will soon find themselves entirely out of the mainstream of American society.

And therein lies the first lesson of multiculturalism.

John M. Velasquez
 Graduate student

Be ready for cameras this Saturday at Kyle

For the first time this season, the 10th ranked Aggie football team will be shown

nationally on ESPN, Nov. 13, against the Louisville Cardinals. Football fans across the country will see the Wrecking Crew defense and the 12th Man spirit.

However, it would be very embarrassing for Texas A&M if ESPN's cameras show 25,000 empty seats at Kyle Field. Last year, we had only 48,000 fans when we beat the hell outta them 40-18.

This year Louisville is ranked #13 and has a highly rated passing attack. The 12th Man could make the difference in a close game, so we need as many noisy fans as possible to pack Kyle Field.

When ESPN puts the cameras on the crowd, America should see a full stadium filled with Aggie spirit, not empty seats. See ya at the game, Ags!

George Flickinger
 Class of '95