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No more fire drills, no more write-ups Moving off campus produces new respect for dorm life

Spring is nature's alarm clock. Wildflowers awaken from their winter slumber, babies of all kinds open their eyes for the first time and many college students are hoisted into the chore of searching for a place to live for the coming fall semester.

With prime spring sunshine and volleyball games galore, it is hard to consent to spending three or four hours driving to and from apartment complexes discussing things like carpet condition and counter top colors. However, thoughts of spending another semester in the dorm are usually motivation enough to make that sacrifice of free time seem worthwhile.

JENNY MAGEE

Columnist



Now, before a multitude of loyal on-campus residents spontaneously erupt into their respective dorm hump-its, let me say that I think dorm life is an integral part of the entire college experience. Maybe sometime around the age of 40, I'll actually miss trying to fall asleep to the sound of doors slamming, being awakened by fire drills in the middle of the night and wearing mittens to bed in the winter.

But, after two full years of the dorm experience, the thought of a change feels as good as dreaming about ways to spend the money from a winning lottery ticket. What will it be like to have a kitchen sink and a separate bathroom sink? What will it be like to have a thermostat?

And most of all, what will it be like to have a bathtub?

As I begin the process of leaving my humble dorm room forever, I feel a certain twisted attachment to the 12-by-12-foot space

that I've lived in for two years.

I remember the first time I saw the room. It was completely empty, the floor was filthy, dust was caked on the shelves and there was a rusted piece of clothes hanger sticking out of the air vent.

My stomach dropped as I sat down on some hard green piece of plastic that was supposed to be a mattress and began to cry. I promptly told my father with tears streaming down my face, I couldn't, I wouldn't live here.

If I remember correctly he laughed at me, patted me on the back and said, "It is amazing how easily people can adapt to their surroundings."

As much as I hate to admit it, he was right. After seven banana boxes full of my stuff were unpacked, I felt much better. It took me five hours and two rolls of tape to cover every visible inch of the walls with postcards and posters. If I had to be enclosed in a 12-foot square, then at the least I wanted to be surrounded by pictures of things I loved.

Granted it was easier to adapt to the physical appearance of the room now that it had

my own personal touch.

Other facets of my new environment weren't as easy to adjust to. It took several weeks to figure out how to fit all of my clothes into half as much closet space — push one hanger forward and the next hanger back or double up clothing on one hanger. There were several winter nights of waking up shivering cold because three shirts, long johns and a jogging suit were not enough to keep me warm.

Perhaps the largest feat of adjustment was learning how to shave my legs in a stand-up shower without any ledges. Let me just say that it's a good thing that I took gymnastics as a kid.

If learning to adapt to a less than luxurious living environment was the name of the game, dorm life was a successful teacher. I learned to be neat because I could not flee to another room to escape a mess. I learned to share a bathroom with three other girls. And I learned to microwave everything.

Now as I am leaving dorm life, I am thankful that in the future if need be, I know I can live quite happily in a very small space. I am thankful that I can cherish little everyday conveniences like bathtubs, thermostats and windows that open.

My dorm room, as is the case of many college students, was the first place where I ever lived without my parents. It was a humble beginning to life on my own, but it was a step. I don't think I ever did or will think of my dorm room as home, but it is someplace that I will never forget.

Jenny Magee is a sophomore English and journalism major



EDITORIAL

King no hero America needs objective view

Will the real Rodney King please stand up? There are two sides to every story, and it's time that the world looked at the complete Rodney King. There is a growing trend in America to view King as a role model, when in fact there are glaring reasons why he should not be viewed as one. This is not an issue of color — it is an issue over how much is enough.

When the King beating first was televised, the country was horrified, and Rodney King became a downtrodden hero — he was fighting "the system" for his rights as an American citizen. After the defendants were acquitted in the first trial, the federal government stepped in and started another trial. The defendants subsequently were found guilty.

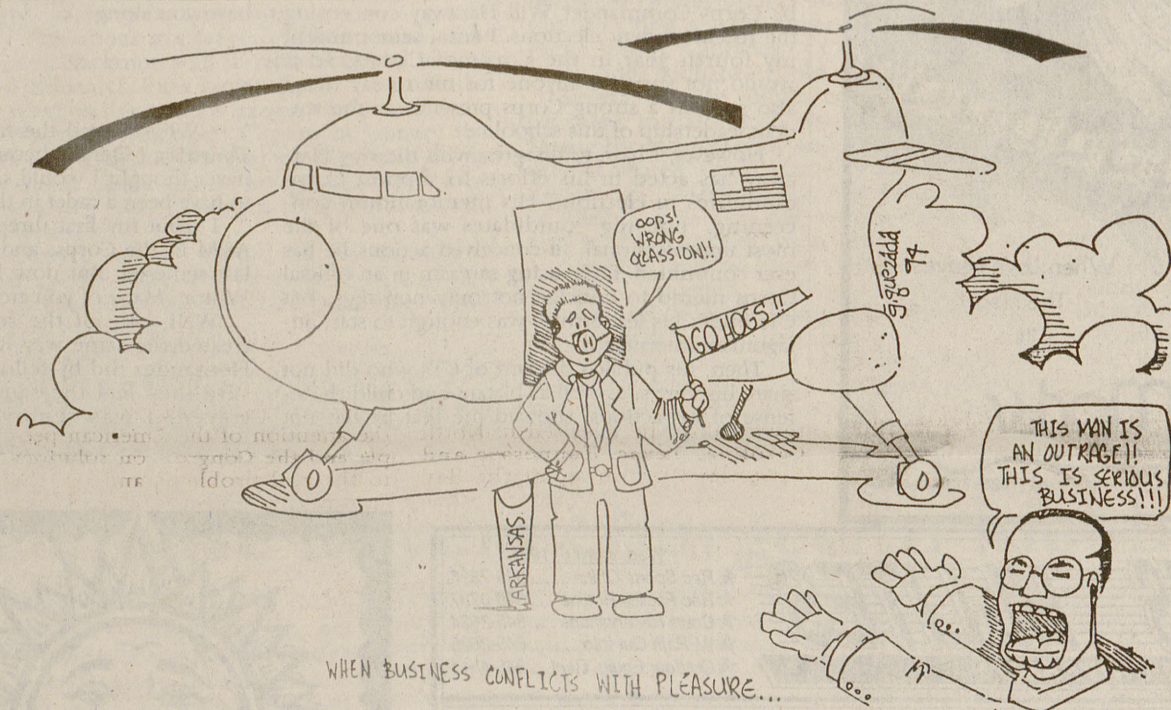
However, the defendants in the Reginald Denny case were acquitted, and the government has yet to get involved. Denny's beating was a senseless act of retaliation over the perceived injustice of the results of the first King trial. Denny suffered per-

manent damage from his injuries, but no one is hailing him as a crusader against brutality.

After the city of Los Angeles offered King a million dollar out-of-court settlement, instead of taking the money and moving on with his life, King is holding out for more. Since the trials, King has been arrested for drunk driving, and accused of beating his wife as well as soliciting a male prostitute. There are two Rodney Kings — one that asks for peace among men, and another who can't find peace with the law. Anyone besides Rodney King accused of the same crimes would not be held up as a role model.

King's civil rights were violated and this is an abuse no citizen should have to suffer, but it's time for both Rodney Kings to stand up and be held accountable for their actions.

If this situation is looked at as a black vs. white issue, no one can be objective. We've got to stop buying the idealized image of Rodney King — and the media has got to stop selling it.



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Early architect built legacy of strength, grandeur, charm

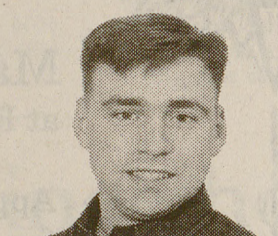
Texas A&M is not known for its great architecture. Few buildings on campus are worth remembering, and those that do have style and architectural value are being uniformly defaced with the installation of dark-tinted, aluminum windows.

But during the '20s and '30s, several buildings were constructed here that exude an atmosphere of strength, grandeur and charm. Buildings like Systems Administration, Chemistry, Geology, Scouts Hall, Animal Industries, the old Cushing Library and a few others are all superior in design to anything built here before or since.

The University has two events to thank for these monumental structures. One was the discovery of oil in West Texas. The other was the arrival of a man named Samuel Vosper.

At the turn of the century, the University of Texas and the Agricultural & Mechanical College of Texas were just beginning to solidify as academic institutions. At the same time, however, they were struggling to survive on meager budgets. Their operating funds came from leases on grazing and mineral rights to about two million acres of

ROY L. CLAY
Columnist



near-useless land in West Texas which the state of Texas allotted to the two schools in the late 1800s. How could the state legislature have foreseen that those two million worthless acres sat on some of the richest deposits of petroleum in the country? Needless to say, after the first oil discoveries, the two schools had the money to create campuses that reflected the excellence taught in their classrooms.

The only question was who would build them. UT already had its answer. Even before the oil boom, the Austin school enjoyed the lion's share of the proceeds from the West Texas leases, and its financial situation wasn't as dire as A&M's. UT had employed Cass Gilbert, a renowned architect,

to design its campus and buildings even before the discovery of "Texas Tea."

A&M, on the other hand, was not so extravagant. Whether by design or fiscal restrictions, the school decided to give the task of planning the campus and its buildings to the head of its architecture department, Frederick Giesecke. He had been responsible for the designs, if not the actual architect, for several buildings in the past, including the Academic Building and the Carnegie Public Library in Bryan.

After graduating from A&M in 1890, Giesecke began teaching at his alma mater. In 1912, he took a job at the "State University" in Austin as Head of Engineering Research and later the architecture department. It was in the latter capacity that he met the large, rotund, jovial drawing instructor, Samuel Vosper.

Born, raised and educated in the North, Vosper fell in love with Texas on his first visit. He moved his family to San Antonio in 1920 and began working for an architecture firm. Later, he took a position at UT where his peculiar personality and drinking habits gained him notoriety. However, he was fired in 1929 after it was learned he

was using a student as a nude model for his drawing classes.

Giesecke, who had returned to the A&M College two years earlier, immediately hired Vosper as a professor of architecture.

Vosper was fired from a teaching position at UT in 1929 after it was learned he was using a student as a nude model for his drawing classes.

Vosper's ability was unquestioned. He was considered "to be one of the ablest delineators of modern times" by Ernest Langford, a colleague and future head of the architecture department. Raiford Stripling, a well-known Texas architect, said Vosper could "make a pencil talk."

In 1931, A&M began a building program. Giesecke immediately designated Vosper as the chief designer. He proceeded to create the most beautiful buildings on

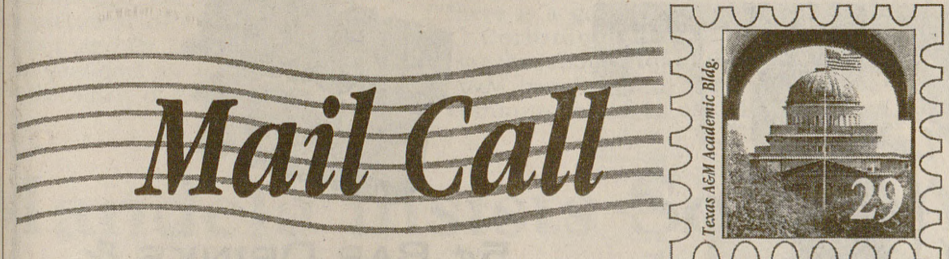
this campus.

But Vosper's life was not as happy as his joviality indicated. He and his wife lost their infant son in 1915, only a year after their marriage, and a second son in 1928. By the beginning of the A&M building program, Vosper was drinking so heavily his assistant had "to prime him with a couple of shots of whiskey just to get him out of bed." He died 25 years later of alcohol-related illnesses.

Regardless of his personal problems, Vosper left a legacy that will last for as long as his work stands. The buildings he designed are intricate and fascinating. The interior of the Systems Administration Building is one of the most unique on any Texas campus. Unfortunately, few of Vosper's creations carry his name. Because Giesecke was the official college architect, his is the name that adorns the cornerstones.

Walking across campus, perhaps you will remember this bit of A&M history and enjoy the architecture Samuel Vosper gave us. A&M will not see the likes of it again.

Roy L. Clay is a senior history major



Class project stolen

Despite the recent Mail Call letters about stolen property and money, things haven't changed. I was painting a metal box maroon for my ENTC class between Dorm 7 and Lounge C on the Quad. Within the 30 minutes that I left it to dry, you guessed it, someone picked it up.

We all know what the Aggie Code of Honor says, so there is really no need to repeat it here again. All I ask is that my class project be returned. I don't know, maybe you didn't realize it belonged to

anyone or thought it was junk someone had thrown out. In any case please return it.

Mike Sharp
Class of '95

Stanford should not dismiss improbability

Frank Stanford, in his column "Religion born to soothe stargazers," makes some interesting points on the nature of the more

miraculous stories of the Bible and says, "All of this would sound preposterous if you didn't already believe... wouldn't it?"

I believe he has fallen into a dangerous trap by dismissing accounts solely because they do not fit into his particular world view. Perceived improbability does not preclude truth. For example, the improbability that one man's warped psyche could lead to the murder of six million people does nothing to take away the true horror of the Holocaust.

One should also not dismiss something which is potentially relevant as the resurrection of Jesus simply because it seems improbable. This is not merely a story told to soothe the fears but it is something which either 1) actually happened, or 2) did not occur. It would seem unwise to dismiss such a potentially significant truth without thorough investigation into its possible validity. I can think of nothing more worthy of study than the question of Jesus Christ's resurrection.

John Murdock
Class of '95

Feminist movement defined by leaders

The best way to define a movement is by what the leaders of the movement do, say and believe. Catherine MacKinnon, a professor at the University of Michigan Law School and author of "Feminism Unmodified," is the most outspoken and articulate of prominent feminists. She maintains that all sex is rape. She also feels that unrestricted abortions should be legalized in all situations because all pregnancies result from rape.

Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women is also a notable feminist. Among her preeminent accomplishments is abandoning her husband and children to live with her lesbian lover. Moreover, in the past she has bolstered efforts to expand the definition of rape to include those instances of sex in which the male used "verbal coercion" before engaging in the activity. Under this definition, any

situation where a man tries to encourage a woman to have sex would qualify as rape.

Consider Gloria Steinem, esteemed author of "Women Who Run with the Wolves." One of her more recent actions that drew media attention was campaigning against Texas senator Kay Bailey Hutchison. Hutchison is a Republican, so Steinem denounced her as a "female impersonator."

As much as Catherine MacKinnon would disagree, the definition of feminism is radical liberalism applied to women. It is not about equality, which is a noble goal that any reasonable person would support. Its major focus is expanding the definition of sexual harassment and rape and basically allowing abortion to be used as a method of birth control.

James R. Staley
Class of '95

Editor's note: "Women Who Run With the Wolves" was written by Clarissa Pinkola Estés.