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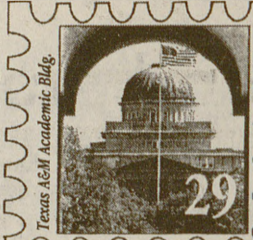
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# Mail Call



## Faculty Friends ad debate continues

I would like to clear up a mistake that I have seen in many letters to the editor over the past two years. It most recently appeared in a letter by Derek Veazey in which he defended the Faculty Friends ad by claiming it was protected by freedom of speech. This is not true. If the Faculty Friends wished to publish a paper or speak on campus and were denied the opportunity to do so, this denial would be an infringement of their right to speak freely. However, what they did was different. They purchased an ad in a newspaper. While the paper is protected by freedom of speech, the Battalion staff has the right to deny publication of any ad.

If, for example (and this is only an example to make a point - I would never, ever do such a thing), I wanted to run an ad calling for the death of Reveille and had a picture of a dead collie that I wanted to include, the Battalion staff could, and probably would choose not to run such an ad because it would offend many students. The newspaper in doing this would only be exercising its editorial rights. My rights would not have been violated. This is something that The Battalion does every day and has every right to do. Letters to the editor which contain language that is considered offensive are published at the staff's discretion. No one's right to free speech is violated in this situation.

If, however, I wanted to stand on a street corner with a bullhorn and call for the death of Reveille, or I wanted to print a newspaper that advocated such action, Texas A&M could not prevent me from doing so without infringing on my right to free speech and free press, although I'm sure the campus population would see to it that I would cease such actions.

Whether The Battalion was right or wrong to run an ad which offended a portion of the population it was their decision and one that they have every right in the world to make. Let me once again state that this issue has no bearing on freedom of speech! If you are going to throw around terms like freedom of speech in an attempt to defend the rights that you have been given by the Constitution of the United States, I suggest that you first understand that document and how and what it protects.

they are revealing that (2) is their real reason. This would also explain why Faculty Friends is restricted to faculty. For if their primary purpose is to "witness" on behalf of their faith, surely they would welcome any private individual - student, staff member, local resident - to join them. A professor is not better qualified than a private individual to evaluate the evidence for faith.

David Gershon Men  
Assistant Professor of English

I would like to respond to Professor Hugh Wilson's letter about the "unacademic, anti-intellectual, stupid" Faculty Friends ads in The Battalion.

1. Professor Wilson states that these ads are "a glaring violation of the American tradition of the separation of church and state." The protection of these ads is not based on a tradition but on the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Referring to the First Amendment, the attorney general of the state of Texas Stated in Opinion H-511 in 1974 that student religious groups at Texas A&M must have the same access to University facilities as other student groups. Equal access, presumably, would apply also to religious faculty groups.

2. Professor Wilson also states that "claiming one metaphysical truth to the exclusion of all others is a violation of a global academic tradition." He should recall that Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, Yale and Princeton were all founded with the express purpose of teaching only one metaphysical truth, the Christian religion.

3. Professor Wilson is also concerned that many of the Faculty Friends are in positions of academic authority. Does he really wish to propose that tenured professors forfeit their freedom of expression?

4. Finally, I want to respond to Professor Wilson's concern about the academic quality of the members of Faculty Friends. As for myself, I was one of the four founders of the Faculty Friends and came to Texas A&M from an Associate Professorship at Yale after seven years as a post-doc at Stanford with a Ph.D. degree from Princeton. From the beginning, we restricted membership in Faculty Friends to those with academic appointments. Professor Wilson is correct, however, in noting that some of those now listed in the Friends' ad are not on the faculty. Their names will be removed from the next ad.

John A. McIntyre  
Professor of Physics

Editor's note: Both sides of the debate over the Faculty Friends advertisement have been addressed, and The Battalion will not run any more letters on the topic.

## Many feminists oppose abortion

In response to James Staley's letter about the leaders of the feminist movement, I would like to add another page of history to the picture.

Not all feminists define all sexual activity as rape and advocate abortion as a method of birth control. I refer to the members of a national organization founded in 1972 called Feminists for Life of America. These people agree with the first leaders of the feminist movement like Susan B. Anthony, Alice Paul, author of the original Equal Rights Amendment; and Margaret Sanger, founder of what became Planned Parenthood, in opposing abortion. They took this stance not only because it is unsafe; they argued that abortion takes a human life and ultimately hinders justice for all women.

True feminism celebrates women's ability to give birth and loves and nurtures every human being, especially the defenseless. There should not be competition between a mother and her child - a situation created by the male view that accepts violence as a legitimate solution to conflict and encouraged individuals to function separately, rather than in harmony with each other.

If you would like to meet a current feminist leader, Celeste Dixon, president of Feminists for Life of Texas, will be speaking on Monday, April 18 at 7 p.m. in Rudder 502. Remember, not all feminists are alike.

Sara Gross  
Class of '96

## Solutions to human overpopulation

Think we need tighter immigration control? Tired of sending money to hungry nations? Fed up of commercials of starving children in Africa? What it all boils down to is overpopulation. We will soon be too large of a race for this planet to support. How do we stop this? Stop having so many children so we don't overload the carrying capacity of the earth. But you tell that to the man in India who needs more children to add to his family income. We can't expect him to give up his only hope of livelihood, just so the rest of us can feel comfortable. What next? Abortion, birth control. Although birth control is preferable, abortion is acceptable. You say abortion is murder. So is having a baby that you cannot support. Take your pick - starvation or a coat hanger. Or how about taking euthanasia one step further than legalization. I'm talking about mandatory euthanasia at a certain age. Birth rates would then be closer to the death rate - population stabilization. Besides, who wants to drool on themselves, wear diapers and be pawed off by their children to a "retirement home?" Not me. It's all about population control. Or maybe, as a campus-wide form of population control, we could have a trash deposit in the Commons for any unwanted babies!

Zach Ester  
Class of '96

## Un-awareness Week idea 'honored'

Hey-hey, according to the Batt, it's the official "Un-awareness Week" here at Texas A&M. In honor of un-awareness, I will walk around in a stupor with horse blinders on (as they suggested), and remain totally oblivious to the liberal political indoctrination of the Batt and most of my professors. I mean, for God's sakes, who am I to question the authority of the almighty Battalion, or my all-knowing professors?

Bill Zerby  
Class of '96

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I would like to thank Professor L. Murphy Smith for helping answer a question that has bothered me for nearly three years. Each semester I find myself reacting to the Faculty Friends' ad with a vague combination of resentment and annoyance, an odd feeling whose origin has remained a mystery. I knew that it had to do little with the fact that I am a Jew in a predominantly non-Jewish community; I spent three years at Houston Baptist University, a school that makes A&M look like UC Berkeley. My politics (just left of moderate) also don't explain this feeling. Indeed, I wholeheartedly support the group's right to run the ad. But then I read Smith argue that Faculty Friends would never "mistreat the non-Christian students." Why did I find this so hard to swallow? The answer is in the ad itself. To treat every student "fairly" obligates faculty to at least try to treat every student equally, a task that necessarily requires a separation (to the best of one's ability) of the religious and the political from the academic. Students should be students first, not Christians, Jews, Muslims, Atheists, Democrats or Republicans. It seems to me that these categories exert little influence on a student's ability to learn or an educator's ability to teach. But one look at the Faculty Friends' latest ad, with its queer blend of religion, politics and academics leads me to believe that, contrary to Smith's assertion, non-Christian students have legitimate fears. Can non-Christian students expect "fair" treatment from Faculty Friends? In the end, the answer doesn't matter. The point is, no student should even have to ask the question.

Mary Gross  
Graduate Student

Harry M. Klaff  
Graduate Student

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