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Old-fashioned role model a lost ideal Today's heroes entertain, don't achieve greatness

Heroes don't do heroic things anymore. Perhaps we as a society have become wary of those we want to emulate, but the famous in our society are no longer our role models. Presidents lie and break the law. Athletes beat their spouses. Actors die of drug addictions. Musicians kill themselves, leaving their families behind. But there is still a need for heroes in American society today.

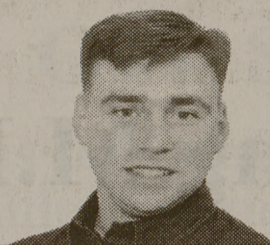
In an age when visual media dominates our culture, the traditional hero is out of date. The idea that men and women who distinguish themselves with their accomplishments and lifestyles become role models for the nation's youth is gone. Now America follows the careers and private lives of "stars," not because they are great at their chosen profession, but because we want to see them do something spectacular or scandalous. Simply stated, today's heroes don't achieve, they entertain.

Traditionally, we have looked to men and women of extraordinary ability or accomplishment for inspiration. Professionals like architects, sculptors, military commanders, firefighters, statesmen and athletes were the role models for past generations — not because they were flashy, beautiful or glamorous but because they were professionals known for great deeds, intellect and heroism. America placed value on accomplishment and its role models reflected that.

Today, achievement is only a commodity to market in order to sell print and increase ratings. Almost every day we watch extraordinary events on television. But the media doesn't stop probing for a story; it goes behind the scenes and milks emotional moments for all they're worth. Reporters intrude on the private

ROY L. CLAY

Columnist



"in," substance is "out."

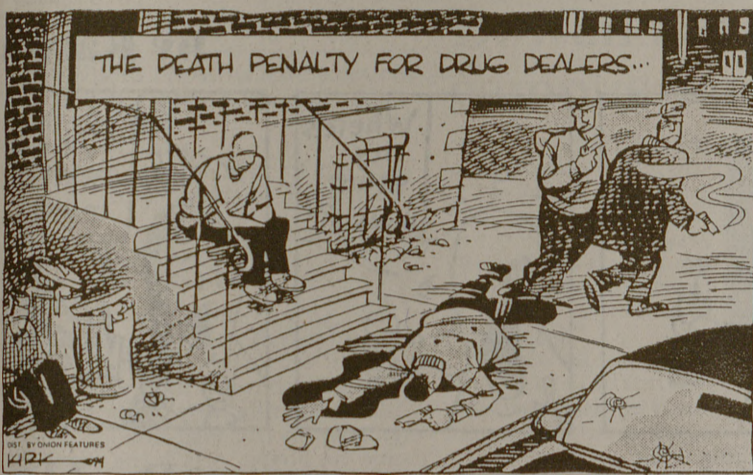
This is not to say there are no heroes left in the world. We find them everyday in the local news. Those who risk death in order to save a life or spend their spare time helping the sick and homeless. And there are others who have captured America's heart like pitcher Nolan Ryan or speedskater Bonnie Blair. But it seems we build these people up to watch them fall, waiting for them to make a human error that will cast them down in the eyes of the public.

Mickey Mantle was thrown into national prominence at 19 years of age when he played for the elite New York Yankees. Since his retirement in 1969, Mantle's athletic ability has taken on nearly epic stature. Unfortunately, all of his achievements will be marred by a serious problem with alcoholism that has caused him to forget much of the last 10 years, as well as many memories of his glorious days on the baseball field.

But he was a hero, and — to many Americans — always will be a hero. Why? Because Mantle achieved something with his life. The problems he has to cope with are real and unbecoming; but as a professional, he was one of the greatest of his time and never did anything that reflected badly on his team or his sport. That's hard to say for many famous people today.

We have been exposed to media-generated personalities far too long. Our generation now can see the consequences of growing up without the positive role models our parents were able to follow.

Roy L. Clay is a senior history major



...ISN'T WORKING.

EDITORIAL

Momma knows

Ensuring fair deal for students

Aggie Mother's Club President Margaret Freeman has vowed to continue monitoring events at Texas A&M. It is up to the club's next president, Shirley Tingley, to see to it that she does. By forming a committee headed by Freeman, the new president will continue the Aggie Moms' commitment to questioning university policies.

The respect for Freeman was evident when she received a well-deserved standing ovation at her farewell speech at the Federation of Texas A&M University Mothers' Clubs' spring meeting. She earned their respect and the respect of many others by questioning the privatization of part of the Department of Food Services, and the University's dealings with Barnes and Noble Bookstores. She said that all she did was ask the question, "Why?" Although she has yet to receive a satisfactory answer, she will continue to be persistent with her role heading up this new committee.

Many things go on at a university this large of which students are often unaware. But the Aggie

Moms have taken on the responsibility to take a closer look at the administration of this school to make sure that the students are getting a fair deal. With the number of scandals this school has seen recently and with the students' lack of knowledge on many University policies, the Aggie Moms are good to have on our side.

The mother who presented the motion to form the committee did so because she did not want to see the issues dropped as the club changed officers. All students should appreciate this unified display of concern. The Aggie Moms are not required to perform such an important task, nor were they ever officially asked. They saw a need for some group to step in and they took the initiative.

The Aggie Mother's Clubs are the only group that can look at the dealings of this university with only the students' best interests in mind. Things will be changing next year with a new president, but the Aggie Moms will still be here keeping an eye on things. We can take great comfort in that fact and we should all be grateful.



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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Muster celebrates spirit, pride, memories of Texas A&M

Tomorrow we will celebrate what many people consider to be Texas A&M's most time-honored tradition — Aggie Muster. The Muster ceremony begins at 7 p.m. in G. Rollie White. Although it lasts only about an hour, its presence will be with us until April 21 comes again.

Almost everyone on campus has heard of Aggie Muster. Upperclassmen have attended the ceremony. New students, faculty and staff have probably seen hundreds of students wearing stickers to promote the event. Even so, as we become consumed with daily jobs, studies and responsibilities, it is easy to forget about Muster, its importance and what it has come to symbolize since its beginning on June 26, 1883.

The first Muster was held as a celebration of Aggie Spirit and coincided with the time of graduation. The event offered a chance to congregate with Old Ags, eat, drink and have a good time. The candle lighting ceremony that now comes to mind when we think of Muster began

MELISSA MEGLIOLA

Columnist



much later. As Muster has evolved over the last 112 years, its role on our campus has grown. Muster is a time to celebrate our pride in this university and our love for our fellow students, those current and former and those who have passed on.

Dr. Malon Sutherland, Vice President of Student Affairs, wrote in 1988, "Muster is a humbling expression of thanks that transcends the years and allows Aggies — be they Class of '36, Class of '65 or Class of '91 — to get together to remember when, and to say thanks for the memories."

Every year, a class holds its 50th reunion on the day of Aggie Muster. The Class of '44 will return to campus to-

morrow to see old classmates, attend the Muster Barbecue and participate in the evening roll call. They are unique as they were the only class never to wear senior boots when leather was rationed for World War II during their final year in the Corps.

Tomorrow, the Muster celebration will begin at 11 a.m. with the barbecue on the Academic Plaza. The celebration, commemorative of the original Aggie Muster, offers a chance for students to meet members of the Class of '44 and enjoy the camaraderie of other current students. Meal tickets can be purchased with Aggie bucks in advance, a meal plan or \$5 cash on site.

The evening speaker, Andres Tijerina '67, a history professor and the Muster chair at Texas A&M Kingsville, was selected by the campus Muster committee because he "truly relates to all audiences," says Amy Ellis, chairman of the Speaker Selections Committee.

Dr. Tijerina was a student, is a former student and as a war veteran, has a special tie to the reunion class. He flew 150 combat missions in Vietnam and was

awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Perhaps most importantly, he is someone who truly identifies with the emotions and meaning of Aggie Muster, as he answered, "Here," when the name of his brother, Albert Tijerina '65, was read.

The annual Aggie Muster is a time to celebrate our pride in this university and our love for our fellow students, those current and former and those who have passed on.

Because of the popularity of Muster, seating has been a problem in the past. This year overflow seating is available in Rudder Auditorium, where a giant television screen will be set up to show the event. Although at first, the atmosphere would be lost outside of G. Rollie White, Nikki Jamison '94 disagrees. Last year she

went to Muster with her fish camp and could not get into G. Rollie.

"I was very upset that some of the freshman were missing their very first Aggie Muster. We watched the ceremony on a tiny television screen in the flag room. The spirit as the people around us answered 'here' for their friends and family was just as impressive and awesome as I have felt it inside the coliseum," she said.

April 21 is truly a great day each year for Texas A&M. But the pride, spirit and warmth of our campus is important year round. Aggies think of their classmate not one day in April but everyday of every month. During a Silver Taps earlier this year, as the Ross Volunteers marched in front of Lawrence Sullivan Ross, a man who had just lost his daughter said to his wife as he shed a single tear, "Look at all the people. Surely she didn't know them all."

Live Aggie Muster tomorrow, the next day and every day after.

Melissa Megliola is a senior industrial engineering major

Mail Call



Parking lot changes worsen Hart tickets

There's an awful lot on the mind of a young college student these days ... Institutional racism, misogyny versus misandry, bending moments, triple integrals, and yes, the Faculty Friends. Does freedom of speech override federally mandated separation of church and state? I don't know. This is not the point of my letter. I'm afraid all of these controversial debates will have to be postponed until a greater, more disruptive

social argument has been settled ...

PTTS has robbed the Hart parking lot of nine spaces! Nine regular spots were converted into "24-hour reserved" tickets raps early Thursday morning. Ahs, we must bind together and make sense of this madness.

At the very least, this letter should warrant a reasonable explanation from PTTS as to why more "reserved" spots are needed. When I walk around campus during a weekend, the yellow parking lots by Bizzell and the Military Sciences Building, both of which are close to Hart, are usually pretty empty. One-half of an already small parking lot now

belongs to the faculty ...

If I owned a car and had a real reason to be upset, I would be tempted to enlist the aid of the Warren Commission.

Jeremy D. Eubanks
Class of '96

Readers respond to feminism column

• Elizabeth Nicol brought up a good point. Since abortions have been performed since the beginning of time and people will be doing it anyway, it should be legal. This got me to thinking — if this solves the abortion problem wouldn't this solve a lot of other problems like stealing? People have been stealing since the beginning of time and people are going to be doing it anyway so let's alleviate any stealing laws. Better yet, let's remove all murder laws, not just on small children that haven't passed through the mother's

womb yet. All of this can easily be justified in the Bible because we can interpret the book to say anything we want.

Only a feminist could come up with a novel column using such a new writing style. I always thought columns were supposed to make a point.

I realize I was stuck in my genetically-driven male chauvinist mindset. Now I see that I was just mad because women are able to have pleasure without men. Hail the superior gender! May feminists rule the earth!

Christopher Binovi
Class of '97

• I'm referring to the article on feminism by Elizabeth Nicol published in The Battalion of April 14. It's the best piece I've read in The Battalion since I started reading it almost two years ago. Are you breaking an old tradition and/or are you starting a new one?

Murali Chinta
Graduate Student

Thanks to Big Event, Women's Lacrosse

First, I and my Dad want to thank the organizers of the Big Event. This project Saturday, April 9, was a big help to the community and to the ones that need some help in keeping up their property.

And we want to especially thank the Texas A&M Women's Lacrosse team that painted the trim on my Dad's house. These 11 ladies were well-organized and did a real nice job in a nice manner. They were so nice to my Dad in that they did any cleaning, raking or whatever job he asked them to do. They represented A&M and themselves in a super way.

We, again, thank them for all their time and services and maybe they can help us again next year. Thanks, again to the Texas A&M Women's Lacrosse team. Take care.

Lawrence C. and Joseph B. Nemecc
College Station