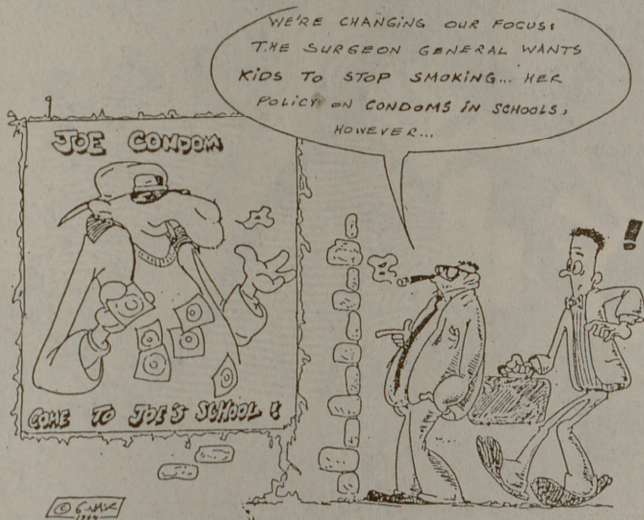


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We are the Aggies, the Aggies are we

Despite outside scrutiny, A&M badge shines bright

Oh, to be hated. Isn't it great? Some friends and I were skating at the Galleria in Houston during a spontaneous road trip one Saturday night when we decided we could not leave the ice without leaving our mark as Aggies. The football team had just been put on probation and it may not have been the best time to be an Aggie. But we were all proud and we decided to have a small yell practice in the middle of the skating rink.

After our first yell another Aggie joined us and asked if we would do another. With all eyes focused on us, we bellowed out another yell. Just as we were leaving the ice, a woman skated by us and scornfully murmured under her breath, "A&M sucks!"

My friends and I laughed it off and headed for our car being sure to say "Howdy" to everyone we passed. We all agreed the weird looks we got back made being friendly the Aggie way all the more worth it.

I didn't always like the scrutiny. People would ask me why I was "going THERE and not a good school," I would always get offended and then knock the junior college they were planning to attend.

About 30 percent of my class was going to A&M, so at least I had allies. But I felt like we were at war with the 20 percent going to t.u. They would always rag on us, asking things like: "So, are you going into Agriculture or Mining?" and, "Weren't your scores high enough to go to UT?"

I always took great pleasure in pointing out that my scores pleased me out of t.u.

MICHAEL LANDAUER

Columnist



I got even more scrutiny when I said I was going into Liberal Arts here. Not many people think of A&M as a good liberal arts school. Most people assume that if we have a liberal arts faculty at all, then they're here to teach the engineers and farmers how to read and write.

With these common misconceptions in mind, people could not understand that I chose a school based on spirit. Some of my t-sip friends even had to go look up the word in the dictionary.

But I don't mind when people look down their noses at A&M. They're usually misinformed and could not possibly understand the spirit. When people say they hate A&M, it's usually because they don't understand us — or sometimes it's because we beat the hell outta them every year in football.

Now with the football team on probation, the whole SWC has lined up in their bad feelings about Aggies. And I, for one, welcome their scrutiny. I find it more than a little amusing that t.u. tried to have next year's game moved to Sept. 17. Do you get the idea that they wanted to be the Grinch who stole Bonfire?

But bonfire will burn, and probation will not last forever. The only thing that will outlast probation and endure so many cheap shots is the pride we have in being Aggies.

It is when people put down our school that we should be most proud of it. Who wants to go to a school that just processes students like canned Spam?

People always ask why we stand during football games, or why we have so many traditions and rules. They rarely understand the answers, but they sometimes reach an understanding about how much Aggies care about their school and each other.

When I went to my first Silver Taps, it amazed me how many people came out to show respect for people they probably didn't even have the pleasure of knowing. But those in attendance did know they were there for fellow Aggies, and that is all that matters.

So when I hear those rifle shots echoing out past Kyle and into the night, I think about how much respect and spirit there is at Aggeland. People who aren't Aggies can never experience that feeling. And when they have had feelings about A&M because they don't understand us, I just feel sorry for them. After all, "Some may boast of prowess bold, of the school they think so grand, but there's a spirit that ne'er be told." And we all know what that is.

Thank God we're Aggies.

Michael Landauer is a freshman journalism major

EDITORIAL

Problems abound

Bowen inherits full plate

Oklahoma imports are becoming an increasingly hot ticket item in Texas, and the recent appointment of Dr. Ray Bowen, interim president of Oklahoma State University, is no exception. Although the University is in need of a permanent president, there are many issues Bowen will have to deal with in order to undo some of the damage Texas A&M has sustained.

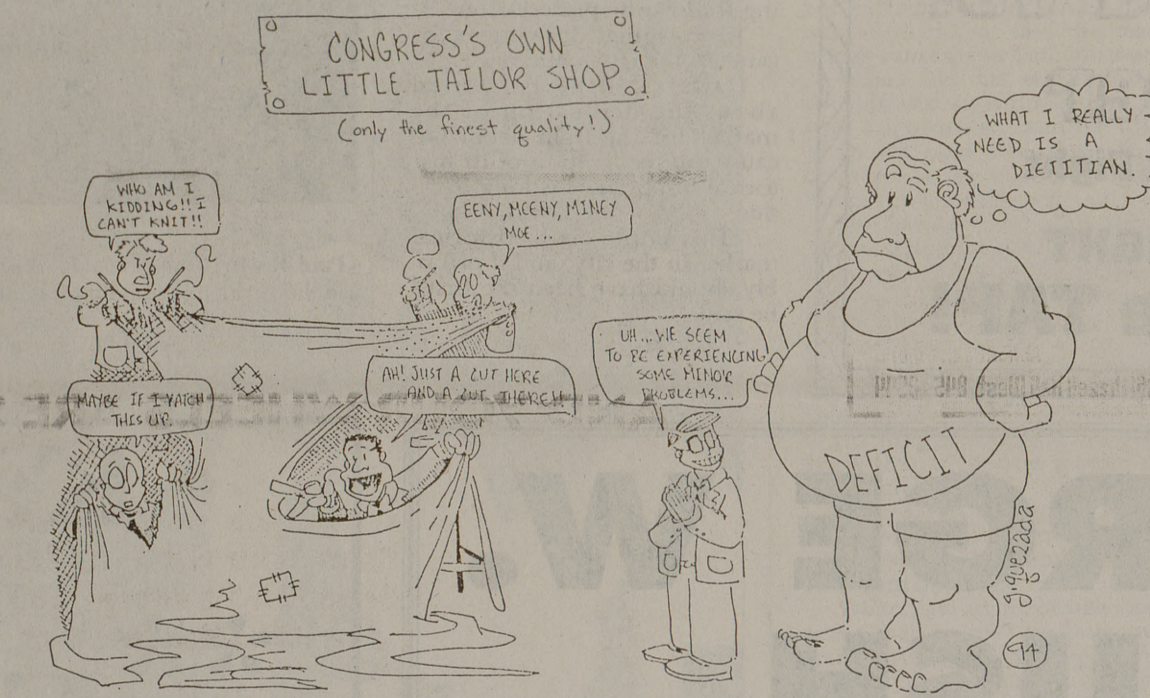
One of the main issues needing attention is the ongoing multicultural dilemma. Dr. Bowen will have to come up with new ways to attract minority students, and at the same time new ways must be found to make the present minority students feel more a part of the University. Using a "bull in a china closet" technique where new classes are arbitrarily required in order to bring about a greater understanding of other cultures may not work as well as intended. An alternative may be bringing together the minority groups on campus together with other groups and exchange ideas of what would make the minority students feel more accepted.

Athletics is another sensitive

area that must be dealt with. With the recent trouble concerning the athletic program, Bowen will be charged with the task of restoring a maligned reputation. An upcoming transition into the Big Eight has to go smoothly, and athletes must be made to follow the rules set down by the NCAA.

Bringing more research dollars into the university is an high priority issue, but perhaps an even more important issue is the hiring of good instructors. A&M needs to find a balance between the professors that want to research and the ones who prefer to teach. The distortion of research funding must be examined as well. Some of the smaller majors are in desperate need of money that in the past has gone to larger programs.

Bowen has a big challenge ahead of him, and there's a lot riding on how quickly the more pressing issues can be dealt with. The student body needs to see that a person in a position of power in the administration can be trusted and helpful, and it will be up to Dr. Bowen to prove it.



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Keeping the world together happens one piece at a time

The little margay crouched on the limb of the tree in the center of its tiny enclosure. He looked at me with his deep, sad eyes and I struggled to hold back tears. Seeing him there was like seeing a small child in prison. Unfortunately, setting him free would be a death sentence.

This margay, a small wildcat native to Texas and highly endangered, was confiscated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from a flea market and sent to Fossil Rim Wildlife Center. Fossil Rim is a popular drive-through "safari adventure" in Glen Rose, Texas, as well as one of the most prominent research and captive breeding facilities in the country. Here I came into direct contact with many species that will probably disappear from the world forever.

Katie, a mottled wolf, licked my hand. I fed an orange to a baby rhino. A cheetah paraded six feet in front of me.

Cool stuff, right? I go away for a weekend and come back to normal college life, right? Extinction is sad, but there's not much we can do, right?

MARY
MATELLA

Guest Columnist

Wrong.

I know not everyone can afford to donate money to the World Wildlife Fund. And I know not everyone is going around shooting black rhinos for their horns or destroying the grassland habitats of the mottled wolf. I know many people are not particularly interested in wildlife and will never write to their representatives or senators about it.

All I ask is this — I ask you to care. Not just about endangered species, but about our natural world. The world that extends beyond our nice air-conditioned homes, offices and classrooms. Care about the rain forests, the mountains

and the rivers you may never see. Whether you know it or not, these things make your way of life possible.

I like to think of the analogy of a giant airplane carrying the world population. There's a range from first class to coach, but we're all there. When each species goes extinct, one bolt falls out. When each river is polluted, a fuse breaks. When each acre of rain forest is slashed and burned, the oxygen content of the cabin drops. Unless we start repairing it, the plane will crash. It's just a matter of time.

So why are things moving so slowly? We can tie many environmental issues, if not all, to one thing: politics. And if you haven't noticed, what college student around here (who's not running for student government or majoring in political science) believes his or her vote really makes a difference? Most people simply don't care.

I say we're here at college to learn to care. That's because, to be true: "What goes around comes around." Air pollution. Contaminated water. Ocean dumping.

A student from Norway sits next to me in my geography class. He told me the other day that Norway uses hydropower and doesn't pollute their air. A coal-burning plant in Russia is responsible for much of Norway's air pollution. It's too

We can tie many environmental issues, if not all, to one thing: politics. And if you haven't noticed, most people in college simply don't care. I say we're here at college to learn to care.

bad that most of Norway's gorgeous lakes are sterile because of acid rain that originates somewhere else in Europe.

What goes around comes around. And somebody has to pay.

Are we going the way of the Romans? Many people say yes, but we have something they didn't. That, as a friend of

mine says, is "an understanding of history." So I asked him — what can we do in this world of exponentially expanding population, declining natural resources and burgeoning pollution problems?

He proposed not a solution, but an escape. "Let's colonize Venus or Mars and just leave." Ah, I think — trash one planet and start on another ...

But I like this one. And I care about it. Even if it means I have to come into contact with that distasteful world of politics, I will not be silent or passive. We, the people, are the ones who pay when the time comes. It doesn't matter if our leaders are to blame.

We are all here at college to learn, to become educated. When we're adults in the working world and social, political or environmental problems stare us in the face, I hope we, the educated, don't look away first. The future of the world depends on us.

Mary Matella is a junior wildlife and fisheries science major

Mail Call



Sinful desires no cause for boastfulness

I agree that homosexual couples have every right to participate in the United Way Kiss-Off. However, it saddens me that they would choose to do so. You see, I believe that homosexuality is an inborn trait. In the same way that greed, envy, deceit, malice, violence, hatred, racism, and lust are in-born traits. They are all manifestations of the dark side of human nature known as sin.

Granted, not everyone is homosexual. But some of us have strong racist feelings,

some struggle with greed, some have violent and hateful urges, some are perpetual liars, etc., until everyone is included.

My own personal struggle is with lust. I happen to find women extremely attractive. Yet it is a sin to have sex outside of marriage, so I choose not to. I did not choose my nature or my desires, but I constantly choose my behavior. Homosexuals do not choose their nature or desires, but they, too, choose their behavior and the consequences that go with it. That is their birthright as human beings.

Whether it is a KKK rally or a homosexual couple kissing in public, what saddens

and repulses me is not that people chose to sin so much as the fact that they are proud of their wickedness and want the whole world to know about it.

Eric Peddicord
Class of '97

In Luckenbach, they know our name well

I've been speaking lately with John Raven, the editor of the Luckenbach Moon — a monthly newsletter based in Luckenbach, and he has told me how the management of Luckenbach feels about the Aggies.

It seems that some Aggies went down to Luckenbach for a Robert Earl Keen concert on March 5 and did their best to make A&M look bad. Let me quote some of Mr. Raven's letter:

"Luckenbach dropped all the Bryan-College Station addresses from the mailing list after the March concert riot. Seems some of

the Aggie faithful stole the historical marker and generally behaved in a socially unacceptable manner."

I am not writing to preach the evils of alcohol. I have had a few beers at Luckenbach myself, and I was at the March 5 concert, and I was quite drunk. But at no point did I curse the management or get out of hand. And I certainly didn't steal anything. I was embarrassed and ashamed I had to apologize for the behavior of fellow Aggies.

Luckenbach does have a great bar, and they do not care if you get drunk. But they do care if you get violent or disruptive. If you can't control yourself, or you don't have friends that can take care of you, then don't bother going to Luckenbach, because they don't want you there. By dropping the Bryan-College Station addresses from their mailing list, it seems that Luckenbach is hoping the Aggies don't come back.

It has been said before that everybody hates the Aggies, but we don't have to make it a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Dave Thomas
Class of '93

Bigger problems are being overlooked

I'm glad that the Aggie mothers are concerned about the school; they certainly have many valid reasons to be. But does the 10 percent faculty discount at the bookstore really deserve to be one of only two issues getting repeated attention in the press?

No one could imagine that the faculty, in Liberal Arts at least, is treated too well here.

I would be concerned, more importantly, about having a better bookstore (one worthy of a university, and not a t-shirt shop), a better library, and better-supported faculty, and about encouraging students to use these resources.

Dr. John R. Lenz
Visiting Assistant Professor
Classical languages