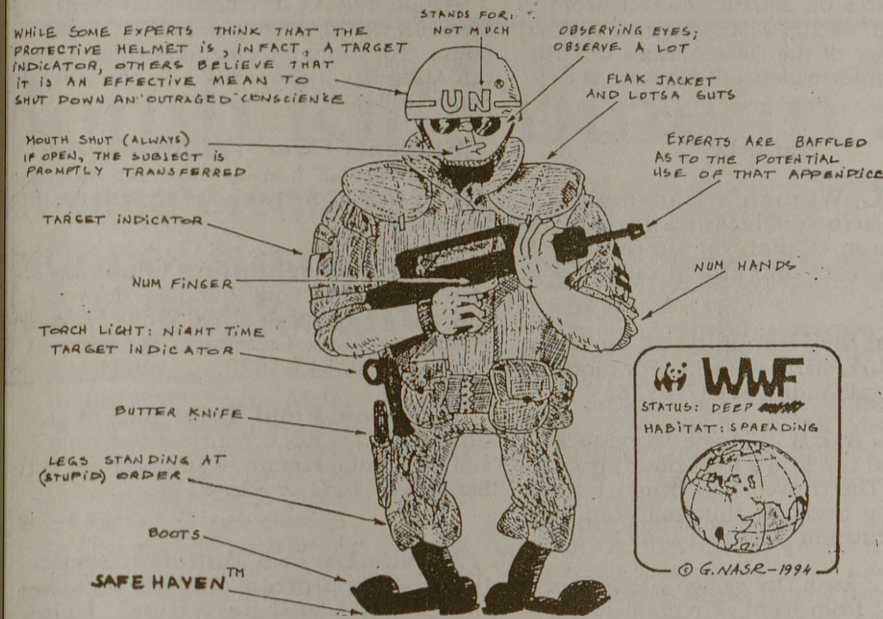


ANATOMY OF A "PEACE" KEEPER



A&M inspires list of likes, dislikes

Not everything's completely bright and beautiful

This column is dedicated to some of the good and not-so-great things at Texas A&M. I consulted various friends to come up with a long list of grins and grievances.

LYNN BOOHER



Columnist

There are the obvious nice things like The Battalion, Midnight Yell and football games, Aggie spirit and Reveille VI. But what about other cool things like those college fairs that come to the MSC grounds and hand out all that free stuff? Or those "Good Stuff" boxes that we get at the beginning of each new semester?

lous and so is OPAS and all the performances it brings. MSC Town Hall and its concerts are great too.

Vending machines that take Aggie Bucks are one of my personal favorites. Aggie Bucks themselves are great, as are establishments on campus that take them.

The campus appearance is generally attractive. West campus is pretty, though a big hassle to get to for class. It's nice that we don't see flyers stapled to trees like all over t.u.'s campus.

I like bike lanes, and I don't like people who park in them during classes. When I'm walking, I don't like bicyclists and when I'm riding, I don't like pedestrians.

The Academic Building windows annoy a lot of people. I find it annoying that the workers replacing the windows are selling the old ones for five dollars a pop. I thought they were just going to be trashed.

Almost everyone dislikes registration and that annoying lady that says, "Please hang up and try again in one hour. 409-845." But phone registration beats doing anything in the Pavilion.

The way some buildings are constructed bothers me too. All modular dorms I've been in have one side that's longer than the other. Residents on the short side have to pay the same amount of rent as those on the long side, even though they get about 36 fewer square feet.

Class size is a point of debate among the people I talked to. Some like small ones for the individual attention; others prefer large classes because they're easy to skip. Classes that are before 11 a.m., after 4 p.m. or last 75 minutes are not nice.

It also bugs me that all the dorms are four stories so that they're not required to have elevators.

I don't like the limited number of honors classes or liberal arts classes and majors. It was only months ago that I realized there is a theater arts major here. Still no music or art majors, however.

One really good thing about dorms is the phones. They have call waiting, call forwarding and three-way calling.

The art galleries in the MSC are really nice, as is the whole MSC complex. Cheap, artsy movies at Rudder Theater are fabu-

Has anyone else noticed that construction always seems to be done during the regular school year and not the summer? I've also seen maintenance workers do

some important job like leaf blowing and use three people for the task: one to hold the blower and two to point at leaves. If they're not blowing leaves, they're driving on the sidewalks.

The relative safety of campus is nice. It's good to have Corps escorts and Dial-A-Ride available. Of course, since I almost never see any violent crimes that occur on campus (especially rape) publicized, it's hard to be sure that campus really is safe.

I like the National Organization for Women, and I dislike stupid guys that harass them when they march to "Take Back the Night" for women. I hate that flier that says, "Friends Raping Friends Is Bad Bull." That flier is bad bull. Rape is a lot worse.

Silver Taps and Aggie Muster are good. So is the tradition of Corps freshmen polishing the statue of Sul Ross. Singing the "Aggie War Hymn" is a lot of fun. People who are fanatical about traditions are not fun.

Going to Sbsa on the days it has special dinners like Chinese food is relatively good. The lady who makes grilled cheese sandwiches is great. People who yell, "Pick it up!" when someone drops their tray and the Bonfire guys who eat-in their grodes are not great.

There are many, many more things on my list, all across the spectrum. I didn't have room to touch on good and bad things about Evans Library, PTTS and many of the other organizations that make Texas A&M what it is. But I did relieve some stress.

Lynn Booher is a sophomore English and psychology major

PRO CON

Should celebrities be held to higher standards than everyone else?

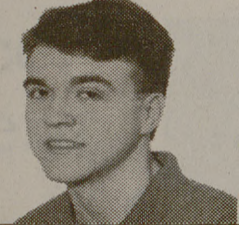
LYNN BOOHER

Columnist



DAVE WINDER

Columnist



Celebrities are just ordinary people who have been thrust into the spotlight, and they don't have any responsibility to behave better than the general public, right?

To err is human. Just because a person can sing, act or play sports exceptionally well does not mean they do not make the same mistakes as everybody else.

I want to be in the spotlight, but I want to hold the switch.

Celebrities are placed upon pedestals on which they are thought as being perfect. This is highly unfair because no one can be expected to escape unblemished in the fish bowl these people live in.

I want the world to give its hard-earned cash to watch me on the silver screen, but ignore me when I show up on the 6 o'clock news after I get caught driving drunk.

Things such as drug addiction and alcoholism happen all across the country, but when it happens to someone famous it becomes a big deal. Everyone gets a "How could they do that?" attitude all of a sudden.

Does this sound familiar? Probably the entire American public would agree that politicians, particularly the president, should be held to much higher standards than the average human being. Making lots of money from cattle futures invested for him by a good friend might be okay for Joe Bob, but it doesn't look good when the president's wife is the one who benefits.

It is unfair for people to have to change their ways just because they have become celebrities. Holding them up to higher standards punishes them for making it big.

Should standards really be different for anyone who chooses to be recognized by the media and the general public?

Celebrities should only be judged as people, not the demigods that the mass media perceives them to be. Thanks to tabloid television and magazines, every little thing these stars do is news. People magazine devotes most of its space to celebrity scandals, divorces and skirmishes with the law. But then again - who doesn't want to read about David Letterman getting a speeding ticket?

People argue that it's not celebrities' responsibility to serve as role models for America's children. That's what their parents are for. But any logical person realizes that children watch television and are influenced by a variety of sources, including the media and their peers.

It is totally unfair for someone to have to change their ways just because they have become a celebrity. If somebody famous wants to have an affair outside of marriage then he or she should be allowed. These people are adults; they can make their own decisions. By holding celebrities up to higher standards than other people you are punishing them for making it big.

By the time a child is in middle school, he or she is particularly susceptible to peer influence. Seventh graders like a particular band or TV show not for its intrinsic value, but because their friends like it. When a popular rock star's drug habits are exposed by the media, these kids get a very strong message that counteracts the "Say no to drugs" slogan pounded in their heads by parents and public service messages.

Take Michael Jordan, who got tons of criticism for gambling at casinos and on golf courses. The guy does everything he possibly can for Chicago-area charities but still catches grief for betting his own money. Apparently it does not matter that millions of "common" people do it. Why should Michael Jordan be treated any different?

Any logical person realizes that children watch television and are influenced by a variety of sources. In this world all of us, not just kids, need someone to look up to.

Just because people look up to celebrities does not mean that the celebrities should have to stop their fun. If someone feels getting drunk every Saturday night is pure enjoyment then they should not have to halt their activities.

We can only wonder what kind of influence the suicide of hugely popular Nirvana front man Kurt Cobain has generated. As anyone who remembers junior high and high school knows, teenage suicide is a reality. Who knows what obsessed, depressed fans might do?

If you are going to hold celebrities up to higher standards, then what scale do you use? How far above the rest of society do they have to perform to be considered living up to what people expect? Judging other people is easy when you have no one to compare them too.

Kids aren't the only people influenced by celebrities. Many adults fail to distinguish between actor's true personality and the character he plays. An actor who perpetually plays the good guy on TV or in movies often becomes a hero to all of us. When we hear on the news that he beats up his wife, it's a blow to all of his future work and it taints our memory of him as a good person.

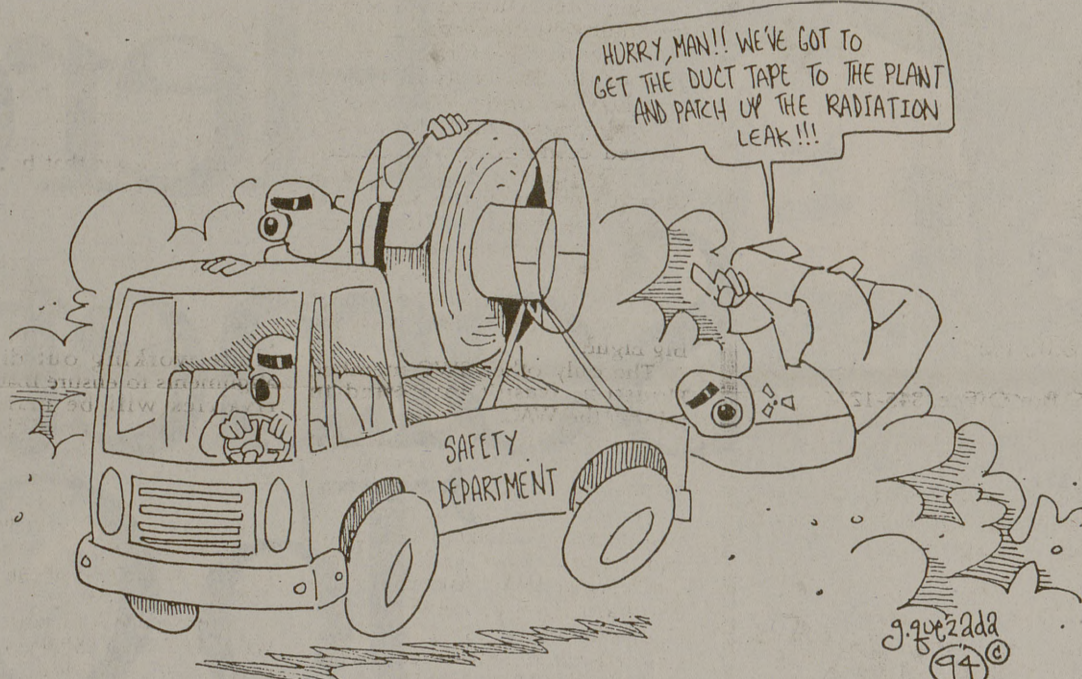
Syracuse University went as far as to separate student-athletes from other students by passing a strict conduct code. The code reads in part, "You will be held to a standard of ethical conduct and behavioral expectations which may well exceed those of non-athletes."

Does that really matter? Do we need heroes anymore? In a world as violent, as scary, as often ugly as ours can be, all of us, not just kids, need someone to look up to. We need people who can make us forget that the world is not always beautiful. We need people who believe in high standards.

Stating that a person must act a certain way just because they hold a position is highly unfair. Don't the other students represent Syracuse, also? Celebrities are just people who worked hard and made it big. They should not be punished for excelling.

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Women do not need single-sex classrooms

I would like to offer a reply to Erin Hill's column printed in the April 19 Battalion. Hill makes a good argument for the implementation of single-sex classrooms in schools, especially for the maths and sciences. But wait a minute...

is, if you want to do well in a class you are interested in, participate in class and study. If not, it sounds like a personal problem to me, not a gender-based one.

Marianne R. Guzman
Graduate Student

If I understand her arguments correctly, women need single-sex classes because, even though some of us like math and sciences, we are too afraid to brave raising our hand to ask, or heaven forbid, answer a question. She also points out that many of the most successful females in the areas of math and science come from women's schools. These women are successful because they did not have to contend with the overpowering male domination in the classroom.

Grades less important than overall education

What does it take to increase an Aggie's cultural awareness?

In all these "surveys" did anyone take into account the academic programs of the school? Many women from these schools probably choose to attend due to the quality of the curriculum or the teachers, or for other reasons. They most likely would have done well in any public school. So what if many teachers praise male students more; it is because they have not heard a peep from the females who are so shy they will not take a chance.

Tonight I had planned to go to a seminar titled "The Himalaya: Man and the Biosphere Changes," which was organized by the University Lecture Series and the College of Geosciences and Maritime Studies. Instead I am sitting here writing this letter concerned about what gaining an education means to some people.

Hill's citing of stereotypes, such as "women being invisible in the classroom" are lame. Most women I know are only visible if they want to be. As for basing any solid argument on "64 percent of females" in a California middle school saying they liked math, well, I am sure many of those same children like pizza, but I wager they do not eat it every day. How can the answer to such a simple and biased question be used to imply that most women want to make a career in math or science?

Before going to the seminar, my roommate informed me that he was also going, gaining full credit (100 percent) for two labs in his course if he attended tonight and Monday's seminar. I thought nothing of this until we arrived, to find the seminar room overflowing with students. "Fantastic!" I hear you cry - a true triumph for multiculturalism and the environment? Jumping as always to my first conclusion, I presumed everybody has similarly been bribed to produce an outstanding attendance for the speaker, Professor Jack D. Ives.

Saying that women need single-sex classes just to do well in math or science is ludicrous. Where did the stereotypes Hill wrote about come from anyway? The bottom line

Now as I contemplate the scenarios I remember a similar event about a month earlier. A seminar series titled "Energy Development vs. Environment" which was presented by the MSC Great Issues Program. Turnout during the day was anything but good for a well organized and presented program. The evening finale was given by the renowned Aggie Michel T. Halbouty, and again was attended by less than 50 faculty, staff and students. Before starting, Halbouty made his feelings felt about the poor attendance after spending a great deal of time preparing his speech.

That evening turned out to be one of my best experiences at Texas A&M - being both educated and entertained by a man who was a part of this state's evolution, which is a large part of this university's history.

Now I ask myself, why the difference in attendance? For the sake of this university I hope that gaining an A is less important than the gaining of an education.

Adrian Newton
Graduate student

Winner declared in governor's race debate

I congratulate both teams in the debate between Aggies for Bush and Aggies for Richards. Both sides did a good job, but the victor was clear: George W. Bush is the best candidate for governor.

The deciding point of the debate came during the discussion of juvenile crime. Crimes committed by youth have skyrocketed in Texas in the past four years. And, when juveniles commit crimes, they are much more likely to be violent criminals for the rest of their lives.

The George W. Bush team explained highlights of his 17-point plan to deal with the exploding problem. The Ann Richards team sidestepped the issue completely, instead talking about her contacts with Clinton.

In rebuttal, a Republican speaker handled it well when he said, "I commend the Democratic debater, if I had to defend Ann Richards I wouldn't want to talk about juvenile crime either."

He continued to point out that Ann Richards only came up with a plan to deal with juvenile crime after George W. Bush had released his.

I thought that was amazing and showed how out of touch the governor is. Juvenile crime skyrockets, and Ann Richards waits four years until her opponent makes it an issue to address it.

Ann Richards should have more than a plan. With a democratic House and Senate, she should have already passed several bills to help curtail the problem.

Ann Richards' pitiful response to juvenile crime is inexcusable. It shows her lack of leadership, and it shows that Texans need a change.

John Gillespie
Class of '96