

## CADETS READY TO PROTECT AND SERVE FROM GUARD ROOM

By Margaret Claughton  
THE BATTALION

Every day, a small group of cadets sit in a little booth on the first floor of Dorm 2 on the Quadrangle and take responsibility for the entire Texas A&M campus.

Whether it's to break up a fight on the quad or escort a fellow A&M student home late at night, the Corps of Cadets guard room is constantly staffed with energetic cadets ready at all hours to handle the situation.

Chris Helms, a junior history major, said the cadets on duty in the guard room are responsible for running errands for the Corps Center, putting up the flags in front of the administration building, responding to fire alarms, escorting, breaking up fights in the quad and basic trouble-shooting.

"It's kind of a peace-keeping thing," said Randy Vargo, a cadet corporal from Baytown. "Our main purpose is, if something comes up, people can notify us and we'll send someone out."

Helms said the guard room handles the minor problems on campus that police aren't needed for.

"Since we handle the small stuff, it frees up UPD to do other things."

Vargo said the guard room uses a system or switchboard known as the Corps Dorm Area Annunciator.

"It basically lights up if any alarms go off in the area and lets us know where the trouble is," he said.

But the guard room wasn't always so advanced.

Joe Fenton, curator of the Corp Center Museum, said the only technology the guard room had in the early 1950s was an old military phone.

"They had an old field phone and a switchboard that was connected to the commodore and different outfits," he said. "But they couldn't transfer calls or anything. It was pretty archaic."

Fenton said the chief responsibilities of the guard room in those days were to receive long distance calls, locate cadets for their families and connect calls to commanders of different outfits.

"Escorting didn't begin until women came in the '70s," he said.

The guard room still handles phone calls, answering from 50 to 100 calls a day.

And although they handle their fair share of legitimate calls, the guard room receives a number of pranks as well.

"Mostly it's your buddies messing with you," Helms said. "But we get calls to escort someone from west campus. We walk all the way out there and they're a no-show. Or we just get calls about weird stuff, especially during finals."

Ben King, a sophomore from Houston, said dead week is the craziest time around the guard room.

"Everybody is letting off steam during dead week," he said. "So it's not surprising to hear about water balloons or quad bombs."

Bradley Morfield, a junior from Sugarland, said one of the weirdest calls he received involved a tongue.

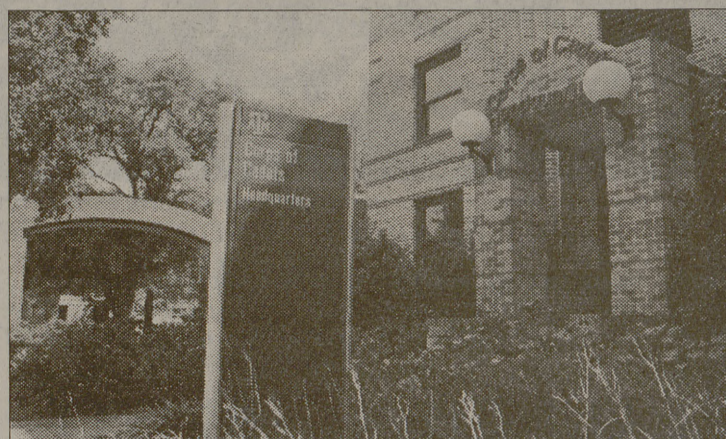
"We got a call and somebody said 'There's a tongue on the uniform block,'" he said. "So we went out there and there

was this huge cow's tongue just laying there."

But Helms feels some people take advantage of the guard room's services.

"I've had girls call requesting escorts and when I arrived, they wanted me to deliver something to one of their girlfriends," he said. "This isn't a messenger service. It's here to take care of the campus."

He said the Corps acts as the keeper of Aggie spirit by protecting the A&M campus and the people on it. Every member of the Corps, he said, is scheduled at one time or another to take a shift in the guard room and help protect the campus.



The guard room is located at the Corps of Cadets headquarters in Dorm 2 on the Quadrangle.

"I think it says a lot about one's character that you'll get up at one in the morning and stay all night to make sure the campus is OK," he said.

# WOMEN IN ROCK

## Phair wows with 'Whip Smart,' Luscious Jackson scores with 'Ingredients,' and O'Connor bombs with 'Mother'

By Rob Clark  
THE BATTALION

Liz Phair  
"Whip Smart"  
Matador Records  
\*\*\*\* 1/2 (out of five)

**B**old. That's the only way to describe Liz Phair, the new darling of rock music.

Phair fascinated the rock world with her 1992 debut "Exile in Guyville," a response of sorts to the Rolling Stones classic "Exile on Main Street." Besides tackling rock giants, Phair surprised and shocked listeners with her sexual audacity with songs like "F--- and Run."

But unlike music sluts Prince and Madonna, Phair pulls it off without disgusting the audience.

And after gracing the October 6 cover of Rolling Stone in an oh-so-sexy pose, all eyes are on Phair's second album.

And Phair doesn't disappoint with "Whip Smart," a smart and sassy 18-song tour-de-force. It's a bit more subtle than "Exile," but a stunner nonetheless.

Phair tackles topics like relationships, and wayward boyfriends on the album. The first single, "Super Nova" is a perfect example of Phair's mix of rock and sex. With a gritty wah-wah guitar sound, the song is a sort of tribute to her lover. Phair sings "You walk in clouds of glitter and the sun reflects your eyes." Oh yeah, and... you f--- like a volcano and you're everything to me.

With any female rocker, a certain independence is almost a prerequisite. A kind of "sisters are doin' it for themselves" attitude. A recurring characteristic on the album and one of Phair's most likeable qualities is this intense independence, with lyrics like "I don't need any support system."

If Phair has any musical deficiency, it's her voice. She is definitely no Tori Amos. Not that she has a bad sound - quite the contrary. But Phair's music doesn't focus on her vocalization. Similar to Tanya Donnelly of Belly, Phair's voice mixes well with the music. Phair's attitude overshadows any vocal arrangement on the album. But on songs like "Nashville," and "Dogs of L.A.," Phair's vocals do shine.

And what her voice lacks, Phair more than makes up for with her songwriting and guitar playing. Phair does an excellent job with the gui-

tar throughout the entire album. And her lyrics are original, fresh and always interesting.

Another appealing aspect of the album is it is just plain good to listen to. There are no extended guitar solos, no screams or ridiculous beats. It consistently portrays the coolest of vibes, and much of it is extremely mellow.

Liz Phair may have a lot to live up to with the Rolling Stone headline "A Rock & Roll Star is Born." But if her career continues with albums as good as "Whip Smart," Phair may redefine success for female rockers.

Or any rockers for that matter.

By Constance Parten  
THE BATTALION

"Universal Mother"  
Sinead O'Connor  
Chrysalis/EMI Records  
\*\* (out of five)

**S**inead O'Connor's self-reported life of abuse and torment has always seemed to work in her favor musically. On her first album, "The Lion and the Cobra," O'Connor poured out her rage publicly, and we lapped up every wrathful drop. After the album received critical acclaim, the weird "bald chick" became a diva to be reckoned with.

O'Connor's second album, "I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got," though not as popular as her first, was more artistic and showed a more subdued side of the artist. The thought-provoking lyrics and harmonious, haunting melodies suggested the angry young artist was becoming more comfortable with her despair. But in 1992 she announced she was leaving the music business because she was "an abused child. The only reason I ever opened my mouth to sing was so that I could tell my story and have it heard."

Since then O'Connor has released her second



Sinead O'Connor

post-retirement album entitled "Universal Mother." A more appropriate title would be "Universal Whining Child," because that is the predominant theme in O'Connor's latest effort.

The album does not stray from the political structure inherent to O'Connor's work. The opening track is a monologue by Germaine Greer on patriarchy in the state structure and breaking down this spiral of power. But the emotion and forthright nature that fueled her first two albums is gone, leaving only flabby, euphemistic lyrics in front of often melodious but weak musical scores.

"Fire on Babylon," with its droning and ominous bass-line is probably the best track on "Universal Mother." O'Connor's lyrical sense shines through in this trip through her battle-scarred world of nightmares. Vague in approach yet full in meaning, her words are set against a rich mélange of synthesized organ, trumpet and sound effects like shattering glass and howling.

The next track "John I Love You," has a beautifully simplistic piano and acoustic guitar accompaniment in the beginning, representing the simple beauty of falling in love. As the song progresses, the music grows increasingly more complex with the addition of wonderful cello, bass and drums that crescendo just as O'Connor's lyrics become more intense. The effect is very nice, and as the song decrescendos, O'Connor's love has come full circle as she is left again with only the opening phrase, "John I love you, I'm ever so fond of you."

Unfortunately the rest of the album does not compare to the first two songs. O'Connor seems to be airing dirty laundry and hurt feelings without a thought to the entertainment of her audience.

Her rendition of Kurt Cobain's "All Apologies"



From left: Kate Schellenbach, Gabby Glaser, Jill Cunniff and Vivian Trimble of Luscious Jackson

is cold and lifeless. Accompanied only by a monotonously strumming guitar, O'Connor is devoid of all emotion. The effect is chilling, but is artistically unpleasing, as is the whole of the album.

O'Connor has slipped into a sophomore state from which she cannot extract herself musically. She attempts to make a political statement but finds herself caught in a spiral of often pointless questions which she leaves unanswered. She is at once opinionated yet lacking in knowledge — pompous yet obviously insecure.

Until O'Connor can make an album showcasing her musical talent instead of her pathology, she should consider staying retired.

By Rob Clark  
THE BATTALION

Luscious Jackson  
"Natural Ingredients"  
Grand Royal Records  
\*\*\*\* (out of five)

**W**anted — one female rock group with the cool funk of Dignable Planets, the sassiness of Neneh Cherry and the style of the Beastie Boys.

Enter Luscious Jackson. The New York-based band explode onto the scene with their first full-length album "Natural Ingredients." The band has drawn comparisons to the Beastie Boys, after signing on their Grand Royal label, and the fact that drummer Kate Schellenbach was the Beastie Boys' drummer in their early days.

But that's where the similarities end. There are no high-pitched screams, frantic raps or loud guitar solos here.

Instead, Luscious Jackson's music paints a picture of everyday life. With their own unique style, LJ makes simple, but terribly enjoyable music to listen to. Music to chill to.

The unique element is many of the beats and rhythms on the album sound straight out of a rap song. But instead, vocalists Jill Cunniff and Gabrielle Glaser provide a controlled but appealing vocal tone to the cool beats.

"Citysong" kicks the album off as a sort of response to the depression of being stuck in a boring environment. Lead singer Jill Cunniff sings "When I'm about to go crazy / Cause I'm still living here / I just get my friends together and we dance, dance, dance / Cause this is the state of the world."

The album's best song is "Deep Shag," with a cool, funky beat and Cunniff's soaring vocals, asking "Why do you make me feel so small? I'm draggin' in your deep shag."

The element of female independence is also acknowledged on "Ingredients." "Strongman" creates a balance of the sexes, with the lyrics "It takes a strong man to stand by a strong woman." And on "Energy Sucker," Cunniff addresses her own dependence by condemning male dependence. "I'm a goddess, not your mother / You're soulless."

The only slip on the album is "Here," a '70s disco-style tune. But they almost pull it off, even with an annoying chorus.

But they make up for it with the dreamy psychedelia of "Find Your Mind" and "Rock Freak," an invitation to "bug out" in the confinements of a rainy day.

Luscious Jackson's inviting debut displays a musical maturity way beyond the band's years. And as for the band's future, the women of Luscious Jackson definitely have the "Natural Ingredients."



Liz Phair

