

OPINION

Full moon rises between classes

Embarrassing moments show the world our 'human' sides

Oh sure, they happen to everyone. I am not the only one who has experienced embarrassing moments. Just the other night a roommate and I entertained ourselves remembering all of the embarrassing things that had happened to our friends over the years.

ERIN HILL
Columnist



"Once this guy fell asleep in class and woke up drooling on the desk."

"Oh, ha ha, my teacher lectured with an open fly."
"Hee hee, someone walked out of the bathroom with toilet paper stuck to his shoe." (The banter continues.)

"Oh get this — I know a guy who tripped while accepting his diploma, and took the superintendent down with him."

"No," I interrupt. "I can top them all. Once my best friend tucked her skirt into her tights on accident and walked through the cafeteria during the lunch hour, and everyone could see her backside. Some of our friends actually stopped her in the hall and told her she might want to check her skirt."

I am chuckling hard now. "Check her skirt" — can you believe that? She probably wanted to do more than check her skirt. She probably wanted to duck into the nearest locker for a couple of days. I mean, someone besides her mother got to see her behind. Oh, the insult of it all.

I laughed and laughed and laughed at my poor friend's plight. Here it is, five years after the event and I am still telling the story. It was the epitome of embarrassment.

Until last week that is.

Oh, I knew my dress was too short. I had a premonition about it even before I wore it. I remarked to several friends that I ought to buy some leggings to wear under my new purchase. But did I wait? Nooo, I insisted on wearing it with just a T-shirt.

Even after I put it on, I knew. I looked in the mirror and thought that it was a bit too short. A bit on the short side. Definitely a miniskirt. I knew it. Yeah, no excuses. A really short dress is what I had on.

But I had no idea of the powerful *deja vu* I was about to experience.

Let's back up a moment, shall we?

I exited the Reed McDonald Building at approximately noon and stopped at the Bus Stop Snack Bar on the corner of

Ireland and Ross to chat with my friend. I remarked to him that my dress was too short. He said he hadn't noticed.

I stepped onto the mall in front of the Chemistry building and headed toward the MSC. I passed the Harrington Building and the Academic Building and had almost cleared Nagle when my world went into slow motion.

I saw her out of the corner of my eye. What does she want, I wondered? Why is that girl chasing me down the sidewalk? She is mouthing something at me. Oops, I took my Walkman out of my ears.

"What did you say?" I asked her.

"You might want to check your skirt."

Might want to check my skirt? I exited slow motion into an accelerated mode. My hands reached back to touch the hem of my dress and instead felt only part of the T-shirt I was wearing under my jumper. Where cloth should have been, there was nothing.

My backpack was off in a matter of seconds and I located the back of the dress. It was tucked under my heavy backpack and had been inching its way toward my neck since I stepped across Ross Street.

"I feel like such a loser, but thanks. Yeah, thanks a million!" I said to her.

"Sure, no problem," she remarked and ran in the opposite direction. She wasn't even going my way. She had spotted me from across campus and decided she must halt my absurd trek toward my class. I have got to stop that girl — she is making a total fool of herself, she thought.

Stop me she did, thankfully before I entered the MSC, where lunchtime crowds make the New York Stock Exchange's throng of people seem like a couple of guys shopping for a pig at a farm auction.

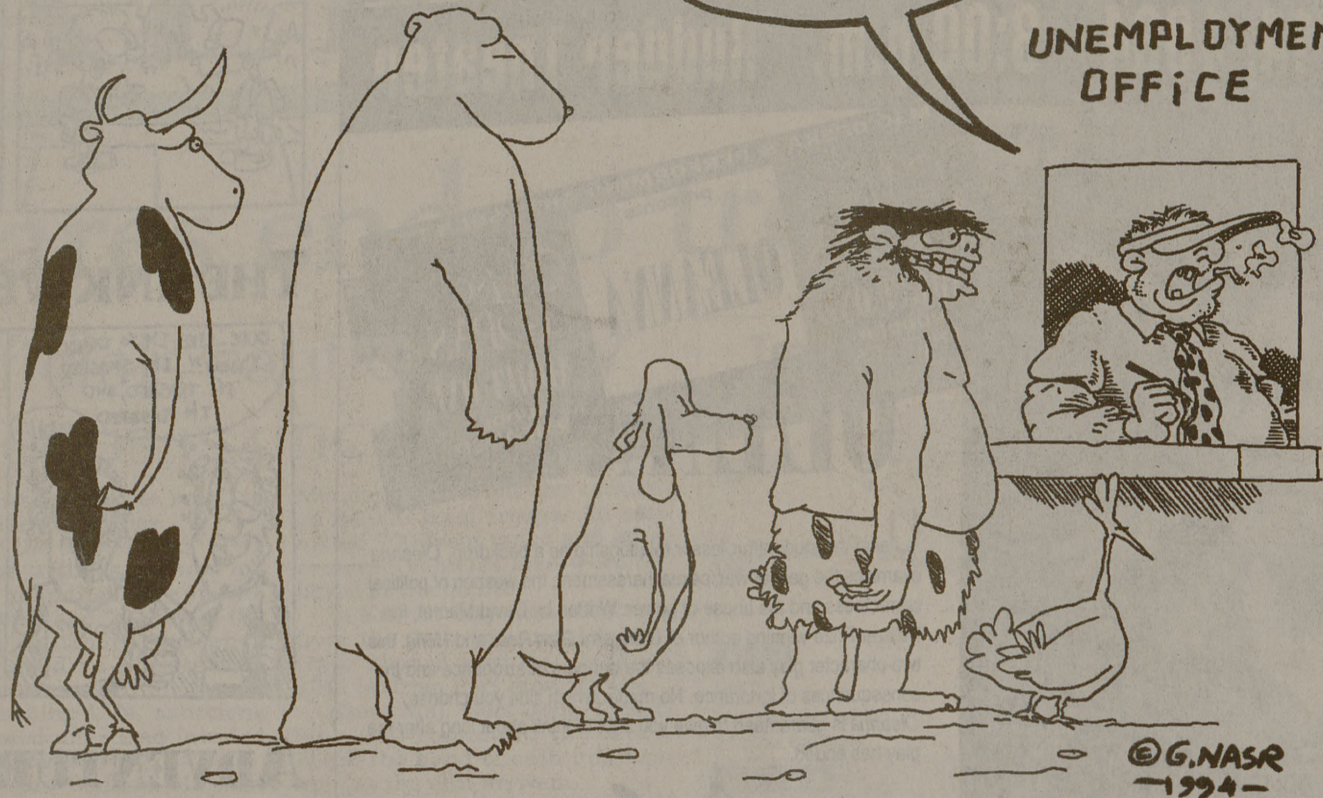
Too bad she didn't reach me before those gawkers did. I wondered why three normal looking guys were staring at me and laughing.

At the time, I figured they thought my dress was too short. Now I realize that they were wondering if I was even wearing a dress. Or wearing anything at all.

My friend will surely find poetic justice in this. Something along the lines of "She who laughs hardest will someday expose herself to people too."

We trip and learn.

Erin Hill is a senior English major



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There's a whole new world outside A&M

Studying abroad teaches student to appreciate value of being 'home'

It took me a couple of seconds to do the math. Two...no—\$2.20. For a newspaper? For U.S.A. Today? All I wanted was the A.P. Sports Polls!

JAMES A. BERNSEN
Guest Columnist



Such is the lot of the international traveler. It bothered me that the Aggies had played their first game over two weeks before and, I—being 4,000 miles away—had no idea how it went. In the small German university town of Tübingen, even finding an American paper was hard. And then they rip you off.

More than anything, that 3.5 Deutsch Marks I paid and the realization of the dollar value it represented brought me down to earth and cured me of an illness most travelers suffer from — I call it Monopoly Money Syndrome.

The first week some part of my mind was laughing the whole time as these fools gave me good food for these ... cartoon bills and coins. But \$2.20? That's robbery!

Americans tend to be blinded to the rest of the world. I mean, even when you buy a clock that says, "Made in Taiwan," you still don't even think about what that means. It's just this nebulous place "out there" that we don't like to think about.

It could say "Made on Mars" and would make no difference. If you haven't been there, how do you know it exists?

Traveling abroad, especially studying abroad, which I'm doing for a year, is like being on another planet. Every morning I wake up and realize to my shock and horror that I'm surrounded by 50,000 people who have never been to a football game, never drunk a Dr. Pepper — never played 42 at the Chicken.

Call me naive, but I always assumed these were universals. Doesn't everybody have a bonfire gene in their chromosomes? Can people really exist without Wal-Mart?

Food is different. TV is different. Toilets—good heavens! How can they be different? And this is WESTERN Europe, the same country my ancestors came from. How different then are Asia, Africa, the Middle East? Some things, I'll admit, are better over here. It's great to be able to take a weekend excursion to the local 15th Century castle. You just can't do that in College Station.

And you don't need a car here — buses are cheap, efficient and clean. You wake up with a postcard for a window. And despite having about four times as many people as Texas crammed into half the space, they have still found a way to preserve vast forests.

But to do that, everyone is squeezed into compact and oppressively overpopulated cities. And those buses? You need them because there just isn't room for everyone to have a car.

And what about all those social services they enjoy that Bill Clinton likes to point to? They also enjoy a tax rate that would make Vlad the Impaler look like a compassionate guy.

But some things are just the same. When you sneeze, they all say "Gesundheit" — just like back home. Gummi Bears are just the same. And of course, everyone here wants to be rich and buy a Mercedes-Benz or a nice BMW.

Oh well, as I sit here listening to a tape of the Oklahoma game, straining to hear the Aggie Band over Dave South, wondering why in hell Bucky Richardson was starting for the Oilers, I can't help but be a little homesick. There are stories to write at the Batt, classes to sleep through and a bonfire to build. And all I have as a lifeline to that world I know are these static-filled tapes and a \$2.20 newspaper.

Perhaps once I get to meet the other college students here, I will find those things that are the same across cultures. Because whatever language you speak and customs you have, students are still students and people are still people. Perhaps I'll meet a nice German girl ... If I'm really lucky, I might even find one who shaves her armpits.

Adios! Auf wiedersehen! Hasta la Schnitzel!

James A. Bernsen is a senior German and journalism major studying at the University of Tübingen

EDITORIAL

COMING OUT WEEK

Aggies should strive for tolerance, support

National Coming Out Week begins today. The event will be celebrated across the nation, as well as here at Texas A&M. Aggies should be at least tolerant and at best supportive of those who choose to "come out."

Prejudice against those who have different sexual preferences is no better than racism or sexism. Homosexuals and bisexuals are just two more groups that are struggling to gain acceptance in a society that tends to discriminate against those who don't fit into the so-called "norm."

Understandably, many homosexual and bisexual people fear coming out. Often times homosexuals and bisexuals are assaulted both verbally and physically when they choose to express their sexual persuasion to their community. This kind of intolerance shows nothing but ignorance.

Many people are extremely uninformed on the topic of homosexuality. Some common myths are that homosexuality is a disease, and that all homosexuals are out to try to convert others. That simply is not true.

Homosexuality is not a disease and no one can catch it. The purpose of National Coming Out Week is not to convert heterosexuals, but to provide an opportunity for people to openly admit their homosexuality with the support of other people taking the same risk.

Homosexuals and bisexuals are just like anyone else. The only difference is their sexual preference. Homosexual and bisexual persons are everywhere. They hold positions in every profession and are present in every ethnic and racial group.

The best way for heterosexuals to observe this week is to open their ears, eyes and mind. Support those who are different that you are. It's a concept called diversity.

A&M has often come under fire for its closed-mindedness. This is an opportunity to dispel that myth along with all the others about homosexuality.

Coming out can be a very difficult process for homosexuals and bisexuals. Far too often, many are afraid to even acknowledge their sexual preference in fear of repercussions from society.

This week is an opportunity for homosexuals and bisexuals to openly come to grips with their sexual persuasion. If a person is brave enough to make that difficult step, then they at least deserve to receive basic decency from their fellow Aggies.

People of all kinds should be able to celebrate what they are, and no one should infringe upon that right. If you can't open your heart, fine — but at least open your mind.

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MAIL CALL

Racist music taints spirit of Bonfire, student unity

As I waiting for a parking spot in the Zachry lot on Oct. 5, I was disturbed by the loud music coming from the Bonfire site. To my displeasure, the three songs I heard were about "niggers." These songs had lyrics like "move them niggers North," "we don't like niggers," and a new definition of "NAACP" reverberated off of homes, businesses, etc. and pierced the very soul of my being. The songs ended as I approached the field and saw a guy working on Bonfire. I inquired where I could find a redpot or the person in charge of the music. There was a large guy in the crowd forming a half circle in front of me who leaned past me to ask his coworker what my "problem" was. I told him I wanted to know the meaning of the songs about "niggers" played a few minutes earlier. He acted like he didn't know what I was talking about, but he led me to

a redpot who said he was sorry and pulled the tape out himself.

I also wondered if this incident is part of the spirit of Aggieland. If not, where is it represented? Is it the redpot who tried to right a wrong he did not create, or the guy from the crowd who didn't know what I was talking about? Or is it the crowd that was forming around me ready to react to my actions rather than respond to my question?

Surely something should be done about this blatant display of racism, but what? The Corps, itself teaches that discipline is the tool that makes punishment unnecessary, but when punishment is necessary, what form is appropriate? What can we do to heal this object that is no longer a beauty mark, but a festering sore on the face of Aggieland?

Steven S. Sims
Class of '92

Threats, vulgarity ruin the meaning of tradition

Every single week at football games and yell practices, phrases like "Show some f— respect, this is a f— war memorial!" echo through Kyle Field. If the people who say these words believe that Kyle Field is a memorial, why would they dishonor it by screaming obscenities?

Would these people do the same at a funeral?

A&M has many fine traditions, but when they are followed only under threat of physical harm, one has to wonder about the value of those traditions. Use "uncover" to remind fellow Ags that a yell is in progress. Use it again to remind fellow Ags of the hat he forgot he was wearing. Let it end there. Please don't make this fine tradition appear to be a marshall law by harassing those who choose to wear head gear.

Remember also that this tradition is an Aggie tradition. Instead of harassing visitors to our University, impress them with a massive show of hospitality and spirit.

Finally, while I'm on my soap box, I would like to ask why the horrible death of Texas Tech's mascot is cause for jokes by our yell leaders. The yell leaders' jokes and the crowds' corresponding whoops were crude and in poor taste.

Martin Leifker
Class of '95

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