

People, not books preserve history

Older generations' experiences shed light on today's social problems

When Michael Jacobs was liberated from a concentration camp, he set a goal for himself. He decided 50 years ago that he would give speeches about the atrocities he had endured. Jacobs told friends of his desire, but they only laughed. At the time many of those in concentration camps felt the world had turned its back on them. Who would believe the stories they had to tell?

MICHAEL LANDAUER
Columnist



had to tell. It was also incredible to hear the racist ways she described people. To say she was not politically correct would be an understatement. She had a lot to say, but I learned as much from her racism as I gained from her anecdotes.

It should make us wonder—will our grandchildren learn lessons from us that will stand the test of time, or will they see our ideas as examples of the short-sighted ignorance of the past?

Not all elderly people are racist, and not all racists are elderly. There is no excuse for racism no matter how old a person is. But talking with that woman showed me that times have truly changed.

Unfortunately not everyone has

learned from people like him. We should listen to elderly people, even if they are often wrong, because we can learn far more from them than we can from books.

People like Jacobs have done so much to tell their story, the least we can do is remember. Hopefully it will change the way we act.

If it does, then the name of Jacob's award is fitting—because of people like him, there is Hope for Humanity.

Michael Landauer is a sophomore journalism major

So much of history dies with the people who lived it, and many valuable lessons are never passed on to the next generation.

changed with the times. There are still people who are ignorant enough to act on their prejudices. These people are usually looking for a way to explain things they don't understand. My friend "David" lives in Louisiana and lost his best friend to violence. The people who shot David's friend happened to be black, and one night David got mad because I didn't hate black people.

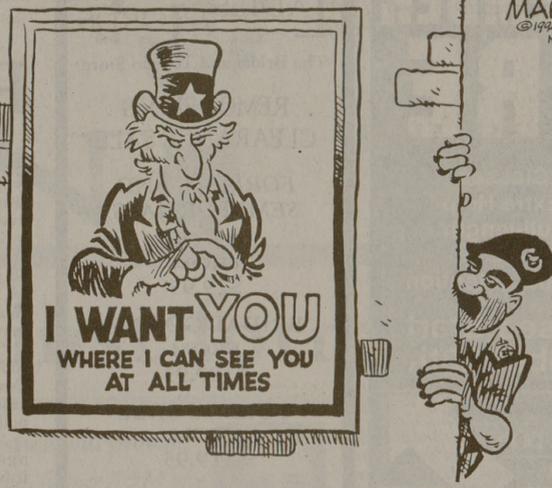
If we find it hard to relate to racist people, it is because they are drawing their views from an environment we cannot understand. I did not understand

learned from people like him. We should listen to elderly people, even if they are often wrong, because we can learn far more from them than we can from books.

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EDITORIAL

RACIAL DISHARMONY

Tensions demand A&M's attention

Last week's controversy surrounding the College Republicans and Bonfire have brought attention to the issue of race relations at Texas A&M. A&M President Ray Bowen, Vice President for Student Affairs J. Malon Southerland, A&M faculty and administrators will meet with leaders from minority student organizations today.

This meeting is an excellent opportunity for students to express their problems and concerns while they have the attention of the whole University.

Those attending the meeting will have the opportunity to discuss the possibilities of racial education workshops. The discussion of domestic cultural education, a more localized form of multicultural education will also be on the agenda.

After music played at the Bonfire site was viewed as racist and offended several students, the Bonfire Committee agreed to screen all music before it is played. The decision will help all students enjoy building Bonfire.

Similarly, the College Republicans responded quickly and appropriately to the distribution of racist fliers last week by taking them down. The regis-

nation of Bo Armstrong, College Republican's vice president for publicity, who was allegedly responsible for the distribution of the fliers, indicates that the group is not interested in causing racial confrontations and will not tolerate overt racism.

Should further problems arise in the future, organizations and students must continue to work together to solve the problems of race relations. Organizations and students should also continue to find ways to prevent further incidents of this nature. By acting on these suggestions, the student body of A&M can closer to unity and move forward.

David Washington, president of Alpha Phi Alpha, said the fliers are a symptom of a greater problem. Now is the time for the problem to come to the center of attention.

Students have chosen to come to A&M to learn, and in their education, they must also learn to respect and cooperate with each other, regardless of race, religion or creed.

Until we learn to do so, the tension will remain, and it may have the propensity to grow into a larger problem if we don't stop it now.



Affirmative action not the yellow-brick road we wanted

I really don't believe I was the average child. There was a morning when I went to school with a bright, mismatched ensemble on my back, the spoils of my victory in that morning's what-I-want-to-wear-to-school fight with my mom. Then, there was the period when I wore two enormous Afro-puffs on each side of my small head- I wanted to be just like Princess Leia from the show "Star Wars."

AJA HENDERSON
Columnist



Aggie regarding affirmative action and equal employment. I do not know if all Aggies even care. What I do know is the difference between a perception and a fact. The great thing about our country is that you can think anything you want- it is OK. Everyone

is entitled to their own opinions here. However, an intelligent person weighs realities, not just perceptions, when forming an opinion. The difference between perceptions and realities is that perceptions are things you think are true, while realities are things to know to be true - sensory observations form perceptions, facts form realities. Let's deal in what is real for a moment.

Affirmative action began in 1979, not because anyone in Washington, DC, thought women and racial minorities were dumber than anyone else, but because employers obviously did- they were not hiring them. Affirmative action was not designed to make the hurdles of women and minorities lower than that of the majority, only to make everybody's hurdles the same height. None lower, none higher than anyone else's. All equal.

We are all Americans and all equal, remember? Anyway, since its induction in 1979 affirmative

action has reaped the most benefits not for blacks, not for Hispanics, but for white women. This is not a judgment of whether affirmative action is good or bad- I am not a social scientist. This is just a statement of fact. You decide.

If it were up to me, affirmative action would never have come about. People would never have historically been discriminated against - we would all have been judged solely on our merits and personal strengths. The hurdles women and

Affirmative action was not designed to make the hurdles of women and minorities lower, but only to make everybody's hurdles the same.

other minorities face would have not been higher than that of the white male's - our hurdles all would have been of equal height. If it were up to me...

Well, I realize that my contemplations are ambitious- after all, I deal with reality. And reality tells me that equality for all people has historically been nothing more than an ideal, even since the birth of our nation. Isn't it sad

that the average black female college graduate working full time receives less than 90 percent of her white counterpart's salary? That is the average equivalent to the salary of a white high school drop-out.

If you truly believe, as I do, that all Americans are equal, and should be treated equally, let's work to make this ideal reality. We can fight the discrimination, prejudice and racism that plagues our country and hinders equality. There are many organizations and events here on campus you can get involved in - too many for me to list in this limited space. You can start by sharing your culture and heritage with someone who is not like you.

You can call the Department of Multicultural Services and say, "I believe that we are all Americans and that we are all equal. How can I help to make equality a reality? How can I get involved?"

On the other hand, if you think that everyone in America is treated equally, that everything in America is really OK, don't be surprised if I assault you on your way to class- I think you stole my rose-colored glasses. That kind of crime doesn't pay, my friend.

Aja Henderson is a sophomore finance major



Humans, not statistics draw faulty conclusion

One of the reasons that statisticians become cranky as they age, is articles like "U.T. outranks A&M in total crime rate" in the Oct. 14 issue of The Battalion. There are technical and conceptual

errors throughout the article and the graph. The heights displaying the number of crimes are not drawn to a common scale. Comparison graphs are meaningless, or even worse misleading, unless they are all drawn to a common scale.

The major conceptual error is the use of crime totals to compare different universities which are of greatly different size. What's needed is crime rates, for example, crimes per full-time student or crimes per student residing on campus. Totals of almost anything have no meaning when comparing populations of different size.

Of course, what really makes statisticians grumpy is comments like: Statistics can lie; it depends on how you interpret them. It's not, in other words, the statistics that lie, but the humans.

So, to lighten up a bit, how about redoing the analysis? Let's see if we are really #2!

Raymond J. Carroll
Professor of Statistics

Soldiers use violence to protect, not destroy

I must write in sheer disgust of Michael Landauer's column on Oct. 12.

Imagine yourself loaded with gear, an M-16 automatic weapon "Locked & Loaded" in your hand. You haven't seen your family in years and you are 16,000 miles from home and 100 yards away

from unseen enemy troops who only know they should kill you. Yes, you are a soldier, a pawn sent to fight and maybe die in a country you never heard of before. It is so easy to "Armchair quarterback" military movements.

I speak as a Army veteran from the 25th Infantry Division (Light), Schofield Barracks HI. It was there I spent 4 years as a Jungle expert/Air Assault qualified forward observer. I joined the Army out of a heartfelt need to protect Americans. Every time I watched the news during those years, a black cloud hung over my heart every time troop movements were reported.

I knew this meant possible death for my team, for as a soldier, you never know when God may call you in.

A soldier's mission is to protect. We

understand we may die, yet none of us, or our families want soldiers to die. I know now that there are far better ways to solve disputes than by the violence of wars.

To the unknown soldiers who guard us across the world as we sleep, I salute you.

Kelly Williamson
Graduate Student

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