

THE BATTALION Editorial Board

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EDITORIAL

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Regents provide vital link to A&M System

Although the Alumni Association was unhappy with the process that was used to select their new president, they should be commended for deciding to work with the A&M System.

Prairie View A&M Alumni Association has compiled a 10-point plan of action to improve communication with the Texas A&M System Board of Regents in order to better represent Prairie View A&M.

In the plan, the Alumni Association has requested that a minimum of one position on the A&M Board of Regents be a Prairie View graduate.

However, regents are already assigned to each of the schools in the A&M system.

Currently, that position has been appointed to Alison Brisco, and she currently serves as the liaison between Prairie View and Texas A&M. If Prairie View A&M were to receive a regent who is a graduate of their school, then every school in the A&M System would have a viable argument to request a graduate of their school to be ap-

pointed to a regent position. The key to making the Board of Regents work for A&M's charter schools is for the regents to develop better working relationships with their assigned schools.

While the Alumni Association feels that Prairie View would be better represented by a regent from their own school, being an alumni won't necessarily make a person the best regent for Prairie View.

Furthermore, a regent who was a Prairie View alumni would be more likely to focus on the specific needs of the school and not the A&M System as a whole.

The Alumni Association has also considered creating a separate Board of Regents for their school. Under such a proposal, Prairie View would no longer be a part of the A&M System.

Such an action would not serve Prairie View's best interests. Prairie View would have more control over appropriations and legislation which pertains to their school, but they would lose financially.



Disease robs victims' integrity

Former president faces battle with Alzheimer's

Mom, your pills are next to the keyboard. You have to take your pills, remember?"

I tried not to notice my teacher's phone conversation as I pretended to type. "A keyboard! It's in front of the computer. Mom, you know what a keyboard is. I was working on it last night. It has a bunch of letters on it. Oh God."

This went on for 10 minutes. When it was over my teacher came over to me with tears in her eyes.

"Michael, you have no idea how frustrating this is. I love her so much, but it is getting so hard."

Alzheimer's Disease puts a strain on families that no one can imagine unless they have endured it themselves.

Former President Ronald Reagan went public with the news that he is in the early stages of this terrible disease for which there is no cure.

It is a disease that attacks a person's memory and robs them of their integrity. Unlike other brain disorders which attack suddenly, Alzheimer's takes its time as it slowly erases a lifetime of knowledge.

We are young and each day brings new experiences and memories. We have a lifetime ahead of us, and we can't begin to imagine what the future will bring. But think for a minute what it must feel like to know that in the future you will only forget more and more of your past. We can't imagine what it would feel like to forget what a refrigerator is or how to find our way home.

We can hope with some confidence that we will never forget who the members of our family are, but Reagan can not be so optimistic.

Our sympathies and prayers should be with the Reagan family as they deal with this disease. He selflessly decided to come forward with the diagnosis of his disease to help raise public awareness.

Not only should we be aware of the possibility that this disease could affect someone we love, but we should also be aware of how this will touch a public family in such a private way. There can be no disrespect for a man at a time like this.

MICHAEL LANDAUER

Columnist



Reagan is a man with a political past stretching back to the post-World War II era. He was the last president to be called a Cold War warrior. His contributions to this country are now part of a past which we view with 20/20 hindsight.

We can judge his leadership as harshly as we wish. We can criticize his actions as president. We can question his involvement in the Iran-Contra affair. We can even continue to make fun of his absent-minded nature, but here we should yield to our sense of good taste and respect.

No matter how you view his presidency, Reagan deserves respect for the struggle he now faces. No longer is he a Republican, former president or elder statesman. He is a father, a husband and a victim of a disease we should fear. It is not funny.

Some people will say it is ironic that Reagan should be faced with such a mind-crippling disease. He is famous for not taking notes in important meetings and for forgetting things. His mind has wandered and his speech has grown slurred and slower since we first elected him. Irony is not always funny.

The Dallas Morning News printed an ad calling for the capture of a traitor dead or alive on Nov. 22, 1963. The

traitor the ad was directed at was John F. Kennedy, who arrived that morning aware of his critics, but left that afternoon in a coffin. Irony is not always funny.

It is a disease that attacks a person's memory and robs them of their integrity. Unlike other brain disorders which attack suddenly, Alzheimer's takes its time as it slowly erases a lifetime of knowledge.

People should also remember the millions who supported Reagan as president. He was one of the most popular presidents of all time. My generation grew up during what Reagan called "The New Morning in America." It was a time of confidence and strength, and the image of America rested on the shoulders of the Gipper himself.

But the "New Morning" is over and the man who coined the phrase said in his letter that he is heading into the sunset of his life.

We should refrain from making this a joke. We should hope for the best for him and his family. We should thank him for his service to our country. And we should wish him an easy voyage into that sunset and respect the impact he has had on our day.

Michael Landauer is a sophomore journalism major

Easy answers perpetuate dangerous assumptions

Murderous mother attempted to prey on negative stereotype to escape her own actions

And the Grammy goes to...(drum roll)...Susan Smith! A hot topic in the news for the past couple of weeks has been the tragic story concerning this woman. She is the "wholesome" mom from Small Town, USA who blamed an attacker for carrying her and driving off with her two little boys, Micheal and Alex. An extensive search was conducted before Susan finally broke down and revealed the truth: she had brutally murdered her two sons.

This is a sad story. Unfortunately, this is not the only sad story of this whole tragic affair. No, there is another one. That story centers around the "attacker" Susan Smith described when America asked her what the monster who took off with her babies looked like. Without hesitation, Susan answered.

He was wearing a flannel shirt and jeans. He was in his 20s. He was black. So, why was our nation so quick to jump to her side? Because we felt that her babies were in grave danger. All of the Union citizens, including the African American population, joined in the effort to find those boys.

Why was our nation so quick to believe the story of the kidnapper? A lot of factors came into play, but one strong possibility is that Susan painted him in a "believable" way. Given the negative stereotyping of African Americans that remains strong today, as we can see from this event alone, it is easy to paint the black man in the role of the monster.

This is sad, but it is not new. Remember the case of Charles Stuart just five years ago? This Bostonian from the suburbs claimed that a black man jumped into his car, drove it to a remote area, and shot both Charles and his pregnant wife, killing the wife. The police conducted a massive manhunt and interrogated dozens of black men in the area. It turned out that Stuart was the one who had shot both his wife and himself.

So, as you can see, the blame-the-black-man isn't new. Dr. A.J. Broussard, who is the associate head of the History department and an associate professor of Black History, gave the following statement in regards to the Smith incident, "I was not surprised that a white mother in 1994 accused a black male of stealing her car and kidnapping her children. Nor was I sur-

AJA HENDERSON Columnist



prised that the nation, black and white, fell for this deception so easily. I am disappointed, nonetheless, that young black males continue to serve as symbols of what is wrong in America - symbolic of the nightmare of millions of Americans who are trying to cope in America."

I suppose that I shouldn't be shocked, either. Still, I cannot help feeling angry as I read the stories about this incident.

I see two main chords: first, extreme repulsion for Susan Smith's crime; and second, a little bit of pity for her.

Psychologists here, there and everywhere are telling us what an unhappy young woman she was. How she was teased as a child. How she had a failed marriage. How she owes money to people. Oh, poor Susan, they wail.

The prosecutor in this case, Thomas Pope, is "still thinking" about whether he will even consider the death penalty.

Now, I have a feeling that this would have been a different story had the (nonexistent) black monster been caught in this same situation. I really don't believe that I would have seen psychologists coming out in the droves analyzing his marriage, childhood or financial conditions.

Furthermore, I think that the public outcry for execution would have been swift and sure. There would not have been mercy, only justice.

I don't care about this lady's failed romance or any of her other personal tragedies, and I think she can save that insanity defense. She was sane enough to try to cover her butt. Now, those buttocks should either receive a good shock or sit in a jail cell for a very long time. Any other verdict would only add further injustice to the senseless, cruel murders of Michael and Alex.

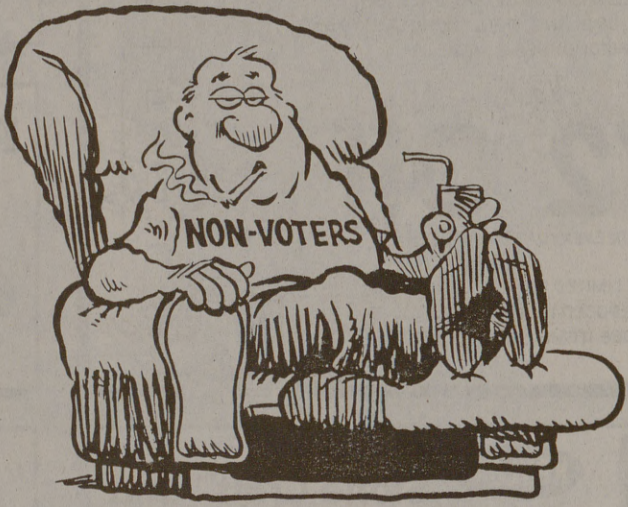
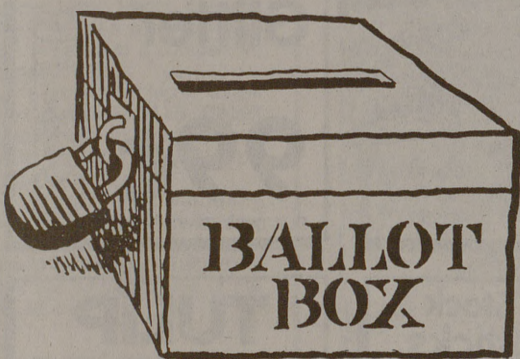
It is truly unfortunate that a growing rule of thumb in this country is black man + menacing + dark skin color = "there's your durned criminal, Bubba!"

While the helpful citizens should be commended for their commitment to rescue those precious darlings from what Susan told us was an attacker, we cannot ignore the fact that Susan chose to paint that attacker black and the significance that holds.

Aja Henderson is a sophomore finance major

Fruits of Democracy

Vegetables of Democracy



MARGULIES ©1994 THE RECORD NEW JERSEY

No matter where I wear my earrings, I'm a normal person and another fighting Texas Aggie...like you.

Meanwhile, remember: if you want attention, or even a date (so many guys looked at me - I felt like Cindy Crawford), just wear a ring in your nose, or your belly button or even your eyebrows. You don't even need to really pierce your body parts, just wear a fake one, like I do.

Oh, and as far as all the attention I received, thanks Ags, I really enjoyed it.

Priscilla Kojin Class of '97

Time at A&M changed students view of world

I felt compelled this week to express a view on school spirit. Before transferring here, I lived on my own in dilapidated areas of Los Angeles and Baltimore. During this time, I instinctively learned to avoid eye contact with people and to constantly study my surroundings.

This "project" living conditioned me to conceal a weapon safely, to detect faint odors of fire, to react quickly to strange noises and to sleep lightly. But, the most important lesson I learned was to trust no one but myself.

Now, this December I should graduate with a university education that has given me mental confidence. And no

matter what lies ahead, I know I'll carry positive memories.

For instance, it will be easy to recall a male passenger giving up his seat to a girl during my first bus ride at A&M. And I won't forget thousands of cheering Aggies huddled together fighting frozen temperatures last Thanksgiving. And I'll remember the groups of children touring our school shouting "Howdy" to the Corp. The Cadets roared "Howdy" in reply, which made me laugh inside and admire this cordial campus.

Yes, these occurrences are part of tradition and spirit. Yet, the personal interactions I experienced here, rest much deeper in my mind. There are many people I want to thank for their kindness. I appreciate the students and classmates who challenged, critiqued, and encouraged me. And all who showed respect and thoughtfulness to involve me in this college experience.

Thanks again Ags for showing me the true meaning of school spirit.

"G" Taylor Class of '94

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor and will print as many as space allows. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class, and phone number. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Address letters to: The Battalion - Mail Call 013 Reed McDonald Texas A&M University College Station, TX 77843-1111 Fax: (409) 845-2647 E-mail: Batt@tamv1.tamuedu

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Nose ring catches the glare of public attention

I had an interesting day the other day. I felt like the center of attention all day long. Guys, girls...everybody was looking at me. They not only would look at me once, but twice. Some would even turn around and look again. Others would point me to their pals. It was awesome! And you know why I was getting all that attention? Just because I was wearing a nose-ring. A small silver loop in my nose and I turned into a star. If only I had known it was that easy...

However, in a campus of more than 41,000 students, all the attention I received is not a good sign in my opinion. It shows how conventional and resistant to change many students at A&M, the school I love, are. As I said, I love A&M, and I love Aggies, but I think it's time some of us loosen up a little bit. A mere nose-ring should not be something to get all freaked out about.

Vertical text on the left margin containing various names and dates.