

Differences often spark hatred

Spend some time in the MSC this afternoon. Some people will be solemnly reading a list of names. These names belong to some of the millions of innocent victims of the Holocaust.

DAVID TAYLOR
COLUMNIST



the vote of Missouri." By the winter of 1838-1839, 12,000-15,000 Mormons had been forced from their land and their homes by the state militia.

Thousands were either murdered or died from exposure, all in the name of religion. The "Extermination Order" was not rescinded until June 25, 1976.

For almost 140 years it was legal to kill Mormons within Missouri. How could a group of decent Americans allow such an indecent situation?

The Germans were able to rationalize their abhorrent actions on the grounds that the Jews were just simply different. The 19th century Missourians were able to rationalize their actions the same way.

Whenever we emphasize the differences among people we are setting the stage for the same type of thing as went on in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s.

Think about it, are your friendships based on what you have in common or on what you have different?

The Jews have the same set of moral/ethical beliefs as Christians. After all, the Ten Commandments are found in both the Jewish Torah and the Christian Old Testament — not to mention the Muslim Qu'uran.

Yet for centuries many Christians have taken every opportunity to create their own little version of the Holocaust.

The Crusades are a great example. In an effort to free the Holy Land, thousands of both Jews and Moslems were massacred at the hands of men wearing crosses. For some reason, the remaining "infidels" had little motivation to become Christians.

Now go ahead a few centuries to Resurrection Week. Now I don't believe for one minute that the participants would want to massacre anyone, but take a closer look at what

happened.

Near the MSC we had the opportunity watch a play commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The organizers included a group of actors pretending to be Jews who screamed, "crucify him!" This is almost like providing other Christians with an excuse to, if not hate, at least feel revulsion towards the Jews.

I need to point out an important fact concerning Resurrection week.

Most of the participants are genuinely good people who are trying to do what they believe to be right. That, however is the point.

All too often, being "right" gives

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someone an excuse to feel a little better than those who are "wrong."

How far are we from the Holocaust? All it would take is for us to come to believe that someone who is different is not as good. It's not a great leap from there.

It can happen here.

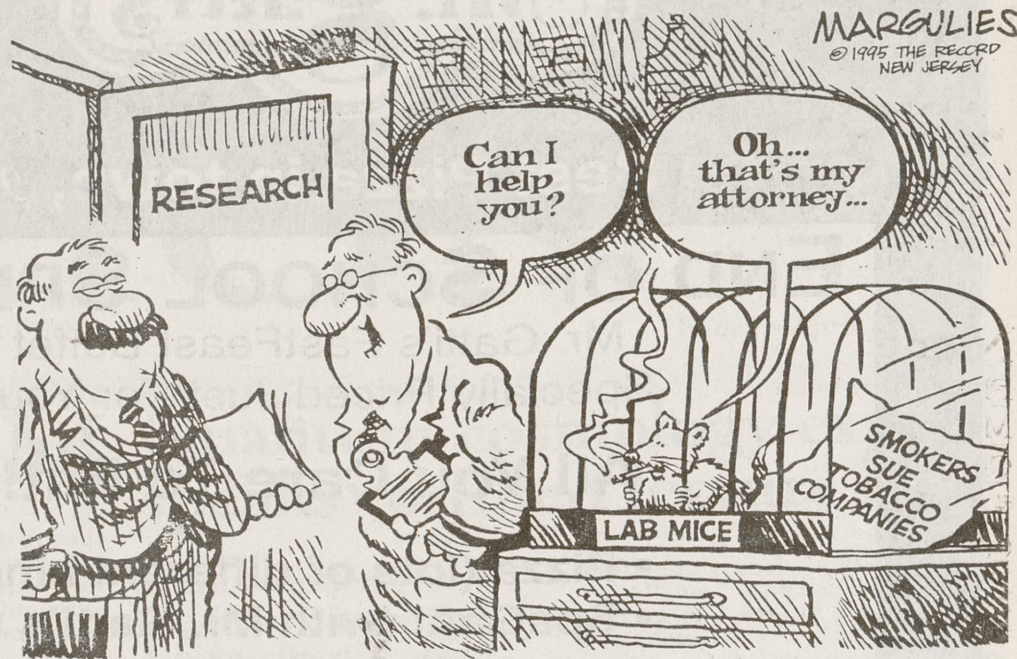
As a Christian, I recall that Jesus, among others, taught the overriding need to love everyone — regardless of their religion.

Love doesn't mean tolerating sin, but I'm not encouraging that.

I mean loving people in their differences, but realizing that inside we are all the same.

To those involved in Resurrection Week: please consider this before next year. More people respond to being respected for their differences rather than reviled for them.

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THE BATTALION

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EDITORIAL

FREE WHEELIN'

Students should make an effort to participate in the Bike-to-Work program.

Tomorrow marks an opportunity for Aggies and others to break the "car habit" and participate in the Bike-to-Work Day.

Last year, more than 1,100 bicyclists participated in Bike-to-Work Day. It was the largest first-time Bike-to-Work ever in Texas.

This year, students should make an effort to participate in the program and make it an even larger success.

The Brazos Valley Cyclist and a local chapter of the Texas Bicycle Coalition are sponsoring this year's Bike-to-Work Day. The event, they hope, will encourage students to help the environment by biking to work or school. Cycling not only provides better exercise, but also uses no fuel and produces no harmful exhaust.

This program gives Aggies an opportunity to take advantage of alternative forms of transportation. Wayne Bryan, owner of AggieLand Cycling and Fitness, noted that College Station "tends to be a one-person-in-a-car town, which is not efficient."

Just because Earth Day has passed doesn't mean that citizens

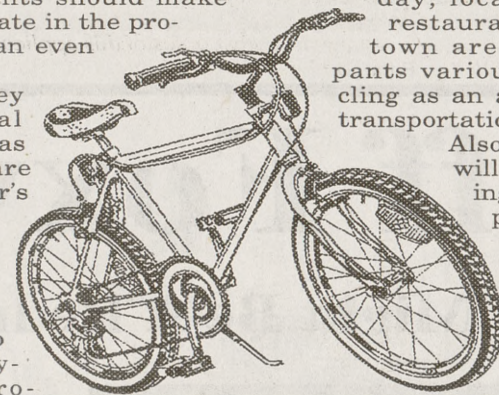
no longer have a responsibility to conserve energy and prevent pollution. The Bike-to-Work program gives all Aggies a chance to fulfill that responsibility.

The program, in addition to helping the environment, offers several other advantages. Throughout the day, local merchants and restaurant owners around town are offering participants various rewards for cycling as an alternative form of transportation.

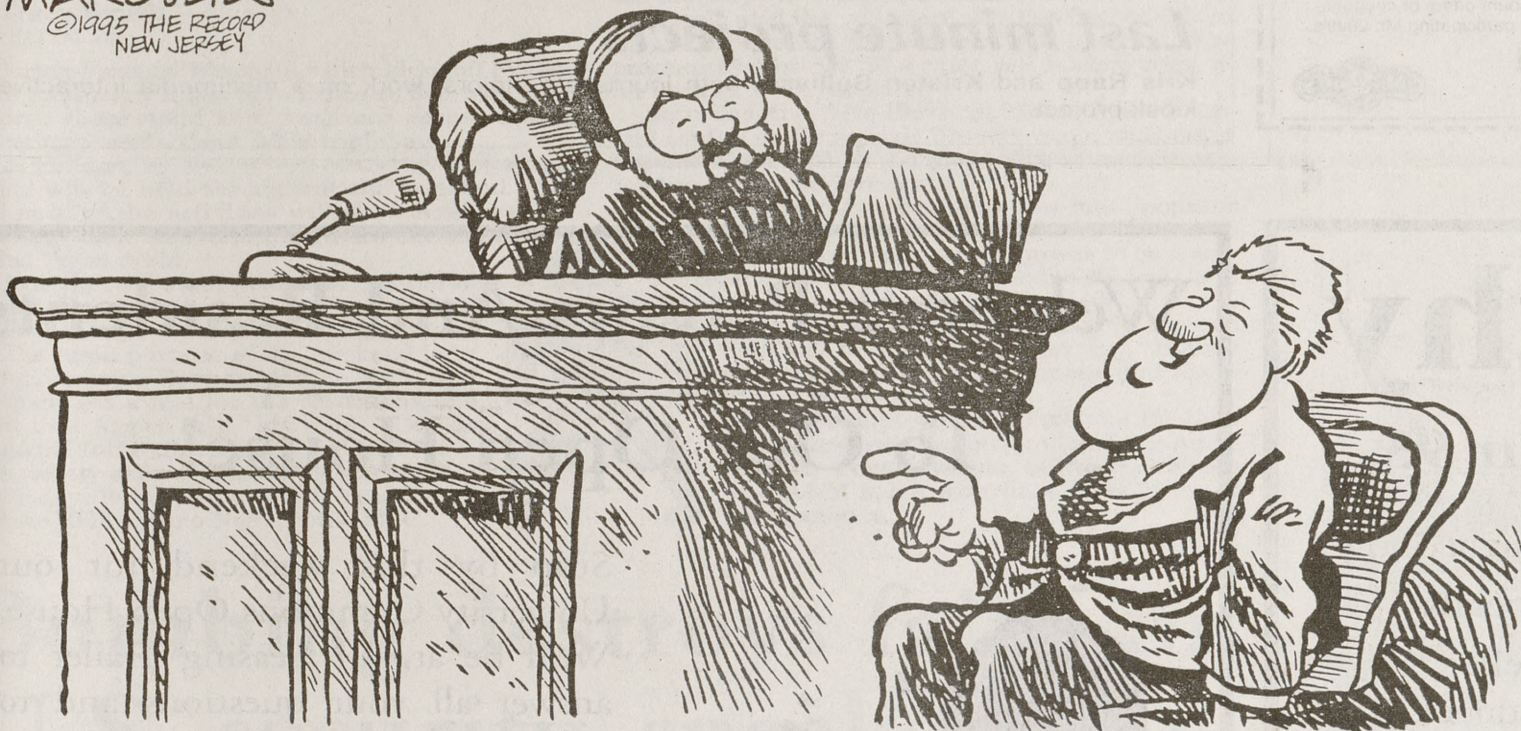
Also, biking to campus will alleviate the parking problems that are prevalent at Texas A&M. Cyclist usually aren't forced to play the fun-filled "parking game," and they can travel around campus more quickly and efficiently.

However, those who chose to participate in the Bike-to-Work program should be sure to follow all traffic laws. The laws were established not only for the safety of the cyclist, but also for all those around them.

Bike-to-Work Day is an excellent opportunity for students to recognize the importance of alternative forms of transportation, and Aggies should help to make it a success.



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"I hope you don't mind, Judge Ito... but testifying at the Simpson trial is the only way I can get the country to pay attention to what I have to say..."



MAIL CALL

Hall's assessment of Equity 2000 incorrect

In Zach Hall's column on April 18, and Steve Cunningham's April 18 letter to the editor, used a classic white societal scare tactic when they labeled the Access and equity 2000 Plan as an "outcome-based quota system," most likely without even reading the final proposal.

These two, ill-informed, propaganda spreading individuals, concluded that in achieving the plan's objectives, TAMU would begin hiring unqualified minority faculty candidates and lower admission standards for entering minority students. When did increasing minority representation on this campus become synonymous to hiring and accepting under/unqualified persons? Quite simply it hasn't. To many the suggestion that standards must be lowered for TAMU to become inclusive irradiates the type of cancerous racist attitudes that are perpetuated throughout this society.

Cunningham's reference to prospective minority faculty members, even suggested that the University would, "... either have to pay them more, and/or otherwise choose them, without basis, over equally qualified non-minority candidates to disproportionately increase their numbers." Perhaps Cunningham

feels new positions should go to equally qualified Euro-American candidates; possibly because these positions have been "grandfathered" to them.

Hall led many to believe that Equity 2000 does not subscribe to his belief in, "... the old — and quickly fading — philosophy of working hard and striving for the highest quality and standards of achievement." These individuals, and those who bought into their political rhetoric undoubtedly have reading comprehension problems.

The facts are that this plan aims to make this University less Euro-American and more Inclusive-American. The documentation that I read regarding the Equity 2000 Plan said nothing about lowering minority admission standards; nothing about slipping additional money under the table to attract and hire under/unqualified minority Ph.D.s; nor did it mention anything about Hall's old and quickly fading philosophy. TAMU students, you have been duped, and I encourage you to not tolerate it. End of facts.

For these young men to draw these non-factual conclusions confirms my belief that they are frightened by the thought of losing their "inherited grandfathered" right to preferential opportunities based solely on their status as white men of this country. These "grandfather" clauses were practiced in the past and are still practiced in today's "good old boy network." Sorry, but Hall and Cunningham were born, at worst, one century too late for "grandfather" clause preferences.

*Michael Edwards
Ph.D candidate*

We should all take responsibility for Earth

What a gross distortion of Earth Day! Zach Hall is uninformed of Earth Day's long term goals. I should be insulted by what he stated on April 25 in "Activist overreact on Earth Day." I realize as just another ultra conservative Aggie, it is not "cool" for him to advocate environmental action.

Maybe Mr. Hall should consider expanding his education and taking some ecology classes. Then, he might gain an understanding of how the earth and people are indeed interrelated. The earth is not better off than a 100 years ago ... people are.

The result is the breakdown and loss of vitally important inhabitants. Why do you think that there is a need for the Endangered Species Act or the Clean Water Act? There are legislation passed in an attempt to right our wrongs. Considering this "extremist" views are realistic ones.

Since he states that it is the right of humans to exploit the earth, how is it possible that he finds it irrational to hold businesses responsible for abusing their resources?

Excessive regulations are required because it is impossible to hold only some businesses accountable.

As far as putting humans before the environment, has he considered that if this occurred there would no longer be an environment to protect? Do you enjoy drinking polluted water or breathing polluted air? I do not! The goal is to get everyone involved little by little. If

one person begins recycling because of Earth Day, then we have accomplished something. So, I urge Mr. Hall and others who do not understand the concept of Earth Day to get informed and get involved. We should all be as concerned about the environment as "those environmental" because we will ALL suffer the consequences if we don't.

*Amy Burke
Class of '95*

Humans should be put before environment

I would like to thank Zach Hall for his column "Activists Overreact to earth Day." He has it totally right in his comment, "It is long overdue that we start putting humans before the environment." In America we still have rape, murder, children living in poverty and discrimination. How many members of these environmental groups visit the elderly in nursing homes regularly. They will tie themselves to a tree to prevent it from being cut down while a ninety-year-old lady is longing for someone to talk to. I am not saying conservation and recycling shouldn't be an issue, just not as big of one. In some parts of America a black man will be discriminated against no matter how many whales are in the ocean. Although it is good there are organizations there to clean our Earth, they need to get their priorities straight.

*Shelia Boudreaux
Class of '98*

Taylor incorrect about Shalala's comments

David Taylor's April 20 column refers to "numerous Congressmen, both democrat and republican," who serve in Vietnam. It seems clear to me that if he had meant to use the political party references as nouns, they would have been plural; therefore, he must have been using "Democrat" as an adjective—a practice whose "dumbness" has been superbly addressed in the attached piece by Russell Baker.

Incidentally, Secretary Shalala was misquoted as having referred to "our best and brightest sons." The corrected remark, subsequently reported by the wire services — and buried in those newspapers than ran it at all — referred to "our best and brightest's sons." Her point was that sons of high-ranking politicians and Administration officials — the people whom David Halberstam characterized as "The Best and the Brightest" in his book, by that title, about the running of the war — generally avoided going to Vietnam. There were, of course, some exceptions, including Vice-President Al Gore Jr.

Those are minor quibbles. Overall, the Batt is better, by three or four quantum leaps, than the paper I edited in 1968-69.

*John W. Fuller
Class of '69*

John W. Fuller was Editor in chief of The Battalion from Fall of '68 to Spring of '69.