

Two sides to every story:

Well within our rights College Republicans should be afforded free speech

What do the former USSR, communist China, and North Korea have in common? They are all places where you might expect to have your right of freedom of expression censored.

KIMBERLY L. ROGERS
GUEST COLUMNIST

But for this to happen on the campus of one of the largest and most prestigious universities in the United States seems unbelievable.

Texas A&M College Republicans intend to valiantly defend something most Americans in this day and age take for granted... free speech.

On Wednesday Sept. 13, 1995, the Texas A&M College Republicans were brought up on general charges of violations of the Policies and Procedures for Recognized Student Organizations. Specifically, the College Republican's actual rule breaking was stated as not following fund raising guidelines (How does one violate a guideline?) and not upholding the highest ideals and standards of Texas A&M.

The 95-96 Policies and Procedures manual states that "it is important to coordinate all fund raising efforts so that the private support Texas A&M receives is not jeopardized. As a guideline, any new fund raising effort anticipated by any group... should be coordinated through the director of student activities..."

As for the specific request for coordination, A&M College Republicans have always submitted a copy of the mailouts.

So, what terrible crime did the A&M College Republicans commit? They simply saw conflicts between time honored, conservative traditions of A&M and a disturbing trend of liberal policies pushed through by the faculty and administration, and chose to point out those blatant contradictions.

A&M College Republicans, disturbed by many of the things going on at the University, sent out an informative fund raising letter to a number of the University alumni. At the heart of the letter was the multiculturalism issue.

The Texas A&M College Republicans simply wished to right a blatant injustice they saw on their campus.

The College Republicans' stance remains the same: We believe that multiculturalism courses should be there for students who wish to pursue learning of those topics included, but that this requirement should not be forced on those who choose not to participate in those classes.

But, it appears that Dr. Ray Bowen, Texas A&M president, got his job by promising that he would sign the multiculturalism requirement into effect.

The only reasonable explanation for the fact that this multicultural proposal has sat unsigned

on his desk for almost a year and a half is that he was waiting until he could do it with nobody looking.

The letter also revealed the proposed speech codes recommended by a Faculty Senate Committee and a very misleading and controversial class inserted as a health requirement.

The College Republicans simply wished to right a blatant injustice they saw on their campus. And since partisan organizations are not allocated University funding, the students requested help from alumni in the form of not only verbal, but also monetary support.

Immediately, calls came in to Dr. Bowen from concerned alumni worried, just as the College Republicans, about their beloved University.

This constructive criticism of the University administration and support of the College Republicans did not sit well with the University officials.

What other possible reason can there be for the fact that A&M's College Republicans has been sending out fund raising letters for the past five years and there has been no criticism of their methods or any reference to violated policies of the administration?

Perhaps it was simply that the University did not like the "content" of this particular letter and did not like being held accountable for some of their more controversial policies.

In retaliation, Texas A&M University is labeling the right of free speech guaranteed by the Bill of Rights as a right that "does not uphold the highest ideals" of the University.

Free speech is one of the foundations of our nation. How can it be considered anything less than of the highest ideals and standards?

In fact, the State Republican Executive Committee passed a resolution Sept. 16 in support of the Texas A&M College Republicans' right to free speech.

The resolution upholds the College Republicans' stance on multiculturalism, calls for an apology from the University to the College Republicans and for a "swift investigation into how people's rights can be violated like this."

The Texas A&M College Republicans intend to fight the charges brought against them by the Student Organizations Hearing Board.

The hearing, originally scheduled for Friday Sept. 22, has been delayed for 30 days after a drastic change of heart by the administration.

The College Republicans' request for a delay was suddenly granted on Wednesday of last week.

Perhaps somebody from the administration decided to check their so-called "facts" and got scared that the College Republicans have a valid argument, or worse...

They realized the College Republicans had the right to mail that letter out.

Kimberly L. Rogers
A&M College Republicans member
Class of '96

Overlooked education CRs are blind to the benefits of a multicultural education

In light of recent events, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People wants to take a stand on the actions of the College Republicans.

Again, College Republicans have shown its contempt and lack of respect for the minorities on this campus, minorities throughout the nation and minorities throughout history.

There are several statements in their letter to former students that exhibit nothing more than racism and ignorance. Although many will say that these statements stem from misinformation, we believe that they represent the true beliefs of the College Republicans.

Several times the Texas A&M chapter of the NAACP has tried to explain the purpose and the need for multicultural classes. Obviously, we did not succeed in that task.

The idea of multicultural classes was not spawned by some radical Faculty Senate members, but by scholars who understand the importance of learning aspects of different cultures to help bridge societal gaps.

The purpose of implementing the classes is not to explain the atrocities that white America has dealt to minorities that reside in this country.

The main focus of these classes would be to educate students about positive contributions made by minorities in this country. There are many inventions and discoveries given to society by minorities that are never heard about. The multiculturalism classes would change this.

We do believe that there should be more teachings about slavery than are currently discussed in classes.

Again, this is not to condemn modern white America. It is to inform America about events that have taken place in the past.

We would hope that with a more intensive lecture, others would have a better understanding about the fears and concerns that African Americans have. Also, we believe that this type of lesson holds true for other minorities in this nation.

Furthermore, the fact that any student group would refuse to partake in learning the history, literature, religion or social behavior of a particular race, for the reasons that the College Republicans have given, is nothing more than racism.

It should be the goal of students to learn all they can to make themselves well-rounded persons able to function in a multicultural society. The addition of multicultural classes to the curriculum will not add hours to anyone's degree, nor would it turn a conservative into a liberal.

Hopefully, the classes would help educate stu-

TEXAS A&M NAACP
GUEST COLUMN

dents about the plight of minorities in this nation. The only plausible reason for a person to refuse to take these courses is because that person feels there is nothing valuable to learn about or from a minority.

One should also realize that it is not the mission of the multicultural classes to promote a political agenda, but to enlighten students about facts left out of many history books and literary studies.

It is important that Americans learn not only about the oppression suffered by minorities, but also to understand the contributions made by minorities in this country.

Several statements in the College Republicans' letter exhibit nothing more than racism and ignorance.

Is it politically correct to be ignorant of important knowledge?

Also, it should be noted how unjustly the College Republicans have attacked members of the Faculty Senate and the president of Texas A&M.

The College Republicans have made remarks about these people that it knows to be untrue and supported by lies.

What ever happen to the Aggie Code of Honor in which we don't lie, cheat or steal?

Now it has asked for and received postponement of its hearing in order to find documentation on the comments made in Lydia Percival's letter to A&M former students.

The problem with this is that no period of time given will be long enough, because no such documentation exists.

If they find anything supporting Percival's statements, it will more than likely be propaganda that has its origins in the College Republicans organization.

Why can't the College Republicans understand that multicultural courses will enhance the quality of education at Texas A&M, not champion a liberal agenda?

The College Republicans can claim it was in the right by citing former Aggies who support their conservative agenda, but this claim does not make them right. And the former Aggies who are providing financial support to A&M until the views of the University reflect their own personal views are few and of little significance.

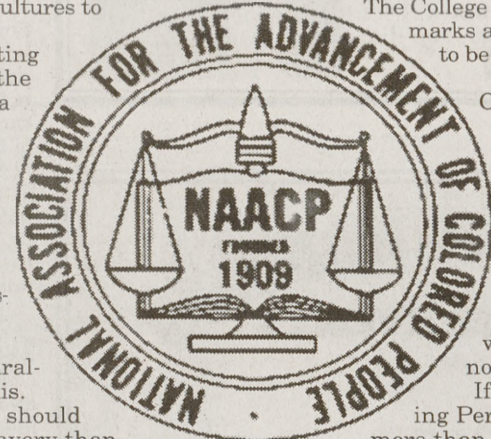
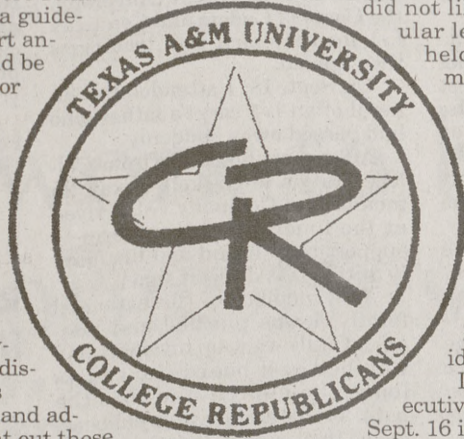
Is this issue really that confusing or are the College Republicans just that blind?

Texas A&M NAACP
Executive Board

Octevia Evangelista /Class of '97

Ferleshare Starks /Class of '96

Cheezz Washington /Class of '97



MAIL CALL

Fraternities add history to A&M

Matthew Merrill thinks he's got fraternities figured out. They are blatantly un-American, unpatriotic and a shame to A&M.

Let's review how un-American and unpatriotic Greeks are:

- all but two U.S. presidents since 1825 have been Greek
- 63 percent of all presidential cabinet members since 1900 have been Greek
- 76 percent of all senators and representatives are Greek
- and 85 percent of supreme court justices are Greek

What a disgrace! How can those Aggie Fraternities live with themselves when, on the most chaotic day of their semester, they miss the lowering of the flag that is taking place behind them?

I was out there at Bid Day, along with my "rented" friends. I was one of the "unruly mob" carrying on with reckless abandon." I apologize for not seeing the flag lowered. We missed it. We were distracted. We're sorry.

But throwing out labels like un-American, unpatriotic and shameful is unwarranted. And "tarnishing the University's reputation"? That's ridiculous.

The real reason there is an anti-Greek sentiment is that even though Greek fraternities have been in America since 1776, they

are a relatively new addition to Aggieland. You know, "No Frats - a tradition since the beginning (1876)." ... along with women, blacks and non-regs.

Furthermore, like it or not, the corps is a fraternal organization. Male dorms are kind of loose, pseudo-fraternal groups. Enter Greek fraternities and voila ... you've got competition. Perhaps the rapid growth of Greeks at Texas A&M caused resentment.

Perhaps the Greeks out on Bid Day were too excited to notice what was going on behind them.

But we are far from un-American, miles from unpatriotic and not even close to being a shame to A&M.

We are Aggies first. We are not elitists who think that our way of life is the only way to exist at A&M ... that distinction goes to others who think their way is.

Travis Stiba
Class of '97

Retroactive fee increase ridiculous

The recent fee increase in the general use fee is amazing to me, both because the Board of Regents' audacity to enact an increase after we've already paid for this semester and because this event generated so little hue and cry among the students.

The Board of Regents is telling us exactly what they think of us by calling for a retroactive fee increase with such little notice.

To do so on top of this semester's hefty tuition increases is just a slap in the face. Where's the accountability? The checks and balances? Where else can a fee legally be raised after it was paid?

If I were to take any other type of classes, such as scuba lessons or defensive driving, and the fees went up after I had paid, I wouldn't expect them to go into effect until the next time the class is offered. To do otherwise is both unfair and unethical.

Tye Botting
Graduate Student

Sarcasm, rudeness not good writing

In David Taylor's Sept. 21 column, he began by stating that he is a conservative with conservative views. Fine, good, wonderful.

It is not Taylor's views that I found disturbing. What was insulting and tired was the way Taylor expressed his views. He used sarcasm and poor analogies to demonstrate facts that would have been more effectively stated directly.

I found myself agreeing with several of Taylor's points. At the same time, however, I was unhappy with how he treated readers who may not have found any common ground with him.

One's beliefs should be strong enough to stand on their own. But people are more likely to respect and agree with you if you treat them as people, not idiots.

Barbara Barrera
Class of '96