

## Just a few things before I go .....

"When you get to the end, turn the page."

My great grandmother was very fond of that phrase. In fact, it was her answer to most every problem that she and my family encountered. And the funny thing is, it usually works. Its effectiveness lies in its simplicity. Now that my term as Battalion editor in chief is almost up, I am ready to turn the page. But I cannot do so until I've written my last line.

As an editor, you learn to understand the University. Not only are you expected to objectively cover the news of Texas A&M, but you are also expected to serve as a student leader. And as a result, you gain much insight into the community you are trying to serve. I know I certainly have.

### The Administration and Former Students

One of the largest misconceptions that I had when I came to Texas A&M was that this was my University and that the administration was working for me and my best interest. Sadly enough, I have found that not to be the case.

If you believe that the administration is working for the students, you are wrong. However, if you take the word "former" and place it in front of the word "students," your thought becomes truth.

This is a fact, and nothing is going to change until the students of A&M realize it and refuse to accept it anymore. Virtually every decision made here is controlled by the former students.

Why? Because they are the ones with all of the money.

This must change. Former students are exactly what their name indicates... former students. They are no longer affected by the administrative decisions. However, for some reason or another, many of them feel it necessary to make sure the A&M of today closely resembles the A&M of yesterday. Our education should not be for sale at any price.

### Traditions/Conformity

The traditions that A&M prides itself on are very unique and they almost define what this University is all about. However, when forced, the traditions lose all meaning. Yes, it is a neat experience when sitting around Kyle Field and listening to thousands of students join together in a common cause.

But far too often, we force participation in these traditions. We call those who don't "two-percenters," "bad Aggs," and many expletives that aren't worth repeating. There is nothing in the student handbook that requires all students of Texas A&M to participate in all of the traditions. And those who decide not to are no less Aggies than you or I.

### Maroon-Colored Glasses

A&M is not the best place in the world. In fact, anything located in College Station is automatically out of the top 10 of any list. But for some reason or another, many of us refuse to accept our University's imperfections.

Here's a news flash... there are many things screwed up about Texas A&M. Our fees are too high. Our professors don't get paid what they should. Our course selection isn't diverse. Our student population isn't diverse. Our administration is more concerned with research than educating students. And we lag behind the University of Texas in most categories.

The following are observations I've had that must be vented:

- Reveille is just a dog. In fact, she is a dog that has epileptic seizures who at any time could fall down and start flopping around.
- The Corps is not all bad. Certain members have a tendency to tarnish its image, but every organization has members like that. There is no way

STERLING HAYMAN

EDITOR IN CHIEF



to have 2,000 model citizens make up one organization. • Multi-culturalism is not a bad word. In fact, it is the

one word that can move A&M forward.

- Not everyone on campus believes in God.
- Highway 6 runs both ways, but so does every other highway.
- Northgate is a dirty, smelly, nasty place. But that's what makes it neat.
- Student Government really has no power. All they do is make recommendations and wear Student Government T-shirts.
- The Faculty Senate fits the same definition as above. However, I don't think they have T-shirts.

• Our fees could go down if the University would stop watering the sidewalks.

- Our library really does suck.
- The professors who teach most of the classes and who spend the most time with students usually make the least amount of money.
- The only students who have different admission requirements are student athletes.
- George Bush and Phil Gramm have one thing in common. Neither attended Texas A&M.

• Being Republican is not an A&M tradition.

• Republicans will force you to pay more for your education.

• The phrase "You can never go home again," really is true.

• Life experiences at college outweigh classroom experiences.

• Your fees pay for things you could never imagine.

• People around the nation think Aggies are hayseeds, if they think about them at all.

• Don't bathe in cologne. People sitting next to you in classes won't like you.

• Aggies lie, cheat and steal.

• Your ATM tattoo won't look good in 20 years.

• The Mail Call letters that begin with, "Got a little story for ya, Aggs," probably won't ever get printed.

• When you stumble over a lip in the sidewalk, don't even try to hide it. Everyone saw, and they all laughed at you.

• Personal hygiene becomes less important as the semester progresses.

• If you ask or answer too many questions in class, your classmates find you really annoying.

• Don't fool yourself — The outfit the person next to you is wearing has been worn two or three times since it has last been washed.

• Our football team wasn't just outscored, we downright lost.

• The tradition of saying "Howdy" is dying because the word has two syllables. "Hey" or "Hi" take much less effort.

• Don't take things in stride. Don't overlook things that piss you off.

• Last month, hundreds of students joined together on this campus to let the administration know that the Hopwood decision sucked and that the University was failing in its duty to serve all students. And for once, I saw a spark in students' eyes. And it was great.

• We have become too passive. We have become too silent. We accept things we shouldn't, just because we are told we are supposed to. In effect, our souls have died and we are now letting others tell us what we think and what is in our best interest.

• The A&M of yesterday boasted students who would sacrifice their lives for what they believed. Thousands of Aggies died in order to protect ideas and beliefs they held sacred. And we have trouble getting our asses off the couch unless we think the word "howdy" is dying or someone forgot to take off his hat in the MSC.

• Maybe it's time to re-evaluate who we are and what we stand for. Perhaps there is more to life than being an Aggie.

• Maybe it's time to turn the page.

• Sterling Hayman is a graduate political science major who is glad he attended A&M

## Earth Day symbolizes extremism

Earth Week — if I had been quicker with the remote, I would not have been forced to watch a commercial telling me to recycle, hug a tree, eat some granola, hug my mom, whatever. Earth Week, why? Apparently the Earth is going to hell in a hand basket and the human race is to blame.

Animals are dying, people are being attacked by giant smog monsters, and all we have to do to change this is to recycle, love our mother Earth and the human race, and the Earth can live in harmony forever.

Well, I don't buy it. More accurately, I don't care.

Even more accurately, almost no one cares.

One reason no one likes environmentalists is that their goal is to tell everyone what to do. It all started back in the '60s; millions of people got together and chanted, "Make love not war." Lo and behold someone listened, and the war stopped. Unfortunately, they realized that by achieving their goal, they negated their own existence. Hmm, what is the next step? The rebellion machine was still oiled and ready to go; all it needed was a new crusade.

The environment! This is even better than anti-war; it affects everyone in the world, not just in the

KIERAN WATSON  
COLUMNIST



United States. The sad part is that after helping to stop war, the activists believed they were right and any crusade they involved themselves in was also automatically right. Wrong.

There is nothing wrong with idealists and dreamers, but rarely are idealists and dreamers also realists. A big dose of realism is what many environmentalists need. It would be fantastic if the world were spotless and birds could fly without breathing gear, but the world is more complicated than that. Like it or not, business runs the world, not because there is a big conspiracy out there, but because every man, woman and child wants money, can't live without it, and happily perpetuates the system if it means a decent life.

A perfect example of environmentalism going too far would be what happened when the nuclear power industry went to Capital Hill to try to persuade the government that the industry is safe. Ralph Nader represented the anti-nuke machine, and John Simpson represented Westinghouse and the industry.

Simpson came armed with 15 years of scientific facts, and Nader came armed with hyperbole and blatant scare tactics. Even though nuclear power had been proven safe in each and every stage, cheap and accessi-

ble power was denied to the United States by a group of people who put their idealism before practicality and proven facts.

Sure, solar power and wind generation would be a great idea, it is just a pity that these people apparently didn't check the facts when telling Congress that environmentally friendly energy sources were just around the corner. They weren't then, and they still aren't now. As for disposing of waste, the reason site approval and construction has taken so long is that the environment-types continue to put their idealism before practicality, even when it benefits mankind.

There are many other examples out there: Environmentalists made it mandatory to put bird guards on cooling towers, even at sites where the last bird to die was probably eaten by a dinosaur.

I hope the next time environmentalists get together, they consider the practicality of their ideas. No one is saved by making something illegal tomorrow. Jobs are lost, costs skyrocket and businesses are less profitable. Work step by step. Understand what is reasonable and necessary for now. Having no nuclear waste is nice, but if it comes at the expense of blackouts and another energy crisis, is it really worth it?

Kieran Watson is a sophomore finance major



MARGULIES  
©1996 THE RECORD NEWS SERVICE  
Jim Margulies



## MAIL CALL

### Nolen exemplifies Opinion page writing

I am writing in response to Jeff Nolen's column on April 23. I would just like to say that Nolen is 100 percent right about the Corps of Cadets and how detrimental its existence is to Texas A&M University. I would also add that those of us who, like Jeff, are so very concerned about this institution, do something about this whole Corps thing.

Let's start by removing all presence of those damn corps turds from any place that they might undermine Nolen's hard work for Texas A&M. Carl Baggett is a logical place to start. As student body president, he could do all kinds of damage. Of course, we need to expel 80 percent of our yell leaders; it's obvious that people like those stinking Torns don't care about Nolen's TAMU. Of course, we need to remove the numerous fascists from the likes of Muster Committee, Traditions Council, Fish Camp, various senatorial positions, etc.; we all know they have ulterior motives for these activities. Nolen could personally take back the Corps' Bonfire pots to avert the catastrophic consequences of CT's with sharp objects.

As I write this, I just keep getting more irate with the Corps of Cadets. It is obvious to me, as I review this abridged list of the multitude of activities, that the Corps attempts to bring A&M down. In closing, I would also encourage all A&M students (non-Corps, of course) to

follow the fine example set by Jeff Nolen, my buddy Chris Stidvent and numerous other Battalion writers of hastily forming and voicing an opinion out of ignorance.

R. Brandon Currey  
Class of '96

### Farrakhan spreads the truth, not hate

This is in response to Erin Fitzgerald's column on Friday, April 19. If you do not believe that there is much water left in the sea of injustice, you have already drowned. Farrakhan is not dangerous because he is hateful, he is dangerous because he is truthful. Honesty is a policy that many Americans need to look into. We need to be honest with the fact that there is a race-relations problem here in America, and yes, discrimination still exists. Although the physical chains of slavery have been broken, the mental and emotional chains are still present on all Americans.

Farrakhan has only put words into the thoughts of many African Americans. No, he is not the spokesperson of every African American. No, everyone is not a mind-numbed follower of Farrakhan. It may be surprising, but African Americans are intelligent individuals, able to think, act and speak for themselves.

Fitzgerald writes, "Farrakhan should wake up from his 30 year nap and smell the roses." Frankly, many Americans have been smelling the roses too

long, trying to avoid the stench in the air. Farrakhan is an intelligent African-American leader, not an entertainer. He has chosen to stand up for what he believes as true. He does not have to hold a candle to other African-American leaders; he has a light all his own.

The next time anyone decides to write about African-American leaders, do not just pull out the ones American history chooses to discuss; dig a little deeper. There are many more African-American leaders of different styles, form and times that have had a positive impact on society — no one worked greater than the others, and all worked for a purpose.

Yes, you are right, it does take more than hate to make history, but from what American history halfheartedly tells us, it is a damn good start.

LaSondra Carroll  
Class of '99

### Anti-Greek attitudes stem from ignorance

Rob Clark is right. Anti-Greek columns rarely break any new ground. And taking a pot-shot at Greeks at A&M is about as daring as calling the pope a Catholic.

"Renting" friends? The vast majority of Greek dues go to house payments. How many other student organizations have mortgages? These houses provide residency for members and serve as 24-hour headquarters and a clubhouse. The rest goes to the chapter, so I'm spending about 55 cents per friend a month. I can't put a dollar value on my friends, but it seems like a helluva bargain to me. For this exorbitant fee, we have the leverage to use our numbers and funds to do things on a grander scale, ranging from philanthropies to parties.

These organizations are non-

profit businesses with debts, obligations and mission statements — all run completely by 18-22 year olds. The learning experience provided is invaluable; people skills, financial responsibility, time management, compromise and peace-keeping skills are quickly learned. And I couldn't even begin to describe how much I value my brothers without sounding sappy (from the outside looking in...) I could never put back what I have gotten out of it, especially if you attempt to attach some dollar value.

Oh sure, you can get these things from various sources. But Greek life offers all that and more in a holistic approach. The Corps can offer some of this, but they are given vast amounts of money from the University and alumni, and guaranteed housing serves as their chapter homes. Greeks have to work hard to achieve these things.

So before people start draping themselves in a trendy anti-Greek attitude, perhaps they better look beyond stereotypes. If you don't know the facts, try our rush; that's what it's for. Greek organizations offer so much for it to be cheapened by giving it a price tag. Lose the argument. It really is invalid.

Travis Stiba  
Class of '97

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. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald. A valid student ID is required. Letters may also be mailed to:

The Battalion - Mail Call  
013 Reed McDonald  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, TX  
77843-1111

Fax: (409) 845-2647  
E-mail: Batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu