

Bad bicyclists should hit the roads

click-click-click-click. This is the sound of danger. Like the breathing of Jason Voorhees in *Friday*, the sound of the screeching in *Psycho*, the sound of the horror.

Although not in view, the presence of the animal is felt. Anxiety builds, fearing — knowing — something is about to happen. The person is about to become another victim of a hit-and-pedal.

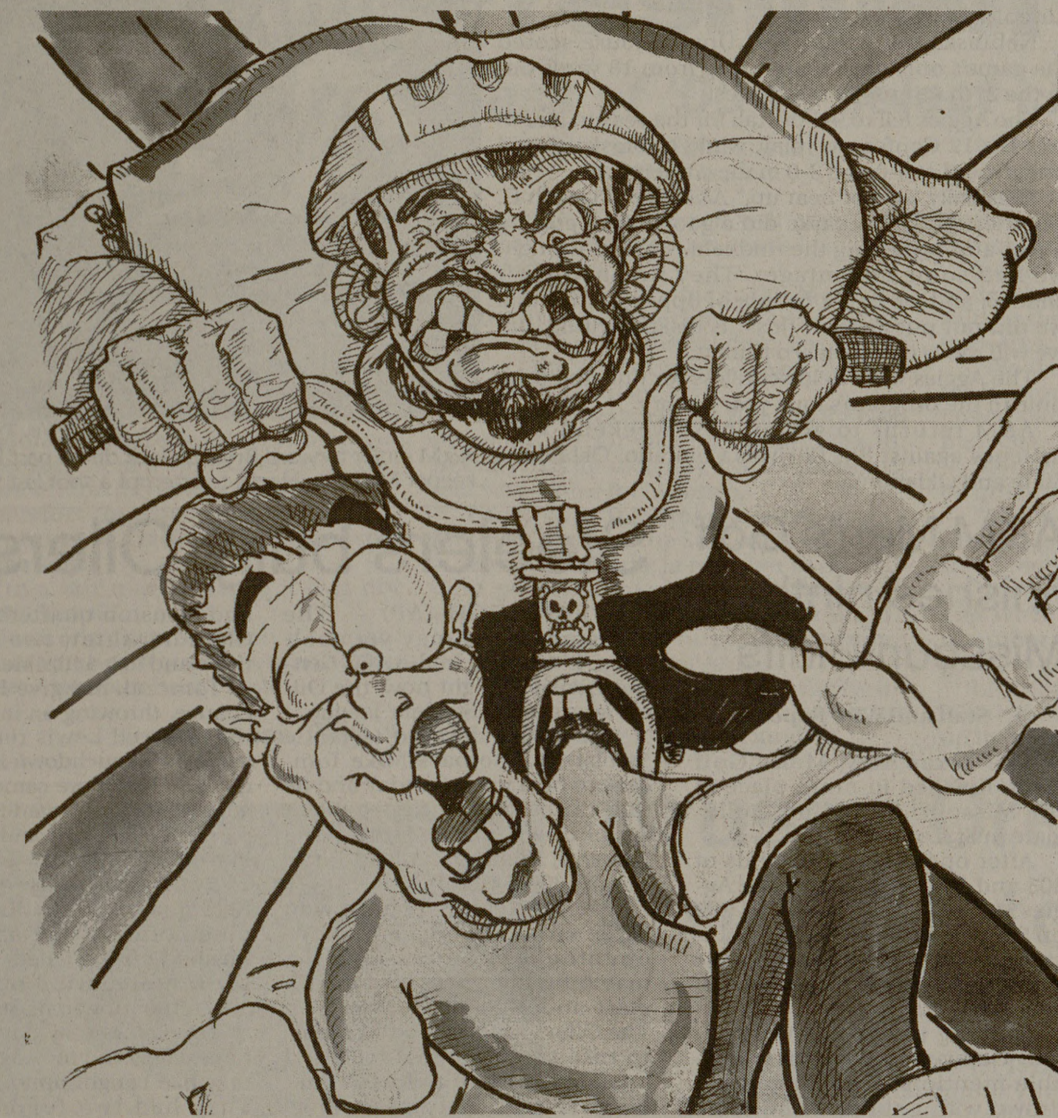
Bicyclists are a nuisance and a hazard on our campus. The reckless road hogs have no boundaries. Sidewalks and streets are constantly molested by pedaling adversaries, endangering the safety of pedestrians, motorists, other bicyclists and themselves. They have roamed this campus freely for too long. It is time to take action restricting obstructive bicycle menaces.

Giving them the benefit of the doubt, let's assume bicyclists are just morons and don't realize their errors. Since the majority of bicyclists on campus apparently do not understand the concept of compound words, here's a lesson for when you see a pedaling, padded butt: Compound words unite the meanings of two words. For example, "sidewalk" is a compound word to get the meaning of the words side and walk.

Therefore, walk on the side. People are killed every day, Aggies traveling on foot suffer injuries with bicycles because of the ignorant and reckless behavior of bicyclists. There is no reason a bicyclist needs to ride on a main campus. No destination on this campus is so far that a student cannot arrive in the allotted 20 minutes by simply walking through Main Campus. For devout bike riders, long distances, such as from Zachary to fall, can be reached by riding in bike lanes, not on campus.

When cutting through a crowd of pedestrians, bicyclists are a hazard. They are also a threat to other bicyclists and themselves. Bike riders never appear to know which way to go to avoid obstacles — like each other. With front wheels and handle bars wobbling from side to side, their indecisiveness causes accidents. However, the pleasure gained from watching spokes and wheels mangle together is not great enough to justify bicyclists riding rampantly across campus.

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before crossing" rule on one-way streets because of illicit bicyclists. Ironically, so must the bicyclists. While endangering pedestrians and motorists, they are also a threat to other bicyclists and themselves. Bike riders never appear to know which way to go to avoid obstacles — like each other. With front wheels and handle bars wobbling from side to side, their indecisiveness causes accidents. However, the pleasure gained from watching spokes and wheels mangle together is not great enough to justify bicyclists riding rampantly across campus.

Many students may not consider this a problem of great concern, probably because they have not had the pleasure of being wiped out by a demonic, speed-crazed cyclist. However, others, such as former student Hillary Lampson, experienced four collisions and numerous close calls during her undergraduate career.

Everyone's day will come if action is not taken. Texas A&M administrators should regulate the acts of perilous bicycle riders. Wherever there are pedestrian thoroughfares and malls, there should be signs designating dismount areas. Then, the University Police Department should strictly enforce traffic laws for bicyclists by ticketing violators. Until that day arrives, the bike-fearing pedestrians of Texas A&M must be content with finding delight in watching a cyclist wipe out on wet cement.

Kiss and don't tell

School officials in Lexington, N.C., should take a re-fresher course on what it means to be a kid.

By failing to adequately justify their punishment of a 6-year-old's actions, they revealed how easily adult fears can be inappropriately used to formulate school policy.

Last week, Jonathon Prevette, a first-grader at Southwest Elementary School in Lexington N.C., kissed a fellow female classmate on the cheek — upon her request.

The principal consequently punished him by placing Prevette in another classroom by himself for "violation of the general school rule which prohibits unwarranted and unwelcome touching of one student by another."

Because of his forced absence, he also missed out on an ice-cream party recognizing students with good attendance records. The school's justification was that Prevette had violated school policy with his "inappropriate behavior."

Inappropriate behavior may have occurred in the school that day. However, it was not Prevette's action, but the school's reaction to the situation. Rather than using common sense, the administrators acted on their own adult fears of "unwelcome behavior" in the workplace.

Perhaps the administrators feared that Prevette's kiss would result in a burdensome learning environment for his fellow classmate.

I've yet to see, however, a person who has been forced to go through years of counseling for being kissed after requesting someone to do so, especially in the first grade. The little girl would probably have been more messed up if Prevette said "no way."

Although the school officially denies that its actions were based on fears of sexual harassment, the measures taken imply that policy was more important than the purity of the 6-year-old's actions.

The school's main error was not in its actions, but in its lack of justification for them. When asked why he would want to kiss a girl, Pre-

Columnist



Jenni Howard
Senior economics and international studies major

vette replied, "Because you love them and you're friends." It sounds like the school stopped the little pervert just in time.

If schools are going to consider kissing a fellow friend on the cheek a criminal act, then they have much work to do to combat this erosion of classroom etiquette.

First, they would have to launch a campaign against all stores carrying those obscene little posters with children dressed up in grown-up's clothes who are holding hands, hugging, or even (gasp!) kissing each other.

Second, they would have to incorporate into their so-called policy an equal rights amendment for all kids with cooties. The terms "cootie-face" and "cootie-breath" would have to be reworded so that they would be politically correct.

And finally, as Jay Leno pointed out on last Thursday's *Tonight Show*, they would have to explain to those kids why they are discouraging the highly unacceptable behavior of a kiss on the cheek, while handing out condoms in school.

The school may have thought it was acting in the best interest of the students when punishing Prevette, but it failed to realize that 6-year-olds are too young to understand how showing affection to a friend could be misinterpreted. The rest of the world is still trying to understand why Prevette was punished. His parents have received telephone calls from Ireland and Australia in support of his plight, and one man in Florida is sending Prevette \$100 to buy ice cream.

It may be difficult for the school administrators to admit that they overreacted, but they may have to do so in order to prevent unnecessary punishments such as Prevette's from occurring in the future. The school should adjust its policy so that adult fears of unwelcome behavior would not be forced upon children who are too young to even spell words like sexual harassment, let alone understand them.

This is your brain on Election Day

The president were to go on television and tell Americans to eat more spinach, chances are not many people would do it.

Spinach consumption would remain constant. The president could read us statistics after statistic proving that spinach is good for us. But nobody would care. Spinach wouldn't touch the stuff.

It's the same with drugs. A federal government survey recently revealed that teen-age experimentation with marijuana increased from 27 percent in 1991 to 39 percent in 1995. Over the past month or so, Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole has been hammering away at these numbers and President Clinton's record on the "war" on drugs. He claims that Clinton and the news media are to blame for rising drug use.

The statistical jump is a big one. No wonder Dole thought it was something he could complain about. It's true that the media and the entertainment industry may be partially responsible. If so, blame on them. It's their job to make money, however, not spoon-feed people with values and how to live.

But Dole is trying to place most of the blame on Clinton. Teenagers, many struggling with the lure of drugs, have seen a United States president make light of his experimentation with drugs," Dole said. "A presi-

Columnist



Shannon Halbrook
Junior English major

dent is supposed to show leadership. This president has shown no moral leadership.

He was re-elected on a 2-2 tie in his recent advertisement. He is running on a 2-2 tie in his recent advertisement. He is running on a 2-2 tie in his recent advertisement.

On the Sept. 22 episode of *This Week With David Brinkley*, Dole adviser and renowned moral dictator William Bennett tried to convince viewers that if Dole were elected president, he could curtail drug use with stern lectures. But after he was prodded a bit by the show's panel, Bennett admitted that culture has more influence over drug use than politics.

He's right. Politicians can only alter supply by stepping up law enforcement and checking smuggling. Dole emphasizes tougher law enforcement and increased interdiction efforts to cut down on drug use; he wants to stop the supply.

But according to the survey that spawned all this talk, only marijuana use is up noticeably. Dole's proposals concentrate mainly on the smuggling of foreign cocaine and heroin into the United States, and are moot for marijuana since most of it is grown domestically.

Meanwhile, even if Clinton could have done more about the drug problem during the past four years, he still wouldn't have been able to affect demand. And even Bill Bennett knows that demand is what regulates drug use.

Maybe if movies try instead to tell nice polite suburban stories of crew-cut lawns and Eisenhower-era innocence, drug use will miraculously fall and society will return to "normal." It's possible.

But to think the president "is supposed to show the way" is grossly inflating the power of the office. All the president does is run the country — he wields no real moral or spiritual influence over it.



MAIL CALL

Stewart scores an off-field touchdown

Last Saturday night, I was pushing a stalled truck down the middle lane of Holleman. Pressed in by fast moving cars on either side, I needed help fast.

Right then, an Aggie jumped from his vehicle and quickly brought traffic to a stop right at our turn off. Grateful, I whipped out first — Bob Santini, Class of '81. He returned volley — Brandon Stewart, Class of '98 — and then departed. Thanks Ags! Keep the spirit.

Bob Santini
Class of '81

Don't horse laugh the A-G-G-I-E-Ssss

I'm writing to address a small problem. Now, I am an Aggie. You are an Aggie. Together we are the A-G-G-I-E-S, not the A-G-G-I-E-Sssssss. Does everyone know what I'm talking about? If not, then you haven't been to yell practice or the games in the last few years.

As far back as I can remember, that hissing sound after the "S" is not part of the "Aggies" yell. First, it sounds like you're giving the "horse laugh" to the Aggies, and as we all know, the "horse laugh" is the polite, Aggie equivalent of booing. Second, that sound is just downright annoying.

Harry Love
Class of '96

A&M women offer integrity & wisdom

Regarding Bryan Goodwin's Sept. 24 column and Christine

Tran's Sept. 26 Mail Call:

After reading about people complaining they can't find a decent member of the opposite sex to date, I have to raise the question, "Are these people blind?"

Texas A&M definitely does not have a shortage of respectable women to date. The girls I know truly deserve to stand high upon a pedestal. Not only are they nice, witty and considerate, but they are also intelligent. Yes, despite what you believe, those qualities are quite common in females.

Mike Chapman
Class of '00

South Korea needs democratic allies

Regarding Michael Heinroth's Sept. 27 column, "Attack of the Red Submarine."

Heinroth's view that South Korea is a small, backwater country that no one cares about is wrong.

South Korea is important in many ways — economically, strategically and politically. The United States must take a strong stand against communism. The maintenance of 40,000 troops in South Korea is tactically wise because they provide a detriment to Communist forces across the border. I am not a war-hawk, and I do not feel any additional troops should be deployed or mobilized. However, we cannot abandon South Korea.

Perhaps in 20 years South Korea will stand on its own. If I sound a bit McCarthyish, sorry, but you probably haven't had your homeland overrun by communists.

Wilber Wang
Class of '00

Internet offers busy signal for its users

The increased need for the Internet has put a strain on the resources currently available at Texas A&M.

Students living off-campus are finding it increasingly difficult to access the Internet due to the shortage of modems currently available.

It is necessary for students to get Online. Most professors are posting their class syllabus, lecture notes and grades on their web pages and are expecting the students to have access. Neither students nor faculty can utilize this improving technology if they cannot get on-line.

With the increased student population and the growing need for the Internet, students often wait an hour or longer to get Online. This problem could be alleviated with the purchase and installation of additional modems. The \$75 computer access fee that every student pays each semester should allow them access to the Internet in a timely manner.

We understand that there are computers available for student on campus, but there is often a long wait to use one.

Josh Morrissey
Class of '97

Christine Burks
Class of '97

DECISION '96

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The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or fewer and include the author's name, class, and phone number.

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