

## EDITORIAL

### THE BATTALION

Established in 1893

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## Memories of Kennedy make impression

Editor in Chief



**Michael Landauer**  
Senior journalism major

*As we grow older, we realize how much our parents have left to teach us.*

*For me, today represents yet another example of what I can learn from my mom. She was in college in Washington, D.C., when John F. Kennedy was shot, 33 years ago today. And this is her story:*

caisson would be and finally decided to go to the church, but we soon realized that was a bad idea, since there were walls for blocks and blocks around it. So we made our way back along the route that the caisson would take.

It was slow going because we couldn't get through the crush of humanity, ten or fifteen deep, on the sidewalks.

At times I remember ducking down and climbing between legs because there was more room there than at eye level.

Somehow, we finally wound up on a part of the route that wasn't as packed and climbed through legs until we were in front.

Then we flirted with a young policeman who was trying to keep us back.

I think he was overcome by my friend's charm and let us stand just behind him, which was about two arms' length from the cars going by on the motorcade. At first, it seemed almost fun because it was such a challenge to get a good spot.

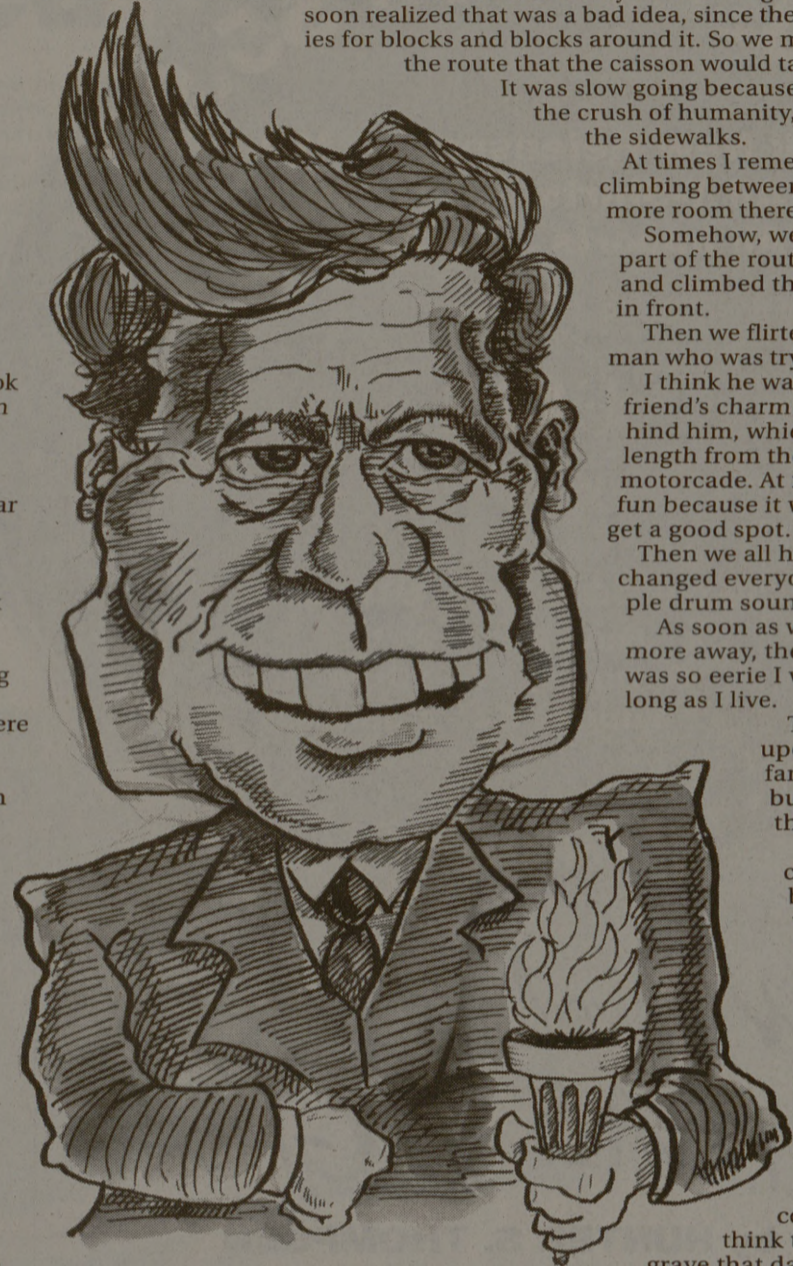
Then we all heard something that changed everyone's attitude: that simple drum sound.

As soon as we heard it, a block or more away, there was a silence that was so eerie I will never forget it as long as I live.

There were millions upon millions of people as far as the eye could see, but all you could hear was the drum.

As it passed, I had one clear thought that I still believe today. Somehow we were burying a dream, an era of innocence that could never be resurrected.

I think something that today's college-aged generation can't even begin to imagine is the deep respect most people had for the office of president and the pride in our country we all shared. I think that's what we put in the grave that day.



## PAY RAISE

### The University should continue to raise faculty salaries

The proposed General Use Fee increase has been authorized solely for salary raises for Texas A&M faculty. Rightfully so, A&M's faculty pay is 8 percent below the national average, and if A&M's pay is not raised, the school's top-notch faculty will be lost to other universities. To retain its top faculty, A&M should remain committed to the pay raise. But the university shouldn't stop there.

This fee increase will go toward separate faculty raises next year — a 2 percent raise in March and an additional 3 percent raise in September. Together, they will use the average professor's salary of \$71,568 to just over \$75,000.

To students, this may seem odd enough. But the average salary for professors is a comparatively whopping \$76,393 at the University of Texas at Austin. Even after the raise, A&M will still be short of its rival school.

To remedy this, the administration should offer faculty a raise each year to keep A&M competitive. If the money magicians could muster a 5 percent increase a few years, pushing A&M professors' salaries above the national average, the situation would be improved. And if the average

salary could be kept above the national average — compensating for inflation and cost of living increases — A&M would look that much more attractive to top-notch professors.

The problem is money. The University does what it can with what it is given by the Texas Legislature. The Legislature gets its money from the taxpayers, who are hardly a bottomless pit of cash.

But there's more coming. Last year, the Legislature passed a bill increasing tuition by \$2 per year until the year 2000; by then, it will be \$40 per hour. And the General Use Fee will most likely be raised to equal that amount.

In addition, A&M, UT, the University of Houston and Texas Tech are petitioning the Legislature for over \$900 million. Although the cash, if approved, would be split among the four schools, it would still bring a good-sized chunk of needed funds to A&M. This should give the administration some money to work with — money that should be directed toward keeping A&M financially competitive. Education spending by the Legislature has gradually tapered off over the last decade; it's time the trend was reversed.

I remember one and only one class that I took in college, but to this day I can see the room and exactly where I was sitting.

Someone came in and said Kennedy had been shot, and we all sat there in total shock and, for the most part, silence, waiting to hear if it was really true.

Our teacher left, and when she returned she was sobbing and said that she had heard he was shot in the head and that it didn't look good. Everyone just started wandering out of class even though it wasn't over, and we noticed that students in other classes were doing the same.

People were crying everywhere. Rumors were flying: "The Russians did it," "There was a takeover," "All sorts of crazy things."

We went back to the "smoker" in our dorm (where all the girls met to socialize). The TV was on and 20 or 30 girls were crowded around it.

When it was announced Kennedy was dead, people just hung onto each other sobbing. After we calmed down, we decided to head straight for the city.

I don't remember much, except that my best friend and I were standing at the fence in front of the White House and watching helicopters come and go all night. Like any city in a catastrophe, every person you met was a neighbor, and everyone was talking to everyone.

That night the city was one large, wild traffic jam.

The next thing I remember was going to the funeral.

We debated where the best place to see the



It didn't take long for the new recruit to experience harassment

## Offensive opinion justly printed

It is interesting that only particular ethnic groups riot when something occurs that they disagree with.

Columnist



**Jenni Howard**  
Senior economics and international studies major

his purpose of showing how violent opposition to injustices was wrong, but he had every right to say what he said, because it was his opinion.

By running an opinion column that may have been viewed as racist, the Broadside did not promote racist attitudes by any means. In fact, several African-American student leaders at George Mason were glad the column ran. Kirby Reed, Student Body President and an African-American, disagreed with Wright's opinion, but felt that publishing the column exposed racial attitudes on campus that would otherwise have gone unnoticed. And Haskins, who is also African-American, agreed that regardless of how personally offended he was by Wright's column, it was an opinion that he felt did not directly attack any particular ethnic group, but rather raised issues and posed questions.

What many may not realize is that by exposing Wright's ignorance in printing the column, Haskins may have crushed any racial sentiment along the lines of what Wright conveyed in the column. By provoking students and school administrators to anger, and consequently to write the Broadside to express their disagreement, a consensus may have been reached that entertaining racial thoughts like those ex-

pressed by Wright was wrong.

Furthermore, whatever subtle misunderstandings may be conveyed in a piece of writing can sometimes be cleared up by printing them. Many students are familiar with the feeling of knowing exactly what we want to say in a paper, but having to spend countless hours trying to put it into words. Even when they succeed, they still have to hope that the professor reading it will understand what they are trying to say.

After Wright's column ran and numerous letters were written protesting it, he did write an apology in the Nov. 11 issue of Broadside, stating that although he may not have expressed his ideas well, he stood by his main argument that violent responses to injustice were wrong.

People should decide which situation they fear more: the right to express one's views and sooner or later be offended by someone else's, or the right to remain silent and not have to listen to obnoxious opinions. What they must consider, however, is choosing the latter would do nothing to dissolve ignorant stances on issues, because they would never come to light.

Choosing the former would not force us to embrace offensive viewpoints, but rather enable us to discuss them and walk away either having enlightened someone else of the truth that we already knew or having learned something new ourselves.



## MAIL CALL

such as affirmative action and judge people on merit alone.

David C. McCaughrin  
Class of '99

### Texas Aggie Band thanks for support

On behalf of the Texas Aggie Band, I would like to thank the student body and Bryan/College Station community for their outstanding support given to the band in the ESPN contest. We received more than 3 times the number of votes any other school received in the "gang-free" first round and, though no longer in the contest, we still have several thousand more votes than any of the other 15 schools chosen to participate (that leaves t.u. and Tech at zero ... and the current score is A&M band 26,389 votes; Rice-4,729).

But what is infinitely more meaningful to us than a hokey internet poll is the sound of everyone chanting "...the nationally famous, Fightin' Texas Aggie Band" right along with Major Brewer. And the pride and chills we get when you whoop and holler so loud at Kyle Field that we can't even hear ourselves play — such as last Saturday. Or the standing ovations from the crowds at every away game. This allows us those indescribable feelings that members of other bands will never know, and this support is what we care about.

The contest was a testament to the way Aggies come together and pull for each other. It took a conspiracy of three schools to squeak by us. No other student body has the character that this one does — that's what makes us unique, and that's why most of us are here (despite what any all-knowing student columnist might try and tell you). I'll gladly keep my counter-marches, silver bugle flourishes, four-way cross-throughs and patriotic marches. We all know where the finest band on the planet Earth is located and we know where the finest student body is, too. Thanks again.

Michael Macicek  
Class of '97  
Accompanied by 249 signatures

### Aston Hall intrudes on people's rights

It seems to me that in an era where popular sentiment is to restrict government intrusion into the lives of private citizens, the residents of Aston Hall are being counter-productive. It is not debated that riding in the back of a pick-up truck is generally quite dangerous, but what gives us the right to deny someone of this? It is foolish to think we can make the world idiot-proof.

Laws cannot save people from their own follies. The attempt will only serve to further erode our claim to our own properties. Someone would have to hold a gun to my head to get me to ride in the bed of a truck, but he or she would have to pull the trigger to make me give up the right.

Benjamin Burden  
Class of '96

### Skin color shouldn't merit scholarships

Referring to the Nov. 19 Pro/Con columns on affirmative action:

During my senior year in high school, before coming to the obvious realization that Texas A&M would be the best choice to continue my education, I was interested in the University of Virginia.

Upon receiving information about scholarships, I was shocked to discover that, while I met the criteria for virtually every single one of them, because I was unlucky enough to be born white, I was ineligible to apply for any of them.

Did Dr. King himself not say that he hoped his children would be judged by the content of their character and not the color of their skin?

I am in no way excusing whites for past discrimination against blacks, but it's time to get rid of reverse discrimination policies

### False assumptions in Nunnery's article

Referring to Melissa Nunnery's Nov. 19 article, "Report predicts decline in education":

I find it insulting that The Battalion would include a front page story based on the false assumption that minority students will attend a certain college because it offers affirmative action opportunities. The article implied that even the most competitive minority students are unable to compete without affirmative action and therefore must rely on it for acceptance and scholarships.

As someone who did not emphasize race on my college applications, I would like to make it known that not every minority student uses affirmative action as a crutch to "get a foot in the door."

It is interesting how President Bowen now feels that he is at a "distinct disadvantage" without affirmative action, while last year at the affirmative action rally he offered no solutions or support to the students who foresaw the decline in minority enrollment that he now fears.

Perhaps the solution to recruiting minority students is to continue distributing the misleading "culturally diverse A&M" pamphlets and appointing the type of "minority" recruiters that encouraged me to choose this fine University.

Elsa Velazquez  
Class of '99

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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