

EDITORIAL

Most Ridiculous Schools take absurdity to a new level

THE BATTALION

Established in 1893

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Editor's Note: The exchange of editorials between The Battalion and the Daily Texan is a standing tradition between the two schools. This year, however, The Battalion is betting a case of Shiner Bock that Texas A&M beats the hell outta t.u.

PATting BACKS

The Battalion practices charity toward that community college in Austin.

The Battalion wants to break the trend of negative and ugly editorials by focusing on the accomplishments of our rivals at Texas university.

We should show that the schools can work together with mutual respect. For example, the chancellor of the Texas university system sends his son to Texas A&M, showing objectivity when considering the quality of higher education.

In return for this compliment, the Battalion would like to point out some of the fine things that come from t.u. (even if very few of them focus on academic achievement).

To start, the Cowboys should be commended for efforts to each aspiring pranksters the importance of knowing how to win. But the football team has taken the lead in community service. Last year in a pilot program, the team invited a new type of college player onto the field.

The first to take advantage of the program had never succeeded in his five years of previous college football, but through the "Assume a False Name and Play" program, he was given a second chance to sit on the sidelines of college football.

Perhaps the greatest contributions t.u. has given the state this year are in the legal arena, including the disastrous Hopwood case.

In another legal event, a creative Aggie who goes to law school at t.u. filed an opening records request for t.u.'s playbooks. The student newspaper, the Daily Texan, in an effort to be cute since it is no longer taken seriously, requested A&M's playbook.

Now here The Battalion must digress. It is strongly suspected that Texas A&M doesn't have a book per se — perhaps a note card. But if the toxin is really curious, here's a clue: Look for the third-and-eighteen quarterback sneak.

In terms of showing respect for former Southwest Conference schools, Texas also has led the way.

Last week, a Rice professor urged Texas students to help defeat the Aggie Band in ESPN's virtual band tournament. In causing the defeat, t-sips learned something about themselves: If they listen closely to people who are more intelligent than themselves and succumb to those people's wishes, they CAN accomplish something. This is surely a lesson they will take with them throughout life.

And we can't forget last year's little squabble at the end of the game. The victory gave way to the greatest display of childish idiocy the fans at Kyle Field had ever seen as t-sips stumbled onto the field.

When the police asked the Corps to help keep the drunken, rowdy fans in line, they didn't realize that for some it would take force.

For sober, civilized people, police and verbal warnings would have been enough.

In an age where our schools have huge and diverse student populations, it was nice to have Texas' actions serve as a reminder that some things never change.

Aggies will always have respect for others, but t-sips never will. It's what separates humans from beasts, and the Aggies from the longhorns.

We may all be winners deep down inside, but the application of this Hallmark-like sentiment has gone too far.

Mental damage control patrols in high schools across the nation are increasingly concerned that not being picked as "most likely to succeed" or "class clown" could result in years of counseling for those not chosen. Consequently, many schools are now eliminating the traditional senior-year elections.

Cromwell High School in Connecticut is the most recent school to jump on the bandwagon and opt to end the selections of "most likely to's."

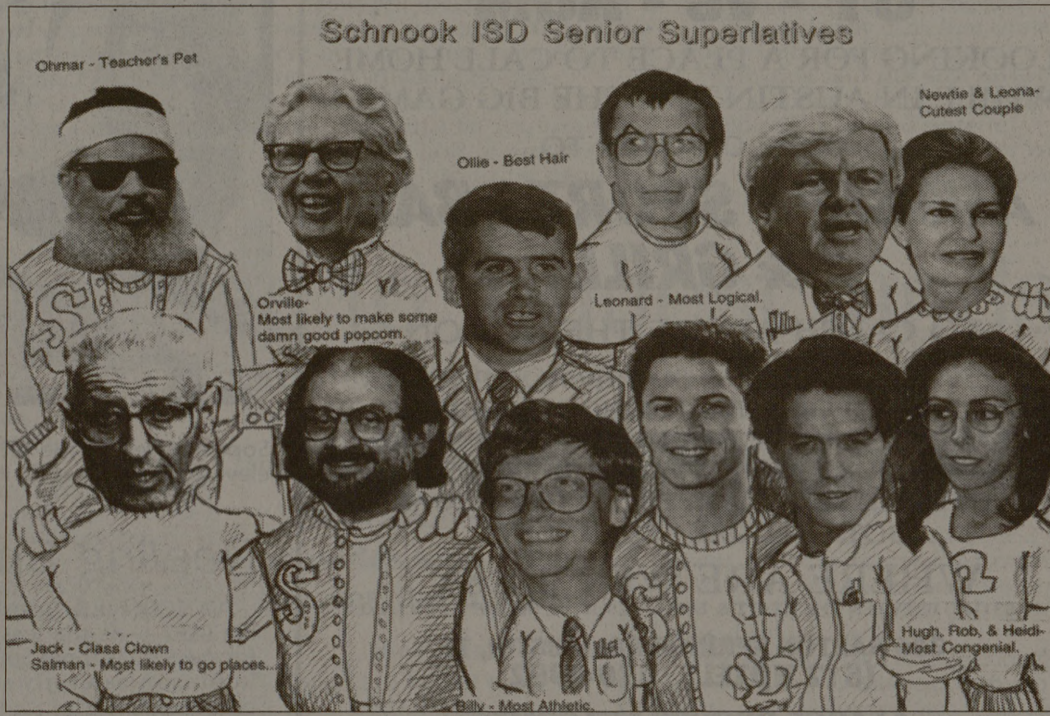
Apparently, the school believes that students would prefer to receive rainbow ribbons of universal approval rather than blue-ribbon recognition of unique talents and accomplishments.

Please. If there was a study that proved an overwhelming number of serial murderers is also bitter about not being picked "most likely to be famous" during their high school careers, maybe this politically correct move would make sense.

But in their mission to make schools more sensitive to feelings, officials have killed an innocent and sentimental tradition of students being recognized by their peers for their achievements or individuality.

It doesn't matter whether students are selected for "best hair" or "least likely to get caught by the security guard while walking through the metal detector," but rather that they have received acceptance from fellow students who appreciate a certain talent or quality they possess.

Attempting to shelter students from not being recognized does nothing more than leave them unprepared for the real world. What will students do when they aren't recog-



nized as "man (or woman) of the year" or "employee of the month"? If they were as sensitive to not being recognized as their high schools had predicted, they might jump off the top of the Empire State Building while repeatedly humming the theme to Sesame Street.

But being exposed to the possibility of non-acknowledgement in high school could prepare them to deal with being another face in the crowd.

Ironically, many people considered geeks or failures go on to highly successful careers, while those chosen as the cream of the crop sink to the bottom. For example, Peter Jennings dropped out of high school and is now a major network news anchor. David Graham and Diane Zamoara, on the other hand, were high school sweethearts with extraordinary academic records, who went on to attend prestigious military academies, and now

stand indicted for the first degree murder of a fellow classmate.

Eliminating "most likely to" categories also robs those attending their 10-year and 20-year high school reunions of the opportunity to compare where their classmates came from and where they've gone since graduating. Instead of being dumfounded at the transformation of a shy, brainy, awkward valedictorian into a world-famous supermodel, old classmates will just have to sit around with their Very-Berry Kool-Aid in hand and congratulate themselves on being the same generic class they were decades ago.

Trying to protect the emotional well-being of students is an honorable endeavor on the part of the school officials, but in this case, they're trying too hard.

Allowing students to continue the tradition of identifying admirable traits in each other should not be abandoned. Rather, it should be upheld as a reminder that it is more important to recognize individual excellence than to ignore it for the sake of affirming a general level of mediocrity.

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Students give thanks for more than turkey

It's a great time of year. Three months of work culminates in a 55-foot tall (or taller) structure that lights up the night sky, symbolizing the burning desire to beat the hell outta t.u. Aggies then go to Austin to show those freaks how to yell, party and play football. But there's a time sandwiched between these events that we sometimes take for granted.

Sure, we might go home for a day, eat some turkey and dressing, kiss our parents and tell them we love them, but few people actually take the time to slow down from our busy lives and reflect on how phenomenally fortunate we are.

Three years ago death came to my house to play. Two friends and I were driving down the highway going about 65 miles per

Columnist



David Boldt  
Senior marketing and management major

hour when a car swerved into me. It hit us on the back left corner, causing my truck to spin sideways and slam head first into the side of a semi's trailer, sending the hood of my truck underneath the trailer and the windshield into our laps.

Unfortunately, it didn't end there. The control in the steering wheel left my hands as the truck continued to spin out from underneath the semi and head into the guardrail on the other side. Still moving at a high rate of speed, we hit the rail, the wheels caught on the grass of the median and we began to roll. After three violent swirls of light and dark we came to a stop.

We were bleeding, we were scared and we were upside-down, but we were alive.

Alive — something a para-

medic told me I shouldn't be. He looked into my eyes at the hospital and said with devastating sincerity, "I've been in this business for ten years and I've never seen a vehicle that destroyed without someone killed, or at least permanently injured. Someone's looking out for you."

I thanked him and walked out of the hospital with nothing but a sore neck, and a lot of cuts and bruises.

Standing at Silver Taps three years later, I thought about the accident. I wondered why I was alive and once again thanked God that I was.

Even people who have stared death in the face sometimes take things for granted. We all do. Not all students on this campus count their blessings every day. Our minds are too cramped with chemistry, accounting and alcohol.

But that's the beauty of Thanksgiving. It's a scheduled

time to set aside to be thankful for all the many things we have but don't deserve.

We have so much to be thankful for. Even if an Aggie thinks his grades suck and he has no friends, there is always someone who loves him, someone who cares.

We all at least had enough intelligence to get into a world class university. We are all part of an Aggie family. That will carry us through the rest of our lives.

If we have nothing else, we have our lives, we have our health. Whether one believes in God or not, life is fragile and can be expelled at any time.

Don't take this holiday lightly and don't fall into the trap of the commercialization of "turkey day." Take time out to count your blessings. Call the ones you love and tell them so.

The Pilgrims at Plymouth rock didn't take life or freedom for granted. Why should we?



MAIL CALL

Yell leader election bill poses problems

Regarding JoAnne Whittemore's Nov. 25 story, "Yell Leader bill tabled by committee":

Such a run-off election would just turn into a grudge match between the Corps of Cadets and non-reg's.

Students would end up not voting for who they want; rather, they would be voting against who they did not want.

The recent conflict with Rice's MOB band is a perfect example of what the results of the elections would be like.

The Fightin' Texas Aggie Band

lost that election, not because more people voted for Stanford, but because more people voted against Texas A&M.

If students feel that the result of ESPN's Battle of The Bands election is a good representation of who has the best band, then by all means pass this bill.

But if students think we got a raw deal and that Texas A&M should have won, then students should not support the bill.

True, most yell leaders are in the Corps, but the Corps only represents about 5 percent of our student population.

The numbers are against the Corps, and non-reg's should win every time.

The Corps should be commended in being able to triumph in such a situation.

But instead, the Student Senate is trying to change the rules so that that the majority has even more of an unfair advantage.

The Corps puts forth the effort to inform its members on who is running in what elections and encourages its members to vote.

If the rest of the student body feels that the results are not a good representation of who should be yell leader, something should be done.

But having a run-off election would just encourage people to vote against Corps or vote against non-reg's.

Nobody would actually be voting for who they really wanted.

The results of such an election would definitely not be a good representation of who the student body wants to be yell leaders. Rather, it would be a representation of who the student body does not want to be yell leaders.

If you want the outcome of the yell leader elections to change, I have one simple solution ... vote.

P.S. Good job Aggie Band! We know you are the Best!

Craig Calhoun  
Class of '95

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or fewer and include the author's name, class, and phone number. The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to: The Battalion - Mail Call 013 Reed McDonald Texas A&M University College Station, TX 77843-1111 Campus Mail: 1111 Fax: (409) 845-2647 E-mail: Batt@tamvml1.tamu.edu For more details on letter policy, please call 845-3313 and direct your question to the opinion editor.