

Separation of church and beer

Texadelphia restaurant too close for comfort for Northgate churches

Nothing says a good weekend on Northgate like a rousing church sermon and a tall, frosty mug of beer. Thanks to the soon-to-be-open Texadelphia Sandwiches on 201 College Main, this new Aggie tradition will soon be realized.

Brazos County Judge Al Jones granted the restaurant a beer and wine license last week, despite protests from A&M United Methodist Church and the Baptist Student Ministry. The debate on whether the restaurant should be granted a beer and wine license stems from a state law prohibiting the front door of an alcohol-selling establishment from being within 300 feet of the front door of a church.

Texadelphia will be constructed more than 300 feet from the front door of the Methodist Church, but it will be within steps of the church's Family Life Center, used for worship services. The College Station city attorney said the Life Center does not qualify as the church's front door because it is not the "primary" place of worship. The Baptist Student Center, located next door to the restaurant, further complicates the situation because it is used for worship during the week.

Judge Jones has made a sound legal decision by relying on the letter of the law, stating the opponents to the restaurant's opening failed to show any negative

Columnist



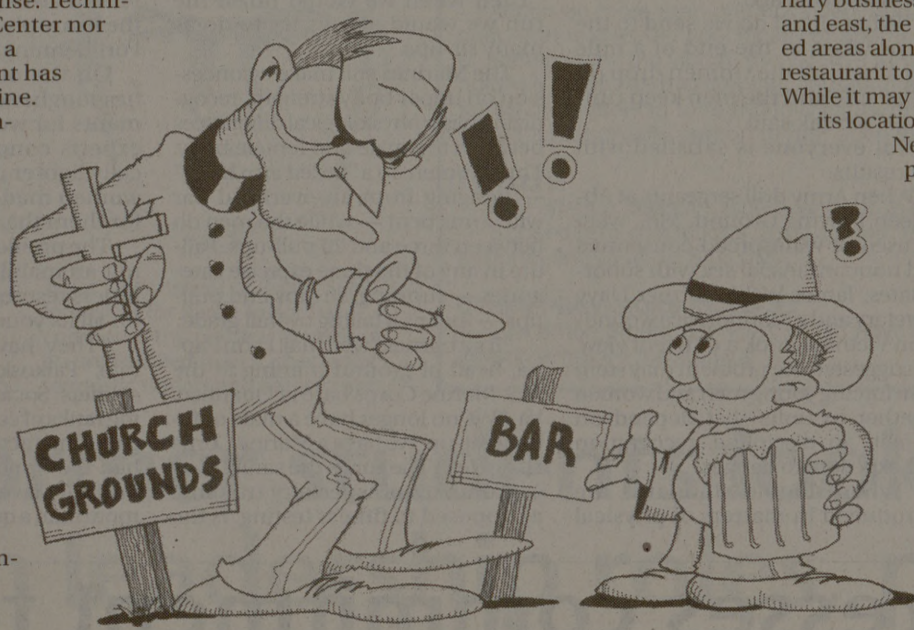
Glenn Janik
 Sophomore
 Political science major

church parking, masterful driving skills and luck are necessary. If other businesses flock to Northgate with their newly attained beer and wine licenses, the only place to park will be at the Northside post office. College Station may be seeking new business for the sake of growth, but continually invading Northgate will cause more congestion and headaches.

By ignoring pleas of the churches, Texadelphia also strains the relationship between Northgate religious affiliations and ordi-

impact in granting the license. Technically, neither the Student Center nor the Life Center qualifies as a church. Thus, the restaurant has a right to serve beer and wine. But what results will the encroaching restaurants and bars have on Northgate churches?

First, further development of Northgate will continue to add more parking, traffic and population problems in the area. To find business or



nary businesses. With churches scattered to the north and east, the bars and restaurants have staked out limited areas along University Drive. Texadelphia is the first restaurant to step outside these established boundaries. While it may be seeking an area accessible to students, its location has broken separation lines.

Neither of the affected churches will stage protests and demonstrations or form a "Get Beer and Wine Off Our Block" coalition. However, Texadelphia has placed potential profit ahead of the traditions and boundaries of Northgate. Its decision may have legal justification, but the location rests on shaky moral grounds.

Final judgment on Texadelphia is yet to come — that is, whether their sandwiches are worth buying. The restaurant and its beer and wine will not deter spirits or attendance in Northgate churches. Sunday sermons will continue to draw a religious crowd, just as bars and restaurants draw their own patrons. However, the churches must be prepared to deal with a Northgate dedicated to opening its door to more bars and restaurants, a Northgate placing business ahead of religion.

Traditions more important than individuals involved

Texas A&M University is well-known for its rich history and strong traditions, attracting students from around the world because of its unity.

Over time, Aggies have gained new traditions and witnessed the death of old ones. Even if we don't like to admit it, our traditions are fragile. They are subject to changing attitudes and fluctuating cultural climates.

Traditions do vanish, but we are not always sad to see them go. In the early 70's, the student body enjoyed a time-honored tradition called "Quadding." Whenever a student earned a perfect score on a test, had a birthday or received a "Dear John" letter from his girlfriend, his friends would subject him to what now is considered hazing. A typical Quadding might involve dragging a student around campus in a

mattress casing or leaving the individual a few miles from his residence hall, wearing nothing except a large sheet.

The loss of this tradition has not devastated campus. Most would argue its removal has improved the University's environment.

While some traditions, like saying "Howdy!" are on the verge of extinction, new ones are continually developing. Ring dunking and Whoopstock are recent developments. Despite this natural cycle of "out with the old and in with the new," A&M still has a rich legacy which will continue far beyond many college careers.

A tradition lasts as long as students cherish it. About thirty years ago, the Stu-

Columnist



David Johnston
 Junior math major

dent Senate decided women were eligible to run in the Yell Leader elections. While a major decision, the institution of Yell Leaders remains unchanged because the student body wants to maintain the status quo. However, if students lose interest in a tradition, nothing can revive it. Student Senate, the Board of Regents or the U.S. Congress cannot force students to say "Howdy!" to each other.

For this reason, current debate over election run-offs may be a pivotal movement for future Yell Leaders.

Some current Yell Leaders, including Chris Torn and Jimbo Cross, have hinted they may separate their elections from the rest of the student body's if forced to

hold run-offs. While this move may have no impact on the general state of affairs, it is possible students will view the action as childish and arrogant. When Cross said, "We can make this a political issue if we want to," he presented himself as an opponent to the student body. If students lose respect for Yell Leaders, or begin to resent them, the effects could be devastating.

Yell Leaders must realize they serve the students. They should respond to a changing student body, be flexible and accommodate the student body to a reasonable degree. When the student body speaks

overwhelmingly in favor of a change, Yell Leaders can only hurt themselves by turning a deaf ear.

"We can make this a political issue if we want to."

Jimbo Cross
 Yell Leader

Unfortunately, this view may pass to other Yell Leaders who are truly concerned for A&M and its students.

Aggies love their Yell Leaders. These hard-working students are representatives of our University who show an enormous amount of spirit. Run-off elections are a small issue, and students want to have Yell Leaders far into the future. However, if the Yell Leaders are unwilling to grow with the University, they may be left behind.



MAIL CALL

Ebonics teaches method for learning

I am writing this letter to bring to light some of the misconceptions about Ebonics. Contrary to the news I have heard going around, the goal of Ebonics is not to institute a separate language for African-Americans, but to act as a method of teaching proper English to students who have trouble mastering the language in the current established curriculum. By acknowledging Ebonics as a native language for many students, teachers then translate from Ebonics to English instead of reprimanding students for speaking incorrectly. The program has positive documented results from tests performed in the late eighties and early nineties. Provided Ebonics could be taught correctly and efficiently, it could be a powerful method for raising African-American test scores in English.

However, the true debate should not be over whether or not Ebonics can act as an effective substitute for overcrowded classrooms, lack of sufficient funds, and unqualified teachers. Ebonics embodies not a conspiracy to render African-American students incompetent communicatively but a desperate attempt by the Oakland school district to come up with a straightforward shortcut for raising embarrassingly low test scores. Although limited testing of Ebonics has so far shown only successful results, this is more likely a commendation upon the involved instructors' teaching skills; as for the remaining teachers, giving them an amateur background knowledge of West African speech patterns may allow them to communicate better with their standards, but it doesn't guarantee to make them better teachers.

Andrew Carter
 Class of '99

Rights for some, wrong for others

In response to "Speak Freely" by Mason Jackson on Jan. 27

Freedom apart from restraint is not possible. Unchecked "freedom" is known as anarchy. "Freedom" which is uncontrolled nullifies the true freedom of others. Unfortunately, America has moved toward this chaos.

Because of the "rights" upheld by the American government for some, others have lost their rights. One right is the right to express "Judeo-Christian" views. These views are intolerable, because they hold a definite good and evil. Those who wish to express these views are many times not permitted to do so, and therefore their rights are effectively nullified. For example, safe sex is now being taught in schools. Most parents are not naive about the reality of sex, but some would like to offer abstinence as a viable option. Another right lost is the right to teach creation as a possible theory. Teachers are required to teach evolution as the only "scientific" theory of the beginning of life. However, many scientists are withdrawing support for evolution due to lack of supporting evidence. The government, however, refuses to recognize either of these rights, because they supposedly teach a religion. America has chosen to violate the freedoms of some groups by wholly supporting the views of another group.

Because of lack of control, there is chaos. There are no set values, because people no longer think there is a good and an evil, making everything acceptable in their situation. This results first in the breakdown of the family, because there are no standards in responsibilities or relationships. Affairs and abuse are commonplace. Secondly, crime flourishes, because there is no evil. Look at statistics. Both

situations are true of America. Chaos abounds.

There is hypocrisy in the politics of freedom, but it stems from giving one group too much at the expense of another. Freedom demands responsibility and restraint.

Daniel Huang
 Class of '00

Dance Team supports 12th Man

In response to "Aggie Dance Team Embarrasses Fan"

The Dance Team is filled with 27 young ladies, each giving 2 or more hours a day, six days a week, to support the 12th Man, and a very important part of it, Texas Aggie Basketball. The halftime show on January 15th consisted of an advanced jazz routine unlike anything a typical pom squad (such as that school in Austin has), much less a cheerleading squad, would perform. The Dance Team voluntarily gave up more than a week of their already short winter break to return to College Station and support the 12th Man and Texas Aggie Basketball. What did you do? Better yet, what have you done TODAY?

Katherine Shipman
 Class of '00

Stars and Bars — a legacy of racism and hatred

If you have ever watched *The Dukes of Hazard*, you may have noticed an icon which seems strangely familiar, yet out of place. No, not Daisy Duke's shorts. The symbol in question is the Confederate flag, which proudly adorns the roof of the General Lee.

However, the Confederate flag isn't limited to the borders of Hazard County.

An observant person can see it garnishing truck bumpers, T-shirts and residence hall rooms around campus. Although Bo and Luke thought the Stars and Bars the perfect accent for their muscle car, the Confederate flag is simply too dangerous a symbol to be appropriate in today's society.

South Carolina is having a difficult time learning this lesson. It is the only state in the union to fly the Confederate flag over its state capital. Last Thursday, the South Carolina House of Representatives rejected Governor David Beasley's proposal to remove the flag. The House then voted in favor of a referendum to let voters choose the flag's future.

Closer to home, the Dixie Cafe in Hearne, Texas, is known for its chicken-fried steak and Confederate decorum. Images of Robert E. Lee, Confederate soldiers and the "Old South" line the restaurant's walls. The cafe even uses a facsimile of the Confederate flag for its logo. To distance the cafe from the Confederate flag, the logo displays seventeen stars instead of the Stars and Bars' thirteen stars.

James Wolfe, general manager of the Dixie Cafe said, "The Dixie Cafe has been in Hearne for at least sixty years. The rebel flag has always been a part of the Dixie name as a logo." Wolfe emphasized the cafe's intent is to provide an atmosphere rich in Southern heritage.

"Southern food, Southern courtesy, Southern hospitality. This is what we're trying to promote," said Wolfe.

Many of the flag's proponents cite a desire to capture the chivalry and hospitality of the South as a reason to embrace it.

Unfortunately, for every person who looks at the Stars and Bars and sees the best of Southern culture, more see an endorsement of slavery and racism. The memories of slavery and racial injustice which prevail throughout our history scar America's collective memory. To selectively remember the nobility of the South is to forget the atrocities suffered by its enslaved population. On Texas A&M's doorstep, on University Drive,

Columnist



John Lemons
 Engineering
 Graduate student

Dinesh Perera sells flags, including the Confederate flag, at Robert's AggieLand Mobile station. Fortunately, Perera's business isn't based out of a Texaco Station; Texaco was accused of racism last fall.

Perera said, "They're [Confederate flags] the best-selling flag by far. We sell about ten to twelve a week."

"You have that connotation," Perera said when asked about racist sentiments evoked by the flag. "It exists, but most people I sell to are young people who embrace the flag as a sign of rebellion."

Perera said he doesn't sell the flag next to it for balance. I don't support the racist viewpoints associated with the [Confederate] flag."

While students may seek to embrace the message of rebellion by buying a Confederate flag, they unintentionally embrace a more ominous message. Hate groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the White Unity Party, use the flag to spread their racist agendas. Misuse of the flag by these groups has forever branded it an instrument of hate.

If you're interested in sending your own message of hate, you can own your own symbol of oppression and bigotry for a mere 12 dollars. The racial discord the Confederate flag creates negates the value gained by displaying

"To the majority of people who see it it's a symbol of racism and hatred."

Blake Sawyer
 L-1 Company Commander

it. It ignites a powder keg of emotions which impede the healing of this nation's race relations. Corps of Cadets Company L-1 formerly used the flag in its company logo. However, L-1 realized the use of the flag affected other groups. A year ago, the company decided to remove the flag from its logo.

Company Commander Blake Sawyer said, "To the majority of people who see it, it's a symbol of racism and hatred and that's not an image Company L-1 or the Corps of Cadets wants to portray."

Freedom of expression demands responsible use. The Confederate flag must go, not because it is evil, but because it hinders us from solving our racial problems. The flag divided the nation along state lines; it must not divide us racially. And I'm not just whistling Dixie.

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@tamvm1.tamu.edu