

Tuesday • July 29, 1997

# The fall of great expectations

## Immigrants face violence, harsh living conditions in the United States

George Hernandez, Melissa Dutchek and Trevor O'Reilly come to America with hopes of finding a better life filled with freedom, liberty and the chance to start their lives over. The first things they encounter, however, are enough to make anyone turn back and run from the United States screaming.

Opinion Editor



JAMES FRANCIS  
 Junior English major

treme and the names have been fabricated, occurrences such as these happen on a day-to-day basis without too many people knowing about it, and even fewer individuals who couldn't care less. Declaring America as a haven for refugees and immigrants has become a joke. For those individuals who think that coming to America means a better life, understand that this type of thinking died with the dinosaurs.

For too long, Americans have been under the misconception that this country is a centralized region where people's wildest dreams come true.

Sure, many individuals achieve great success in America; we have presidents, entertainers and corporation owners who started out with nothing, but now are living the life of luxury and everlasting public recognition. On the other hand, there are people who started from scratch, attempting to become these grand hopes we create, but today they find themselves living on the street with a sign hanging around their neck that reads, "Will work for food." Immigrants seeking shelter from mili-

tary-ruled governments and other places of horrific living conditions may want to think twice about coming to America. This is a country where it has become unsafe to even walk to your car in broad daylight, not to mention walking from a place of employment at night. America is in a constant state of change, each year becoming more violent than the next.

Not too long ago, Beaumont had the highest percentage of rape incidents in the nation, not just in Texas. If a small, industrial city such as Beaumont can become a place of such violence, what's to say that these immoral actions will not branch out into all of America?

"Webster's New Riverside University Dictionary" defines the term "American dream" as being "an American ideal of social equality and especially material success." Although too much emphasis always has been placed on the latter part of that definition, the first portion should be a historical notion to place in the memory of every U.S. resident, whether a citizen or not.

Social equality is a goal that many people in America have been trying to achieve. The problem is that this goal cannot be attained in conjunction with those individuals who come to America seeking a more desirable lifestyle. This is because we, as citizens of this great (in size, not yet in reputation) country, have not been able to make this objective a reality.

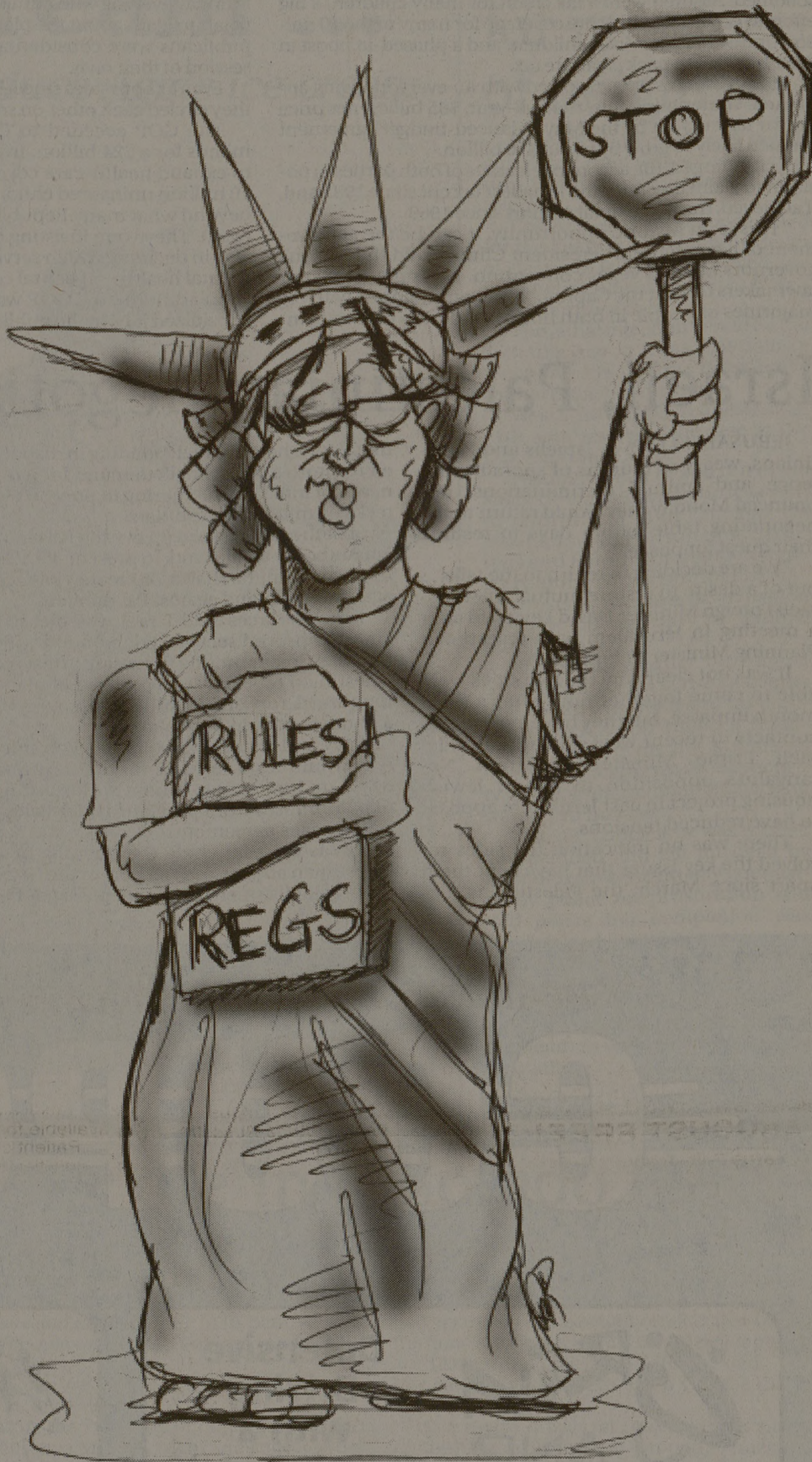
As all of these problems have been outlined, I must say that I do not have all the answers nor the justifications for what seems to be "bashing" of the American society. What can be said is that if everything was running like clockwork in this nation, there would be nothing to complain about or discuss.

Obviously, serious problems face this country, and they can only be solved by everyone uniting in order to form the "better world" we all seek. Every member of American society has a right and a duty to stand up for the problems that seem to surround us. Although it is a group action that will one day turn this society around for the better, the change must start with an individual.

The three people mentioned at the beginning of this column should not have had such experiences when they entered American territory. Each should have found a tiny part of the "apple pie" that always has been promised to all individuals who wish to enjoy a better life here.

This is not to say that everyone in this country will succeed in individual endeavors and become superstars, but by law, everyone should be able to have the chance to reach their highest goals. If they do not fulfill their destinies, at least people of this nation should feel better that people do have the opportunity to try.

In the end, when a boat full of immigrants docks in an American harbor, the individuals on board may want to reconsider their decision to live here before they set foot on American soil.



GRAPHIC: Brad Graeber



### MAIL CALL

#### Reveille, traditions must be honored

I did not have the opportunity to attend Texas A&M, but my husband graduated in 1995 and my son, who is eight, already has plans to go to A&M — they both bleed maroon and white. I may not be a "true Aggie" as far as actually attending, but through my husband and his family, I consider myself to be one, and I am very proud. The one thing that has been virtually engraved in my mind from anyone and everyone who has ever been to A&M is the time-honored traditions that all students hold in high regard. Therefore, you can imagine how shocking it was to hear that there were plans to relocate the Reveille graves.

Though I am not an A&M graduate or student, I was truly surprised. If one thing stands out the most to me, and probably to others as being the true heart of A&M, is the story, or "legend" if you will, of the very first Reveille and the Corps of Cadets' dedication to her. To me, Reveille and the Corps is what has held A&M together all these years, and it is what gives students such pride in their school, their professors and each other. My son has a dream of going to A&M and being in the Corps because of what he has learned about

the University and what he has seen on our many trips in walking about the campus. When he learned of the plans, he was very saddened.

I would think that all efforts would be made to maintain the graves in their current location, progress or not. It seems that something of such great importance in the hearts and minds of students, former students and wannabes like myself, would be a top priority, and that moving them would not even be a consideration. I am sure, if someone would just take time, a solution can be obtained.

I hope you get many letters, and I hope that action is taken to preserve one of the most important and stressed traditions at A&M.

Stacy D. Zatopek  
 Rockwall, Texas

#### Grave site problem has simple solution

Here is my suggestion for resolving the Reveille dilemma: Move the graves.

Install a closed circuit TV so that the scoreboard is always visible from the new grave site. With the TV, the entire action on the field can be shown, including the Aggie Band at halftime, R.C. Slocum on the sidelines and instant replays.

Hope this helps.

Henry Gilchrist  
 Class of '46

#### Uphold tradition by accepting change

Company E-2 and many other student organizations have never been in favor of moving the Reveille grave sites. In fact, E-2 has been on record since the conception of Kyle Field expansion in 1994 as being opposed to any plans that would endanger the tradition of our mascots' resting place. In a series of meet-

ings held last year between the athletic department and representatives from E-2, Traditions Council, Old Main Society, Yell Leaders and the Corps Commander, the students spoke overwhelmingly against moving the graves to fulfill the expansion.

The athletic department took this idea to the architects, who advised them that it was not feasible to maintain the graves' location and still be able to design a "first class facility." With that, the committee began looking into alternative solutions and decided upon temporarily moving them during construction. The final product will allow for another grave site to be integrated into the expansion. Unfortunately, according to the athletic department, it is just too late in the game. Hopefully these plans can be changed.

The students did not "choose" to move the graves, nor were they "in favor of" digging them up. No one holds the grave sites more sacred than members of Company E-2, who were responsible for their burial and maintaining their appearance throughout the year. Make no mistake, E-2 is not happy with the decision to move the graves.

We do not "hold our heads in shame," however, and neither do the other members of the committee to my knowledge. Students do not "support" changing the traditions that brought many of them here. Instead, E-2 and other student leaders have made the best of a bad situation to ensure that some remnants of our traditions remain intact.

Jeff King  
 E-2 Commanding Officer  
 Class of '98  
 Tase Bailey  
 E-2 First Sergeant  
 Class of '99  
 Lance Hill  
 E-2 Public Relations Sergeant  
 Class of '99

#### Despite trial, Cosby shows good example

In response to John Lemons' July 28 column:

Lemons' vilification of Bill Cosby shows how people can make unreasonable demands of their "heroes." "The Cosby Show" promotes family values with a degree of freshness and wit that could win over the most hardcore of libertines. By showing that cool people can have strong families, Cosby did a great service to people of all colors and nationalities. I personally have seen the show in Ecuador.

The series had a brilliant strategy. This tribute to television should far outweigh some of the sins in

Cosby's personal life. I say "personal life" because it is not our job to forgive him for his extramarital affair — that role belongs to his wife.

Perhaps some people will condemn him for paying his ex-lover "hush money" to keep the affair a secret. But if we look at the big picture, we should realize that because he is a role model, there is much more at stake for Cosby than his reputation.

I have little doubt that he placed a high value on the positive influence his show provided. Given that sex and violence sells, Cosby could have chosen a much more direct route to wealth if money was all that he valued.

I hope that "The Cosby Show" will continue to be watched by

families worldwide. As for those individuals who insist on putting celebrities on pedestals, you can watch "The Brady Bunch."

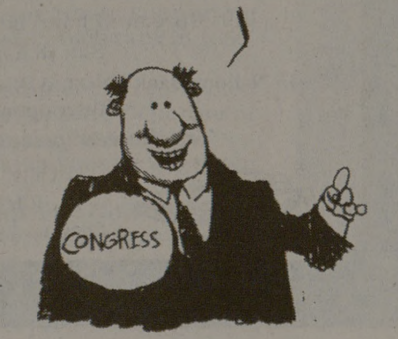
Antonio Chaves  
 Graduate student

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