

Passing the pigskin

American pastime scores big with ridiculous amounts of funding, fanatic support

What is it that compels overweight, middle-aged men to bear their flabby chests, painted o'er with vibrant colors, on national television in sub-zero temperatures? Maybe they possess an overwhelming love for their country. Perhaps they are expressing the joy of biting into a York Peppermint Patty. Or, they just might be looking for a job at Chip 'N Dales. No, they belong to that brainless, beer-bonging herd of football fans, commonly known as the "That guy just puked on my shoe!" guys.



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in bodily fluids secreting from places one did not even know existed. As droves of spectators migrate up ramps, little men in white outfits, known as "Yell Leaders" conduct screaming hordes of fans in monotone chants resembling the primitive grunts, yelps and mating calls of ancient peoples.

Why Americans choose to pay \$35 for a seat that does not even exist, \$5 for hot water, 25 cents to flush a toilet, \$8 for a hot dog which is nearly puked up by the third quarter and \$5 for a game program inevitably stolen is beyond me. Yet we habitually pack ourselves into these infernal pressure cookers like someone is handing out free crates of Twinkles and God is conducting a seminar on where all our missing socks are.

If some vengeful foreign dictator is desperately sought to damage the good 'ol U.S. of A., he could bomb the nation during Monday Night Football and piss off the entirety of the American male population, whose television receptions would go bad.

I admit I would rather watch football than, say, hours of Belgian korfbal or male ice skaters in pink spandex. However, I do not comprehend the ridiculous and barbaric ritual that is football.

Boys dress up in bright colors with little mascots pasted across their clothing. They then proceed to run up and down a little confined space so as to make themselves seem manly or deserving of social respect and honor. It is perplexing to me that sports figures are of such noteworthy importance in our hemisphere we will endure the agony of attending a football game and remain oblivious to the asinine costs.

These costs are exorbitant, and they could fund projects that are beneficial toward humanity, not just Fritos, Budweiser and Troy Aikman. Even here, at Texas A&M, our University holds a sport so dear we would rather make our stadium look like a horseshoe than fund an art or music major.

The University banks off the sports fans. Do they think they are just being "good Ags" and "humpin' it" at the games for fun? Think again. They are just helping to build an empire of im-

ages and titles that attract national attention, which attract national funds, attract more student fees, which pay the salaries, which win the games, which attract national attention,

which attract national funds ... Ah, football. It's more than a game.

Michelle Voss is a sophomore English major.



Student sentiment should be 'Put me in coach, I wanna play ...'

I never thought I would be playing football at Texas A&M University. I knew nothing about the infamous game that trademarks our country and dignifies our campus. I thought a Denver Bronco was the car my family rented in Colorado last summer, and as far as I was concerned the 49ers were a group of men about to celebrate their 50th birthday. To my knowledge, ESPN was an abbreviation for my major, Espanol, and a tackle was something my father used when he went fishing.



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ing tough. Starting on defense for Texas A&M were linebackers I'd heard only rumors about ... huge guys on campus, such as MSC, Student Activities, Student Government Association and someone named RHA. Cornerbacks were Opportunity and Leadership, sure to intercept during passes at campus involvement. Starting safeties were Advisors and Mentors, and right smack in front of me, just across the 50-yard line, was the defensive line of Faculty, Staff and Administration.

Needless to say, I was more terrified than Bevo at a calf fry. College was a football game and I had not the first clue how to play. Things such as Fullback and Tail back sounded more like hairstyles from the 1980s than part of my team.

Well, it's now the third quarter of my college football career and I feel like I've made some pretty decent plays. The center of my team, Academics, managed to score close to 4.0 points every semester. I've been tackled many times by applications from MSC, RHA, Student Activities and SGA. And even after a few broken bones, interceptions from cornerbacks Opportunities and Leadership have proven to be more than worth the sweat. My running backs, Activities and Organizations, have been on the go non-stop and getting stronger each year. Wide receivers, Faith and Free Time have finally been getting their fair share of passes and the attention they deserve. And the team couldn't have done it without my star players Family and Friends guarding it at all times.

So it's predicted I should win this game they call college, right? I mean, I'm choosing all the right plays and my team really seems to have it together. Not quite.

My Field of Dreams has come to life. "Build it

and they will come" is exactly what I did. I built my own team from scratch in hopes one day my dreams would come true.

But I still have one last field goal to score before this game is over. You know what completes goals in this world and wins the game? Certainly you retired football stars from high school remember. Any current Aggie players ... you know, too. The way you win at this game is the reason you play it in the first place.

It's called passion. People who play with passion will persevere.

You are the quarterback, and the team is your character. If you are a senior in the fourth quarter of the game, your team is probably pretty together. You freshmen in the first quarter are still building up your team and are probably as unsure and scared as I was. But no matter how strong you think you are, you absolutely cannot play this game without passion. The real victory in college is awarded to those quarterbacks who have their team together, possess the skills to take control of the game and the passion to persevere. For it is he with passion who surpasses the games of college to the grand championship called life.

What is this thing called passion, besides a costly fragrance for women so strong it could easily knock down a family of five in passing? I am certainly no expert and am still trying to figure that out for myself. Some examples that have knocked me down walking across campus are players such as Cass Burton, jersey number 00, who has already written his own book and is currently working on getting it published. Tausha Burns, jersey number 99 and a junior biomedical science major, is training for the Teneco Marathon and currently can run 14 miles in

one race. Ceci Hudson, jersey number 98 and a senior marketing major, is a decathlete, a member of the Fellows program and president of her sorority.

I am no Heisman Trophy recipient, so I have no credibility to persuade you to play the game of college with passion. You are your own quarterback and you decide what to do with your future. But I can tell you if you don't think you live your life with passion, you are probably right. Are you excited about your game or are you just jogging up and down the field, waiting patiently for the next timeout?

If your college game is spent only running back and forth between the library and class, then I feel sorry for you. And if you are so caught up in your popular players, running backs Activities and Organizations, that you have forgotten about equally important players such as Friends, Family, and Faith, then I am even sorer.

It is not enough to play the game with such minimal effort. I feel for you because I too have sat on the bench, watched from the sidelines and been just a number in the crowd.

Don't be satisfied with just playing the game. You are the quarterback, and your team depends on you. They are ready and just waiting for a little direction.

I may still think that America's reigning champs, the Packers, are some kind of courier service and that the Wrecking Crew is a towing company, but I can tell you I understand football well enough to know that in the game of life, even the 50-yard line seats won't do for me.

I came to play.

Kendall Kelly is a junior Spanish major.



MAIL CALL

Visual presentation upsets married couple

In response to the Sept. 19 Lifestyles feature, "Viz Lab gets a feeling of Vizja-Vu".

I was sufficiently interested to table all my other plans and take my wife out for the evening. The feature described the event as a two-hour screening of two- and three-dimensional computer graphics, animation and video projects created by Texas A&M students, presented by the College of Architecture's Visualization Laboratory. After all, I have attended

and enjoyed a number of similar animation festival programs at the Rudder complex in the past.

This one had the added bonus of being home-grown, so to speak. My wife and I were horrified, however, to discover a number of program elements in Vizja-Vu not mentioned in the favorable feature, including lewdness, misogyny and rampant profanity.

Due to the traffic we arrived late, so I have no idea how the show began. I do know, however, as soon as we entered the Rudder complex we were immediately bombarded by echoes of a diatribe with a vocabulary consisting of two words, both of them profane.

I thought perhaps some junior-high student had got hold of a microphone somewhere and was screaming his heart out. As we walked upstairs, however, the volume increased.

We stood before the Rudder Theater entrance and realized it was the source of our discontent. Surely this is not the place, we thought, but the sign did read

Viz-a-go-go, and this was Rudder Theater. Single-sheet programs were scattered on a table, littered down the side with titles such as Sperm Count.

As we stood there aghast, the horrible voice continued in ever-increasing volume, yelling about how much he hates his woman and all the things he'd like to do to her, each sentence underscored by faint half-hearted laughter.

My wife and I could not in good conscience go into that dark hole of depravity. We left disgusted, our evening ending on a much uglier note than it began.

If, as stated in the feature, Vizja-Vu truly represents a showcase of the top-quality works of the Visualization Laboratory, then I am disgusted that my tuition and fees go to support this kind of activity. In addition, The Battalion would do well to fully research the stories it publishes in the future, and provide warnings about vulgar content.

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