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# The more you know ...

students should take time to understand diverse world of other peoples' cultures



**KENDALL KELLY**  
columnist

I think this is the key for diversifying our country. Movements such as affirmative action are merely the beginning of conquering the ethnocentric personality of a large population of this country. The true success of hearing a harmony of cultures in America lies within the individual, and the easiest place for the individual to begin striking the right chords is in the University.

There are countless programs and a variety of entertainment to promote multiculturalism in College Station. What is multiculturalism, anyway?

It seems when students encounter this popular phrase, they are turned off, believing they will be forced to engage in some "feel good" activity. Multiculturalism simply means "many cultures." Anyone can educate themselves multiculturally.

Students need to take it upon themselves to interact with other cultures. For example, comedian Paul Rodriguez performed in Rudder Auditorium last month, and I think I was one of only a few students present who was not of Hispanic background.

Salsa and merengue lessons will be offered this Thursday as part of the Puerto Rican celebration, and it will come as no surprise if the students partic-

ipating in this fun and rare opportunity are, no doubt, Spanish or Latin American.

What a disappointment it is to those students who work to bring activities and out-of-the-classroom education to A&M and students are too busy or too ignorant to take part in learning a little something about someone else for a change.

Because "multiculturalism" means "many cultures," it consequently stands for the United States of America.

Our country is the prototypical melting pot for what the rest of the world will eventually become. We are no longer a world in which each country is its own boat racing against one another.

Instead, we represent a planet that will soon operate full-time on multi-national fuel. The United States is the captain of this ship. Have you made the individual decision to come aboard and realize the enrichment and opportunities other cultures have to offer? Or are you standing on the shore, waiting for the wave of affirmative action to come and wash away the borders that exist between cultures?

Instead of relying on affirmative action, students should take more individual actions to learn



more about someone other than themselves for a change.

Dr. Cullen, the keynote speaker for the Drive In for Diversity Conference last Friday said, "Hopefully people can

learn more about other peoples' cultures and why they choose to act or believe the way they do."

Herein lies the answer to having an equal and harmonious world. Because after all,

everyone has the same color of skin, just in different shades of brown.

*Kendall Kelly is a junior Spanish major.*

## Bush, CIA hold secret ties of government



**JOHN BURTON**  
columnist

"Freedom?" This somewhat cryptic question was spray-painted on a wall near the Pavilion during the week of the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum dedication, when hundreds of leaders of the world assembled in Aggieiland.

In the newly released book *Secrets: The CIA's War at Home*, the late investigative journalist Angus Mackenzie uncovered several controversial aspects of the recent history of the Central Intelligence Agency. As a staunch supporter of the First Amendment, his investigations as a reporter resulted in personal harassment by government agencies.

A particularly interesting aspect of Mackenzie's research focused on the reduction of American freedoms as a result of George Bush's role as director of the CIA.

Bush was appointed Central Intelligence Agency Director by President Gerald Ford, who, at the recent Library dedication, noted, "Bush joined the CIA at a most difficult time in our intelligence community." Indeed the agency was rampant with great scandal — domestic spying on U.S. citizens and involvement with Watergate were among the allegations made against the CIA at the time.

In his confirmation hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee in 1975, Bush spoke of "Operation MHCHAOS," a CIA domestic spying program which had been uncovered by the media.

He said, "This agency must stay in the foreign intelligence business and not harass American citizens, like in Operation MHCHAOS." At that time, however, CIA offi-

cial were still claiming MHCHAOS was only investigating foreign issues.

Oops, Bush had spilled the beans.

He later changed his position on the issue and adopted the official position of the CIA.

After being director for less than a month, Bush was confronted by the House Select Committee on Intelligence "Pike Report," named after U.S. Representative Otis Pike.

This revealing report detailed official findings of CIA extravagance. Among other things, the agency paid for extensive propaganda operations — incurred cost overruns of 400 percent above budget for foreign operations and 500 percent above budget for domestic operations.

Keep in mind the CIA should not be involved in domestic operations at all. Also, the agency had constructed a military capacity greater than most foreign armies.

The most shocking fact is the CIA's largest category of foreign secret projects involved the news media. The agency planted articles in newspapers, and distributed books and pamphlets around the world.

Often, this propaganda "information" was picked up by U.S. newspapers, thus leading Americans astray.

Bush handled these controversies with his charming and persuasive personality. In a meeting before the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, he issued a formal plea for reducing Congressional oversight. His lobbying was effective. Congress drastically reduced its own access to CIA secrets.

From then on, only the Senate and House Intelligence Committees would oversee the CIA. Also, President Ford — by issuing Executive Order 11905 — authorized Bush to allocate secrecy contracts in the entire executive branch and control all intelligence budgets.

As a result, Bush managed the CIA, the National Security Council and the National Reconnaissance Organization — as well as other agencies — for a total of 13 separate agencies in all. The New York Times noted Bush had more power — unchecked power — than any Director of Intelligence in history.

This power led to reductions of freedom for Americans.

New York Congresswoman Bella Abzug, an outspoken critic of the McCarthy witch hunts, had been spied on by the CIA for 23 years. She testified before a House subcommittee, blasting the CIA for its domestic spying activities.

Rather than eliminating, or at least reducing spying on Americans, Bush responded by organizing the Publications Review Board in 1976. This was the first U.S. government censorship body established during peacetime. Its purpose was to censor the writings and speeches of CIA officers.

In 1976, while Americans were celebrating our country's bicentennial and the freedom it represented, Bush was squelching some of the very freedoms upon which our country was founded.

The Publications Review Board was a pivotal accomplishment for Bush. It was a near-foolproof system in preventing negative disclosures and Congressional inquiries, as well as effectively quieting public outrage. Yet Bush never mentioned it when running for office. Likewise, the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum and Web page fail to mention the significance of the Publications Review Board.

It is fitting that a portion of the Berlin Wall, a symbol of government secrecy, is located at the George Bush Center.

But what about "Freedom?"

*John Burton is a junior bioenvironmental science major.*



### MAIL CALL

**Arts funding, taxing proves dry in writing**

*In response to Robby Ray's Nov. 14 "The Art of the Sale" column:*

As a human and an artist, I was sickened by the narrow-minded capitalist viewpoints expressed in Ray's column.

I consider it an insult to Aggies to say the closest they come to the arts is walking by the J. Wayne Stark Gallery in the MSC. Programs such as MSC OPAS and the Stark Galleries would not have lasted long without support from A&M.

The argument presented about the NEA supporting "pornography" and "excrement" is straight out of the Jesse Helms "School for Cultural Ignorance."

Art is freedom of expression, and I pose the question: how many people would say Michelangelo's David is pornography?

Another point made was only political and religious freedom, not artistic freedoms, are protected by the Constitution.

Where would religious icons and other related art fall under this theory? How many communities would support funding for a military statue or a stained glass window?

Maybe these would be considered moral artistic expenditures. The only word for trying to impose that kind of regulation on art is "wrong."

There is no such thing as a moral majority, just a bunch of people who fear free thought and difference of opinion.

To believe we have much of a say in the destiny of tax dollars is naive. The government is a business, and we are its patrons.

I disagree stealth bombers are more important than art; without art, society would fall into despair.

Those who feel differently may be forgetting all of the different ways art can be expressed. It could be an uplifting story, a picture in a book or magazine, a greeting card and even journalism ... usually.

Those who deny the role of art in society and in culture are often afraid of the reflection it portrays.

*Kathryn Stephenson graduate student*

I myself do not mind spending 38 cents a year in taxes on the National Endowment for the Arts (that's the \$99.4 million budget divided by 260 million Americans), especially when less than 1 cent goes to projects that could be argued as being obscene.

I find it ironic Ray, who works in a profession constantly screaming free speech is the most important American right, would demand a

public election to determine exactly what kind of art is eligible to receive a portion of my 38 cents.

Ray said, "If taxpayers are not allowed to determine where their money goes, then the entire program should be eliminated." In that case, it would be far more relevant to Texas A&M students to be able to vote on what appears in *The Battalion*, a college newspaper funded by a state-mandated tax of \$1 per year in student fees — this is nearly three times what it pays for the NEA.

If students were able to vote on *The Battalion's* contents, I suspect many poorly written, under-researched columns published this year, including this one, would never have seen the light of day.

*Lynn Leifker Class of '96*

Ray seems to argue the rich should have to shoulder the burden because public funding for the arts is too controversial. Besides, art is not as essential as other government activities such as national defense.

Ray is correct on this but he seems to miss the point art has been publically funded not because of its importance but because, like national defense, it is considered a public good. It could be possible to force the richest people to bear all the costs of defending the country, but it would be unfair since the armed forces work for the benefit of everybody, not just the rich.

In the same way, if the arts were funded by a small group of people, it would mean the artistic output would belong to them, or at the very least, they could determine the content of the art the public gets to see based on their own interests.

For example, if only the rich funded the arts, it would be impossible to produce a piece of art that questions capitalism. I am not saying there are better economic systems than capitalism, but simply, artists tend to show us the down side of things many of us are incapable or unwilling to perceive.

I think there should be some public funding for the arts for the same reason there is some public funding for scientific basic research: it may not serve any purpose at the start, but there is a chance eventually it may yield a considerable payoff for society in the overall scope.

*Dennis Muzza Class of '93*

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For more details on letter policy, please call 845-3313 and direct your question to the opinion editor.



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