

Tuesday • November 18, 1997

# Cheesy on the eyes

*Aesthetics of architecture on campus do not live up to rich cultural history*



**DAVE JOHNSTON**  
columnist

While the eccentric sleep habits of students are widely celebrated, there is no reason to mandate campus with buildings so drab that visitors are unable to overcome the boredom the structures induce.

Texas A&M is an old campus with a rich history. The buildings on campus reflect an era where designers paid attention to aesthetics.

Most of the buildings that have been standing on Aggeland for many decades are unique. All Saints Chapel, one of the most attractive buildings on campus, resembles an open garden. The Academic Building, which was built with industrial strength concrete walls, is a distinctive edifice that is nice to look at even though it is not practical.

Not all of the older campus buildings are outstandingly beautiful, but they are still special. The Old Main, close to thirty years old, was heavily criticized when it was first built. Students complained about the "bunker-style" wall in the main hallway, the bizarre designs on the walls upstairs, the expensive and gaudy cowhide benches. Although maybe unattractive, these features combined to make a distinctive building that is unique on campus.

Unfortunately, recent additions to the campus landscape are not distinctive, but are better described as "monuments to the architect's boredom."

Most residence halls on campus are merely replicas of each other. If not for an occasional Legett or Hart, visitors would think they were wandering in circles as they tour campus.

The University has spent plenty of money on new campus buildings.

Millions of dollars have gone to landscaping, maintenance and replacing the flowers near the Academic Building every time the weather changes, but the University skimps when it comes to aesthetic design. Most of the new buildings are heavy on angles and short on ornamentation.

There are a few hints of attractive design among the new campus structures. The Rec Center has a few rare components making it resemble an air traffic control tower. The Reed Arena has a few corners which have been rounded to make them less offensive. The George Bush Library, however, falls into both categories.

The Bush Museum is certainly striking and photogenic, but the Bush School is blocky and sterile. The school and the conference center are both large buildings.

Their intimidating size is only accentuated by the fierce angles and mundane design. Walking down the halls of the Bush School, students wonder if they got lost and wound up in a hospital or perhaps a high school from the late sixties.

Some Aggies are trying to preserve the campus's great architecture. Old Main Society unsuccessfully attempted to prevent demolition of DeWane Field House and Puryear and Law halls.

Saving campus treasures is only a partial solution. The administration should strive to create



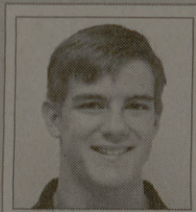
more attractive buildings.

Campus is growing quickly, and when budgets are stretched anything "pretty" is expendable. Yet administrators should heavily consider how long A&M will be stuck with these ugly campus structures.

A&M has one of the most attractive campuses in its size, but serious measures must be taken to make sure it does not soon become one of the largest eyesores in public education.

*Dave Johnston is a senior mathematics major.*

# Republican members personify hypocrites, not ambassadors



**CHRIS HUFFINES**  
columnist

Real ambassadors have just a little decorum and enough dignity to wait more than five minutes before being given the heave-ho. It took McLaren and Otto less than a minute.

Another thing real ambassadors do is have real lawyers representing them. McLaren and Otto pretty much refused their court-appointed attorneys. Which is why they were thrown out so often, they kept objecting during jury selection, while the judge was instructing the jury. For those of you who are not legal-savvy, jury instruction is pretty difficult to object to. As Students' Attorney Rick Powell said, objecting during jury selection is simply dumb. Protesting the fact that the judge is trying to tell the jury to be fair and impartial doesn't make any sense, either.

Finally, real ambassadors realize that when the country they are representing impeaches them, they no longer represent that country.

As Chief Ambassador of the Republic of Texas Ray Wanjura said, the Republic impeached and then disowned McLaren. Wanjura further speculated that it was McLaren's inability to cope with the loss of his position that led to his "reckless and distraught behavior."

The humor here is that the Republic of Texas actually is right. Without going into the issue (which is not the issue here), the absorption of Texas back into the Union after the Civil War wasn't handled correctly, given our status at that

point as a separate nation. However, every reasonable individual in Texas believes they are a part of the United States, meaning that, regardless of the moth-eaten treaties the Republic keeps referring to, the people believe they are citizens of the United States of America.

As is spelled out quite clearly in the Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Texas (1836), "When a government no longer reflects the will of the people, it is no longer that people's government and the people have every right to dissolve it and seek a new government. Also, in the Constitution of the Republic of Texas, all powers not given to the state are the province of the people."

In English, this means that because the people of Texas want to be a part of the United States of America, the Republic has absolutely no right to demand Texas be recognized as a separate country. It's called popular sovereignty.

The people of Texas seem to be quite happy with being a state. The Republic of Texas is hypocritically in violation of its own Declaration of Independence and its own constitution, the two documents that most defined the country. Further, the Republic is refusing to act like a legal government but more like a group of preschoolers squabbling over the sandbox. They are not our government.

*Chris Huffines is a sophomore speech communications major.*



## MAIL CALL

### History skimmed by feminist column

*In response to Mandy Cater's Nov. 13 "Contributions of feminist movement continue to remain unrecognized today" column:*

Cater brought up valid points about Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony; her inclusion of Margaret Sanger brings up some interesting historical points.

She is right in saying that Sanger "was a major force in legalizing and raising public awareness about birth control." She did not, however, campaign for all women to have access to birth control, only those she and the others like her deemed undesirable.

She was the founder and publisher of *Eugenics Quarterly*. The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines eugenics as "the study of hereditary improvement of the human race by controlled selective breeding."

Sanger wished to control the breeding of, among others, blacks, Jews, Italians, Irish and Catholics; in other words, anyone who was not a white Anglo-Saxon Protestant.

In fact, she was highly supportive of German efforts to build an Aryan race until the outbreak of World War II, when she changed the name of her organization to Planned Parenthood. Actions such as holding Margaret Sanger up as some sort of feminist saint are exactly the reason why many modern women choose to disassociate themselves with feminism. Yes, I enjoy the right to vote and have a career but I will never view Margaret Sanger with anything but contempt, and suggesting that she is on the same plane as Stanton and Anthony is a travesty.

*Christina Weston*  
Class of '97

The problem with this issue (as with many other issues of political focus) is that over the course of time, women have taken their desire for equality to an absolute extreme.

Notice, though that Cater states in her column that, "Feminists are women who want to be able to create their own destinies," when in fact, the statement should read, "Feminists were women..." Instead of promoting the characteristics of female nature, feminism has now become an organized front for male suppression and intolerance. Feminists no longer want to just "create their own destinies."

Instead, they want special privileges and specific rights — not equality. It is a complete disgrace to think that women today are so wrapped up in promoting themselves, that we have forgotten to appreciate the individual and unique aspects of each sex.

As a woman, I personally admire and respect the aggressiveness of the male gender, and their desire to provide for and protect us — "the weaker sex" (1 Peter 3:7). I sincerely hope and pray that the feminist movement, as it continues, does not destroy the minimal amount of dignity and respect that seems to be left in America.

*Crystal Ridgeway*  
Class of '00

### Republican morals smell of hypocrisy

*In response to John Burton's Nov. 12 "Campaign funding wires up Republicans' column:*

In an environment in which banal, paint-by-numbers conservatism is accepted with little thought or question, Burton's sharp critique correctly revealed the hypocrisy evident in many high-ranking Republican officials.

Many Republicans are making a career of accusing President Clinton of wrongdoing, despite lacking any evidence to support these claims. But when Republicans are caught funneling money from ostensibly nonprofit organizations, there is no such indignant outcry from within the GOP.

Republicans almost have been fanatical in their drive to oust President Clinton and Janet Reno from office. Numerous investigations (at great costs to taxpayers) have turned up nothing but crumbs, no evidence of any impropriety at all — but the GOP still howls for blood.

Of course, the strict Republican moral standards only apply to Democrats. After Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich heavily was fined for serious ethical violations, Bob Dole ponied up the money for his friend, and no serious attempt was made to as Gingrich to step down. Senator Fred Thompson, a Republican, has suspended hearings on possible Republican improprieties, choosing instead to joust at the windmill of campaign finance reform.

And who could forget Senator Drew Nixon, a Republican currently serving a jail sentence for soliciting a prostitute?

The Republicans would like nothing better than to be the

self-appointed custodians of ethics in American government, but their record hardly justifies it. The Romans had a saying: And who will guard us from the guards themselves.

*Michael Schaub*  
President of Texas Aggie Democrats  
Class of '99

### Puerto Rican Week showcases diversity

*In response to Kendall Kelly's Nov. 17 "The more you know..." column:*

I commend Kelly's column concerning the lack of effort by others to learn about other cultures. As a member of the Puerto Rican Association, I have witnessed the dismay of other members wishing to establish a bridge with other cultures.

We have tried time and again to promote activities to kindle new friendships and understandings of different backgrounds, be they white, black, Hispanic, Asian or whatever. This is what our organization stands for: to create a means in which others can be exposed to our culture (and hopefully have a little fun with it, too.)

Is multiculturalism so terrible? Why does it seem people are so afraid to learn about each another? Perhaps if we all learned more about each other and set aside our stereotypes, this world would be a better place (this may sound like some Disney song.)

Having planned events welcome to anyone and everyone this week, the Puerto Rican Association has done its part, and hopes others will do theirs.

It is wrong to assume I am saying all of this merely because I am Puerto Rican. I luckily have not been subjected to any discrimination or attacks on my race as a student here.

I do not ignore racism exists, but I do not see myself as a victim. I am, however, saddened by the fact some people are unwilling or uninterested in the broadening their horizons. As Aggies attending a "world-class" university, we should realize there is no better time to do so.

I hope to see many people participating in our events (schedules are posted in the MSC.) And when we celebrate the end of the week dancing to lively music (in the Ramada Inn on Friday night), maybe we can see being colorblind really is not all that bad.

*Daniel Ramirez*  
Class of '99

MIKE LUCKWICH ATLANTA CONSTITUTION



### Feminists take equal to extreme

*In response to Mandy Cater's Nov. 13 "Contributions of feminist movement continue to remain unrecognized today" column:*

I would like to make a few points of clarification. First of all, I agree that the feminist movement is very alive and active in our country. In fact, I was rather surprised that columnists are under the impression that it has become a dead issue.

And yes, I agree that we owe a lot to the women in America's history who fought for the right to vote, among other "feminist" battles.

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less 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:

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013 Reed McDonald  
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77843-1111

Campus Mail: 1111  
Fax: (409) 845-2647  
E-mail: Batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu