

## Everyday motivation should be determined by positive attitudes

**W**hy are we here? Every person has asked this question at least once. If not of others, then of ourselves. Some say we are here to suffer. They're wrong. Others say they have the answer and it lies in religion. They too, are wrong. I have the answer. But I am alone.



**MASON JACKSON**  
columnist

Most people innately know why we are here, but they deny most of their life denying it. If they don't deny it, they are denied it by those who live in ignorance of our true purpose for being.

And that is ... to have a good life. And to illustrate my point, I come up with a rhyme.

*It starts with a feeling,  
Sometimes it's called wood.  
But the final result is  
You sure do feel good.*

*You should do what you want  
If you feel that it's right.  
Even though if you're wrong,  
They'll lock you up tight.*

*So follow your heart,  
And follow your soul.  
And if they tell you to,  
Then go smoke a bowl.*

*But use some good sense,  
Your brain if you can.  
A lack of forethought  
Is a weakness of man.*

*No I do not know why  
We do what we do.  
But "original sin"  
Sure never was true.*

*We just have some tendencies,*

*Which can be undone.  
Though instead of them all,  
I'll list only one.*

*It's easy to be cynical,  
I've done it many times.  
And what I've come to see is  
It's the greatest of these crimes.*

*Yes, you've got to believe  
That the least you can get  
Is the absolute top,  
Any less would be ...*

*That last verse was corny  
I know this is true.  
But if that's how they come,  
Then what can you do?*

*At this point in my story,  
You've probably grown tired.  
That is, of course,  
Unless you are wired.*

*So I'll end it now,  
I think that I should.  
And for no other reason  
Than that's what feels good.*

The point, my friends, is that people should be motivated by a positive emotion, like the happiness a person gets by living their life the way they want to.

Too often, peoples' actions are motivated by negative emotions, the blatant ones like fear, hate and jealousy, and the subversive ones like guilt and servitude.

If someone's life doesn't turn out like they envisioned, it's likely because they spent too much of their energy trying to please people other than themselves.

This is the last column I'm writing for The Battalion, and the last piece of advice I have to give is this: follow YOUR dreams; it's a long and winding road, but it's always worth the trip.

*Mason Jackson is a senior marketing major.*

# Mature viewers only

Blatant nudity in music videos shows American standard

**"S**mack my bitch up." These words have been immortalized by the techno-enhanced band Prodigy in its latest video. Not only is the video a clear depiction of raw pornography, but the phrase itself represents a definite decline in respectful attitudes toward women.



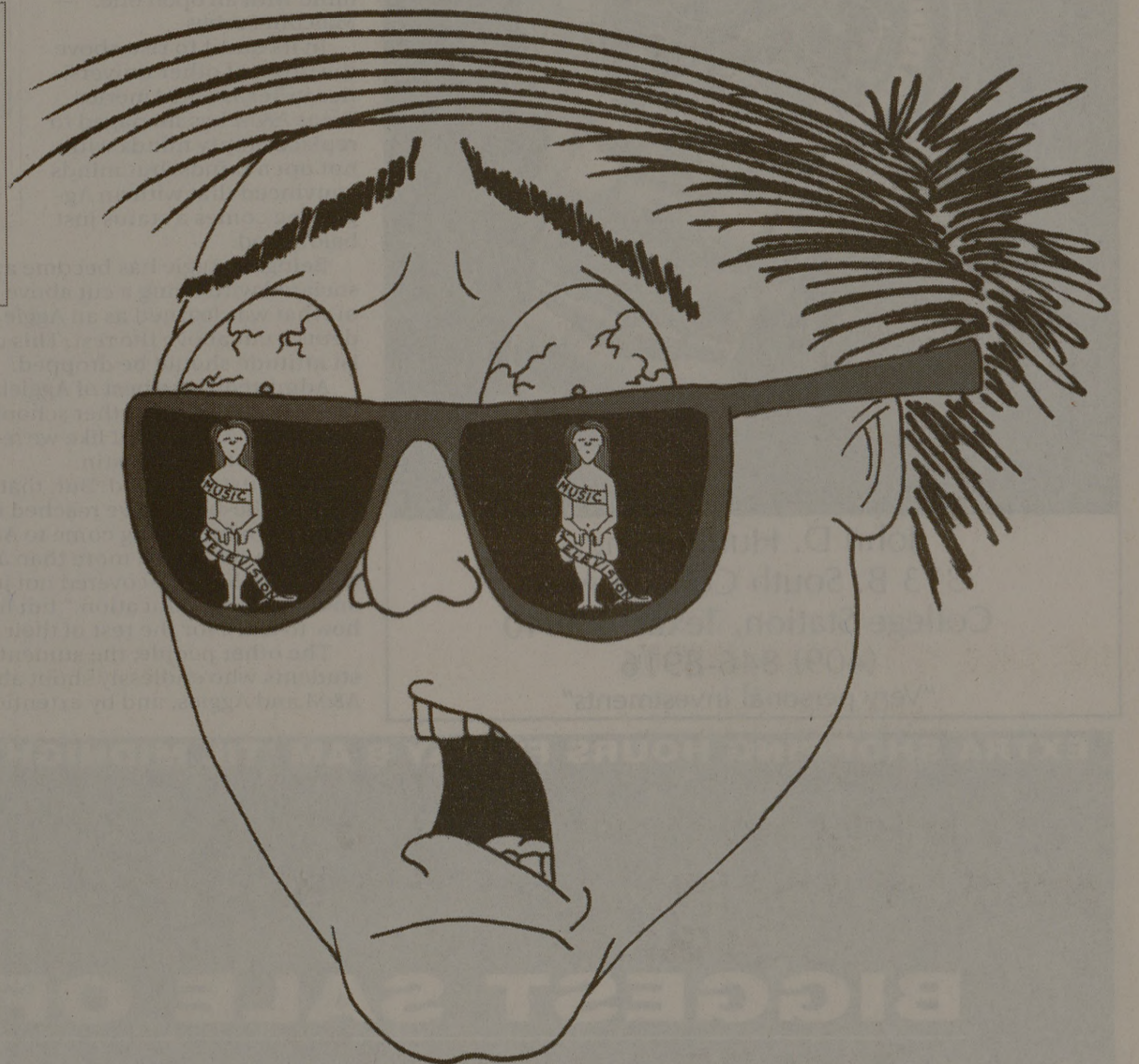
**JAMES FRANCIS**  
opinion editor

As of today, my position as Opinion Editor for The Battalion has reached its reign's end. Many readers will shout, "Good, his columns were always complaining about how immoral and backwards America and its people are," but this is not the image I wish to leave behind. I feel, however, compelled to relinquish my duties in something more than just your usual "farewell my concubine" end-of-the-semester column.

I choose, therefore, to discuss a most powerful entity in today's society, affecting millions across the nation and spanning the globe. What I want to talk about is Music Television (MTV), and its contributions toward the decline of the American society as a television-viewing audience.

It all started, or at least was egged on by, with a young musician by the one-title entertainment name of Madonna. She sang the controversial lyrics to "Like a Prayer," and suddenly the nation was in uproar over maligned religious undertones and ambiguous moral standards presented in the music video which appeared on MTV.

These days, Marilyn Manson can be seen flashing his bare bum on MTV, stretched across a sofa and turning toward the camera in order to give the world a glance at his personal life. This has nothing to do with



the art or simple process of making a music video. It has, furthermore, no relation to the lyrics that comprise the song.

It was once said "art imitates life," but if Manson's video is any implication of what our lives should adhere to, I suggest everyone start heading for high-water countrysides.

In Prodigy's current video, the last 45 seconds leaves the viewer's eyes filled with images of an "alternative" woman who comes in to a hotel or apartment bedroom and begins to

strip away her bra and underwear. After the bra comes off, her bare breasts are bared for all the world to see ... on MTV, a television broadcast channel that exists to promote diversity in music and entertainment news, not random visual shots of a naked woman. In addition to her breasts being shown, the camera zooms in to give close-ups of her buttocks.

At the conclusion of the video, the woman is displayed seated on a bed (full camera shot) with her legs held together

just enough to cover her "private parts."

From now on, MTV should be recognized as Misogynistic TeleVision, and the viewing audience that clamors for more should realize it is supporting a terrible decline in morals and ethics in this nation.

All decline starts somewhere, and these first two music videos represent a downward spiral of the American society.

*James Francis is a junior English and journalism major.*

## And a caroling we will go ...

Corps of Cadets go Christmas caroling, but miss meaning of holiday by attempting to secure women's undergarments

The holiday season brings with it an exciting blend of traditions, both new and old. Among the most recent additions to AggieLand's winter landscape are the warm and welcoming halos of lights that adorn the roofs of most of the residence halls, courtesy of RHA's Deck the Halls Program. Other events have brightened New Main Drive and other University entrances.



**ADAM COLLETT**  
guest columnist

Representing the old guard the time-honored tradition of caroling. Each year the leaves fall and the cool winds pick up, various groups tour the campus spreading the season's greetings through the gift of song. Except for the occasional flat note, the perils from such an activity would seem minimal.

Each season, however, male members of numerous Corps units dress in make-shift angel suits and the female and coed halls. There, they patrol the perimeter of each building, loudly singing holiday tunes and openly supplicating those they serenade to throw down bras and panties. This heretofore publicly unquestioned practice provokes two questions: (1) Why are these young men collecting men's undergarments? (2) Why are these young men giving them away?

David Sahn of the Corps of Cadets. When Sahn graduated from A&M in 1982, Corps caroling was restricted to freshmen singing to the upperclassmen in their buildings during dead week. When Major Sahn returned to work for the Corps in 1988, the tradition had already evolved into the current practice of visiting other halls.

As for the begging for bras, Sahn had no information on the origin of the practice, but expressed regret that the well-intentioned tradition had regressed into something negative. The caroling is not an official activity, but word was passed to the units on December 8 that the practice should be stopped because of complaints by the residence halls.

I spoke to several parties to gain some insight into the motives of the women who are casting away their Jockeys. Re'Shanda Grace-Bridges, Graduate Hall Director for Spence/Keist, suggests that the serenades are flattering and that the residents like the attention; hence, they are more than willing to comply with the requests for undergarments. Grace-Bridges reports that because of the tradition, some residents even go out and buy extra cheap underwear.

Nora Stegall, a resident of Leggett Hall, indicated that although many residents seem to enjoy the singing, most would just as soon not be asked for their undergarments. While Stegall admits that the practice is not particularly offensive to her, she adds, "I don't find it flattering to be asked for underwear."

Becki Elkins-Nesheim, Coordinator of the Gender Issues Education Services office, believes one issue central to this debate is respect.

"We need to treat each other with respect," she said. "How respectful is it to be begging for underwear? What's that about?" As to the question of whether the practice is downright sexist, Elkins-Nesheim laments that at A&M, this is not the general perception.

"On a different campus ... people would undoubtedly tell you that it is sexist and degrading, but here, people don't necessarily see that," she said. "But just because there's this culture here that accepts it, that doesn't make it right. And it's not just men contributing to this culture, it's women as well."

The conventional wisdom touted in defense of this practice is that the carolers earn the bras and panties flung down to them by traversing campus on chilly nights while underdressed.

While this dedication is perhaps worthy of praise, it does not excuse the fact that the practice of asking for underwear is at least disrespectful. And more likely, it is degrading and sexist, and thus vitiates what otherwise could be a point of pride for our campus.

Although the Corps administration is taking positive steps to stop the caroling outright, I believe that it's fair to give those involved the opportunity to correct the situation and thus maintain a positive tradition. In that regard I have some advice for both parties:

Young men, it appears as though at least some of the females enjoy your attention, but would rather not have to surrender their underwear to gain it. So keep coming around and keep singing, but do it for the right reasons and please stop panting for panties.

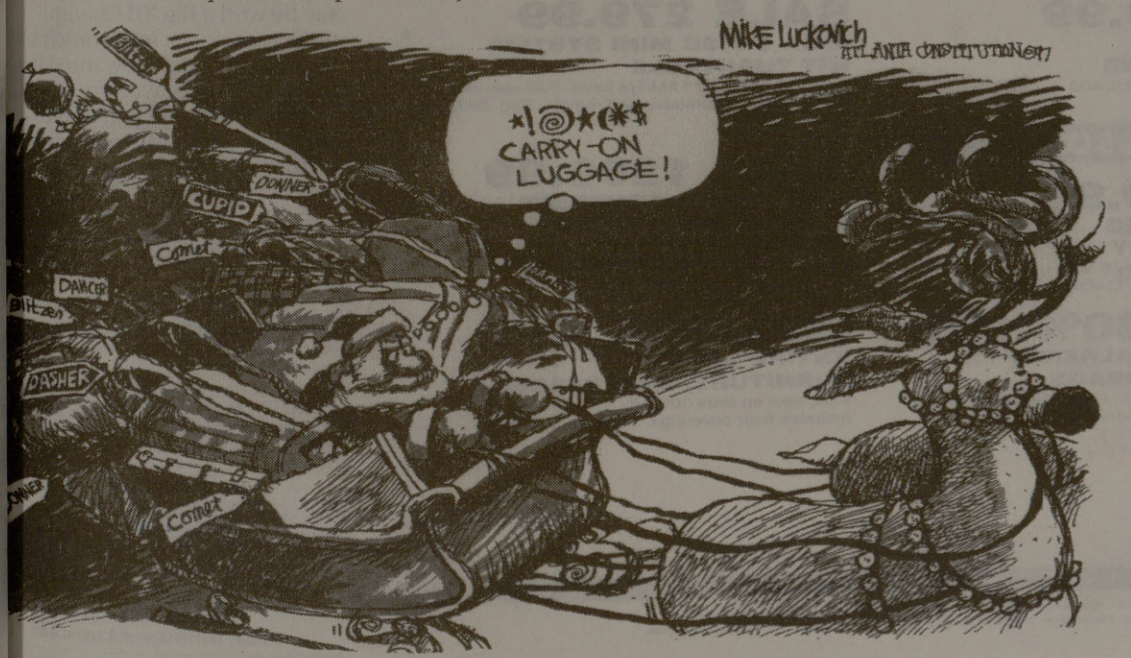
If you're sincere and serious, your efforts will be appreciated and you can leave your panty bags at home. And while we're talking change, here's an even more outrageous suggestion: have the entire unit go, men and women alike, and visit all the halls. After all, everyone could use a little holiday cheer.

And, young women being wooed, the next time a Corps unit or any other group appears on the grass outside your building, throw open your sashes and listen and enjoy for a time. When they are through and you want to express your gratitude, think twice before throwing your underwear, and instead think of all the other ways you can express what you feel. Tell them thank you.

Wish them happy holidays. Heck, for that matter, get contact information from one of them and invite the unit to your next hall program. Or best of all, find out where they live, and organize a group to return the favor by caroling outside of their windows.

So happy holidays everyone. Have fun, drive safely, sing a little and listen to others sing. But for heaven's sake ... keep your clothes on.

*Adam Collett is an educational administration graduate student.*



## MAIL CALL

Continued from Page 14

### Hate crime column confuses atheism

In response to Robby Ray's "Religious Liberties No Longer Sacred in America" column:

Robby, I'm shocked and disappointed. Who are you to draw conclusions that a crime committed by a very sick boy against his classmates was a religious hate crime?

If you have more evidence, then please present it, but in your column you mention the only thing separating this boy from his classmates was he was an atheist and they were Christian.

Are we to follow your false logic that since this is the only possible niche for a hate crime, then it must be the reason?

On the contrary Robby, I'd like to point out that atheists are peaceful people on the whole.

Arabs and the Israelites fight because their religious ideas do not peacefully co-exist.

The Pilgrims fled to America because their religions were being oppressed.

But, in this case, there is less reason to assume there was any religious tension than if the boy had been discovered to be a Methodist and had shot at only Baptists.

The reason I state this is because atheism intrinsically implies no religion. The only hate

crime I see here is a Christian looking for reasons to blame atheists, but perhaps this is a little harsh.

Let me make you aware that few atheists hate Christians and I can't believe anyone would ever commit such atrocious crimes in the name of a lack of religion.

*Andrew Cox Class of '01*

### R.C. Slocum proves detrimental to team

This letter is in response to Jamie Burch's "Aggies still a long way from playing with college football's elite programs" sports article:

PLEASE SEE MAIL CALL ON PAGE 16.