

R-E-S-P-E-C-T (just a little bit)

Faculty, staff and students should be polite, take each other seriously

As students make their daily rounds at Texas A&M, they also are faced with the immense and infamous Aggie bureaucracy system of support. The end of last semester and the recent registration process have not done much to improve the views of the support staff at A&M, but it appears as if the time has come for a reconciliation between the bureaucratic support staff and the A&M student body.



LEN CALLAWAY
columnist

Over the course of the past several semesters, numerous horror stories have surfaced about student involvement with the rank and file of the beloved administration and the "attitudes" to be encouraged when dealing with certain departments.

Personal experiences have left something to be desired from time to time, and a time for a new approach to customer service.

In all fairness, there also are stories flying around certain faculty chain-smoking lungs regarding students "demanding" things, that or the other thing and not understanding why they did not have it 10 minutes ago.

Both sides have a relatively convincing and overly dogmatic manner in which each side is slandered with too many adjectives to mention here. The important thing to remember is that each view is relevant, and one can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. A more calm, rational and patient approach to problem solving would alleviate the pressure left by most negative encounters and allow for increased productivity.

Students, because of the sheer importance of every infinite detail of their relationships with A&M, are prone to believe that whatever problem or situation they are working on at the time is the most important and pressing problem ever encountered by humankind.

With this abrasive attitude, it is easy to push oneself to the brink of an all-out verbal assault when faced with the less-than-enthusiastic staffer waiting for the proverbial 5 o'clock whistle. Needless to say, without verbal assaults rarely serve as an effective motivator (but they are fun if done properly). More often than not, a well-timed smile along with a pleasant tone of voice is adequate to garner a positive and willing-to-help attitude from even the most rigid staffer.

From time to time, students are faced with the staffer who just woke up and decided he or she would not do anything today no matter what, and every student can just "have a seat, and we'll call you when we get a minute."

Usually, about an hour later, the student is told that the person they need to talk to only came in for half a day, "but you can try again tomorrow," and "good luck."

Hey guys, this attitude is unacceptable and students should stop wasting time. Go home and call the department head and file an official complaint against the staffer and ask to deal only with the department head in the future.

After 10 or 15 such phone calls, and new personal responsibilities, usually the rude staffer becomes harder to find in the office and things become easier to accomplish. Hold the department heads responsible for the actions of their staff and for the quality of service to be had in their departments.

On the other hand, if one takes a minute, the position of the less-than-pleasant career staffer is also pretty easy to understand.

After weeks, months or even years of dealing with the above mentioned now-or-never students from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., they just do not care anymore. Today has its faces, and those faces have their problems. Tomorrow will have new faces and new problems. Regardless, the scenario stays the same: So what the hell, "Where's my Igloo vodka caddy and my Carlton 120s—these kids suck and lunch isn't for two hours."

They're stuck and impatient with the hum-drum and immediately panicked existence of an Aggie.

To remedy this situation, several new endeavors should be undertaken by the faculty and students of A&M in hopes of getting back to that "friendliest-campus-in-the-world" attitude.

First, students and staffers alike should attempt to interact with one another with an almost weird air of friendliness. Challenge yourselves. People will find that they generally stay in a better mood, thus one is in a better position to roll with the A&M punches.

Second, every staffer at A&M should be made to wear a nametag while at work. People like to hear their own name and having the ability to refer to someone by their name immediately makes the relationship and subsequent interaction more personal, thereby, at least theoretically improving the odds for attaining satisfying results.

Department heads are, for the most



part, calm and well-educated people willing to go the extra mile for students if at all humanly possible. Plus, by having a staffer's name, students have the ability to let department heads and deans know of inappropriate behavior.

Third, much for the same purpose as mentioned above, the Student Services

Committee of the Student Senate should work to create an effective "compliment/complaint" card much like the one located at the A.P. Beutel Health Center to be posted in convenient locations on the A&M campus. This might increase the feedback to department heads and help rectify some of the "attitudes."

Several members of our upper-scale administration are in favor of these actions and their implementation could only serve to improve the atmosphere and service provided to the students at A&M.

Len Callaway is a senior journalism major.

Taken for a ride

Theme parks prove boring, torturous and overpriced

After traveling to Astroworld on a summer Saturday afternoon, I

was reminded why my reaction to amusement parks is somewhat similar to the average person's reaction to re-runs of "Nightman."

In fact, it must be a violation of some statute that amusement parks can even be named such a heinous and untrue thing. Surely "Parks of Torture" or even "Boring-Land" would be a better description of what actually takes place inside.

For the bargain price of \$5 parking and \$32 for the ticket, tax not included, I was granted the opportunity to waltz around Astroworld in the 132-degree heat, stand in line for the equivalent of 14 generations and buy beverages for \$4.50, tax not included.

Taz's Texas Tornado was my first ride of choice inside Astroworld's land of excitement. After waiting in line, rather excitedly, I might add, it was brought to my attention that, while I was second in line, the ride didn't open up for another hour.

Upon hearing this, I left the line to go ride the Dungeon

Drop where they strap you to a seat and shoot you up in the air until you can see a faint outline of the Great Wall of China off in the distance and then drop you at fatal speeds approaching a million miles an hour before abruptly stopping. The dropping part wasn't quite as traumatic as the sudden stopping part toward the bottom.

After being dropped, I went back to the Texas Tornado line which now looked something like the line for the last helicopter out of Saigon.

For amusement, the people in line would watch the "Guess your height and weight" guy prey upon the small children who had unknowingly just walked by the ride-measurement sign that told them they were "just one inch too short to get in, but we have some nice expensive things in the gift shop your father can buy you."

After being Taz-ed out in the line for about two hours, I was tagged for the next available coaster. However, this is when the coaster decides to break. This would be worse news for the people trapped on the top of the first loop who either had to wait until the ride was fixed or repel down with the mechanics.

Winding my way through the Kiddieland section, I found the short line for the teacup ride appealing; however, I had my sights set higher. The upside-down spaceship ride that I affec-

tionately refer to as the "Upside-Down Spaceship Thingy" was next on the list of challenges. Truthfully, this proved to be the scariest ride of the day.

It may have had something to do with the fact that the only thing holding my body inside of the contraption was a plastic harness that was positioned rather uncomfortably over my chest and (ouch) crotch.

This also proved to be the costliest ride of the day. When the spaceship tumbled over, I lost change, my souvenir cup, my car keys, my sunglasses and one of my kidneys.

Among the lost items belonging to other passengers were lighters, wallets, shoes and a few small children who, funny enough, were not claimed after the ride.

At this point, it was nearing closing time. The time I spent standing in various lines for beverages, water stunt shows, rides, bathrooms and temporary tattoos sucked up most of the day. It was at this point that I came to the conclusion that amusement parks are mirages of fun in the desert of life.

The next time I visit one will probably be after hours of begging and good behavior by my child. When I come back with junior in tow, I think we'll stick to the teacups.

Jeff Webb is a junior journalism major.

MR. PRESIDENT, KEN STARR WILL ASK US TO REVEAL WHAT WE'VE JUST WITNESSED.

MIKE LICKOVICH
ATLANTA CHRISTIANITY



to get dressed before class are doing so out of respect for themselves and their appearance?

Is the cute girl in the front row taking notes just to impress any prospective husbands who may be watching?

Since she has makeup on does that mean she must have cheated on that last test to get an "A"? Sometimes I get dressed up for class and if I wake up late, then I don't and who cares? I think this describes most of the females here. Towery's article was a pile of unfounded over-generalizations and yet another unjustified stereotype.

I realize things slow down a bit in the summer but surely she can come up with something worthy of writing.

Her last article was ridiculous.

Jacy Brie Jared
Class of '97

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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MAIL CALL

Response to April Towery's Monday, June 1, column:

I think that April Towery needs a reality check. Has it occurred to her that perhaps the females that decide