

Opinion

Plays charging parking violations minimize how immaturity

Duma would be dissolving the mission that would be throughout Russia. It was typical talk from Zyanid. That piled all the blame for Russia's crippling economic crisis on Yeltsin and his government — and none on the Duma, which has continually blocked economic reforms. Strengthened among stalled radical overhaul collection system on land ownership that would force the declare bankruptcies. The possible economic and social could spill over on the minds of Alexy II, the Russian Orthodox icon, Our Lady of central Moscow. "Civil war is something that could bring blood always down. Presidential Sergei Yastrzhem was unlikely to date for prime Wednesday. The speculation in the ident was trying of a confrontation in the legislature.



CHRIS HUFFINES

going to park here, even if you say I can't."

Tom Williams, Director of PTTS, said Parking Area 63, behind Olsen Field, and the Reed Arena parking lots almost always have spaces. Also, buses leave from within 200 yards of each space in both of those lots. In other words, there is no good reason not to park where there are spaces available and convenient access to campus.

The most convenient solution for PTTS and students everywhere is for Aggies to begin parking only where they are supposed to park, instead of wherever they please.

This would solve the problem. The forces of realism, however, say this is not to be.

After all, this is the same culture where studies show soccer moms are more likely to run stop signs (and potentially hit another soccer mom's child) and where Geraldo Rivera aspires to legitimacy. It is an imperfect world, and the most intelligent thing to do is almost never done.

And so, since the carrot will not work, PTTS needs to turn to the stick. Students found parked in places they just should not be parked, like the ends of rows and aisles in the parking lots, should be towed out to an empty parking slot — preferably the farthest one — and a boot should be placed on the car until the offending student pays the usual fine.

Minor infractions like accidentally parking in the wrong color lot or staying in 30-minute parking for too long could be handled normally.

This would do two things. First, this technique would drive home the lesson to students that the only places that one can legally park are between the white lines. It would also remove the offenders from everyone else's way.

Students — who are supposed to be adults, remember — have created this situation through their own thoughtlessness and immaturity. It is a shame it may take Draconian measures on the part of the administration to make parking accommodating for all students.

Chris Huffines is a junior speech communication major.

Culture, closed-mindedness and costumes New restaurant's 'thematic' dress code exploits stereotypes

At the 12th Man International Food Court all of your favorite international foods are now being served with a special side order of racial stereotyping.



STEVEN GYESZLY

The Department of Food Services recently completed extensive upgrades of on-campus dining facilities. Most of these changes, such as updating Sbis Dining Hall from the disco era, are positive revisions. However, there is one area where the Department of Food Services needs to rethink their strategy.

On the main floor of the MSC, where the 12th Man Burgers and Snacks facility used to be, is the newly-established 12th Man International Food Court.

Among the three restaurants in this food court is a restaurant called Elephant Wok, focusing on "Pan-Asian" cuisine.

A food establishment serving Asian food represents an innovative on-campus dining experience. The problem is, workers at this restaurant are required to wear Asian-themed uniforms consisting of black Oriental coats.

Who came up with such an offensive idea? Apparently, someone has seen one too many episodes of "Bonanza." Hop-Singh, the stereotypical Chinese cook on that television program, was an insensitive caricature even when the television show originally aired, let alone nowadays.

Granted, the Department of Food Services may be trying to establish an authentic international eating experience, however, if the food court is going to be a recreation of racial clichés, why not be equally offensive to all cultures?

Perhaps one of the restaurants could serve typical American food such as Beenie-Weenies and macaroni & cheese out of a replica of a mobile home, serviced by employees wearing jogging pants and wife-beater T-shirts.

Not surprisingly, many current Food Service employees working at the new food court are not very happy about the new uniforms.

"I don't like them at all," one employee said. "The uniforms bother me because it makes me wonder how I would feel if I had to wear something that made fun of my own culture."

The Asian-themed uniforms are not merely insulting for what they portray, but they also demean the employees.

Agriculture professors are not required to teach class in overalls and a straw hat for the amusement of the students, so why should Food Service employees have to wear a costume for the same reason?

If the idea of Asian-themed uniforms seems repugnant to those who have no direct ties to the culture, imagine how it must feel for those whose racial heritage is being imitated.

As one international student who is a member of the China Club, stated, "It's hard enough being stereotyped by other students. But it is even more painful when the stereotyping is done by my university."

It is not just the students and faculty from various countries that could be offended by the uniforms. Visitors come from around the world to see A&M.

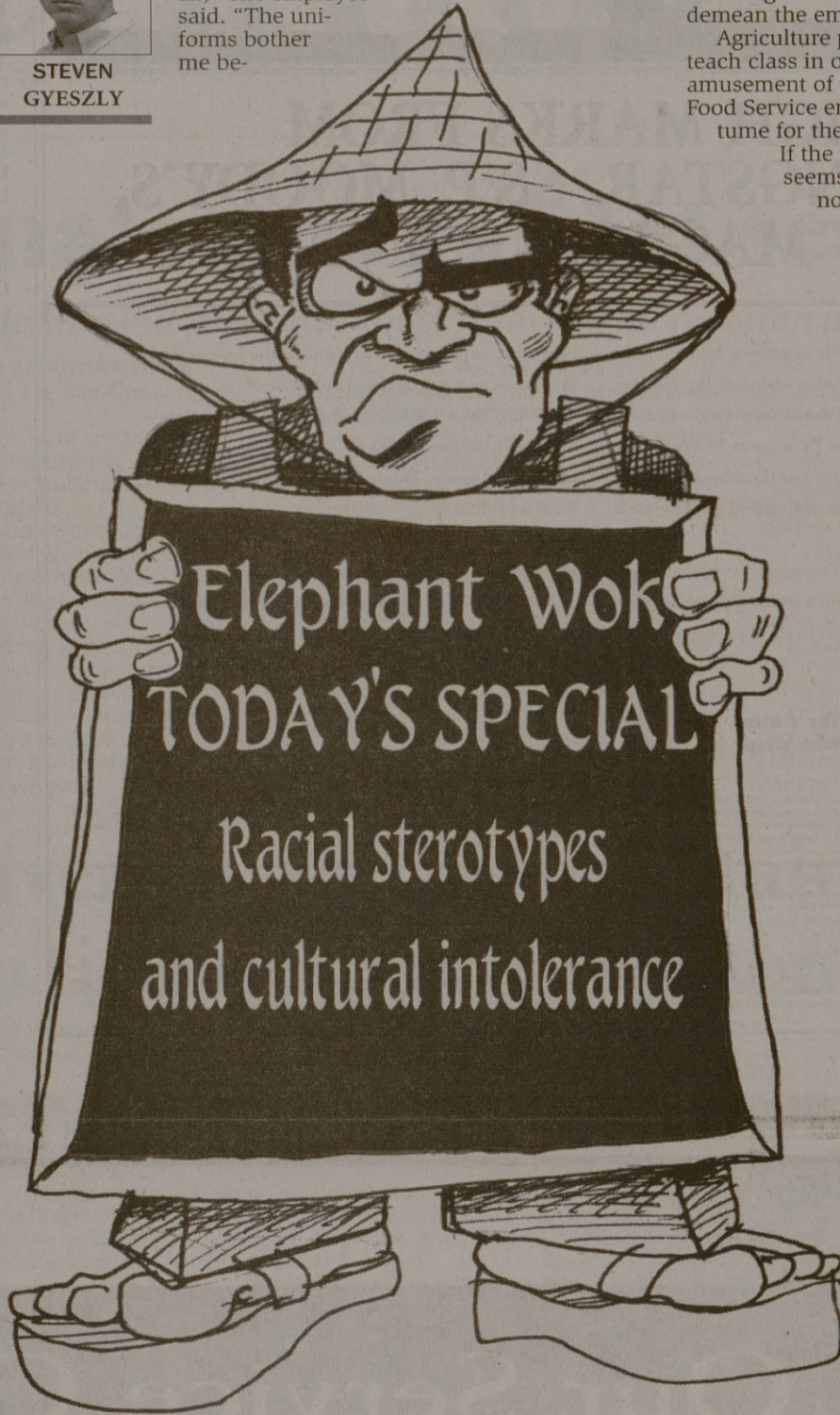
The University has progressed to the point where it can pride itself on its international relations and cultural diversity.

A&M has academic partnerships with universities in various Asian nations, and there is an Institute for Pacific Asia on campus. And yet Food Services, an official division within the University, is apparently condoning — and even requiring — coolie-esque uniforms.

Sadly, this last fact will taint any other image the University may try to establish.

A&M students should know as well as anyone what it is like to fight against a tired stereotype that should have been put to rest long ago. So why should students tolerate any kind of stereotyping on their campus? Asian-themed uniforms should only be seen at one place — old reruns of "Bonanza" on Nick-at-Nite.

Steven Gyeszly is a senior finance major.



MAIL CALL

Christian outreach
fanatical

Response to the Sept. 8 mail call:

st want to say "amen" to mail call from Sept. 8. An-Baley's optimistic view of humanity ignored all its negative effects.

at about the psycho airport vans and the pamphlets that ally appear on your wind-

shield all the time? Did God bless the world with fanatics?

I get enough harassment from Christian fanatics at the mall that I don't need more of it at school.

So, Hallelujah to you if you have seen the light, but I personally like not belonging to a worldwide cult and not being harassed for it.

Ann C. Tsao
Class of '01

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number.

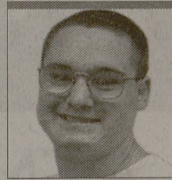
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Moral absolutes, not public opinion, should determine right and wrong

There has been much clamor recently from the Clinton defenders citing opinion polls that show the president's job approval rating remains high despite his recent scandals.



JOSH MASKOW

Actions that once would have drawn outrage and condemnation from both secular and religious American leaders are now ignored or defended simply because the economy is strong.

Although it shames the country — once known for its Puritan ethics — that a president would publicly admit — and express no sorrow for — such immoral behavior, it is even more troubling to consider the manner in which the opinion on Clinton's actions has been determined.

The idea that pure popular consensus should be used to decide public policy is highly questionable, and it is a notion that was abhorrent to the writers of the Constitution.

It is frightening that public opinion alone should be used to determine public morality. It is an idea that can only wreak havoc on the practice of democracy in America.

The Constitution was never intended to be a shroud for debauchery and criminality. The founding fathers assumed that certain actions were, by definition, morally wrong and ought to be punished regardless of the criminal's opinion on the matter.

Since the turn of the 20th century, radical individualism has made inroads in elite political circles (including the judiciary, organized religion and the media).

The American culture as a whole has shifted away from standards of moral truth to a consensus opinion of moral relativism as a tool to determine a conduct's absolute ethical value.

People who want to feel less guilty and more "normal" resent the moral codes and authorities that "make" them feel guilty about their behavior instead of changing their behavior in accordance with the precepts they apparently hold.

Churches and other traditional strongholds of morality have committed a sort of moral surrender, and the consequences are widespread.

Problems that would have seemed unthinkable only a century ago — rampant illegitimacy, unchecked crime and the culture of brutality and sexuality so characteristic of our society today — are now common and nearly impossible to stop.

The founding fathers assumed certain traditional moral institutions would enforce penalties for irresponsible actions. They could never have foreseen the major Christian sects in America turning a blind eye to immorality as they have done today.

Instead of upholding standards, many Christian denominations have changed their teachings regarding morality so as not to alienate their "enlightened" members.

America's churches of today

value popularity over morality. In an attempt to achieve harmony, the just condemnation of immorality has become passé to many church leaders. These leaders apparently neglected many of their own teachings.

America's moral sickness is not confined to religion. The arena of politics is alive with accusation of a vast right-wing conspiracy [of morality], in which a supposedly radical faction of the right wing intends to impose its worldview upon others.

Any principled traditionalist is labeled extremist, while Americans are led to believe the radical individualist is somehow representative of the typical American.

Politics has been described as a "civil religion," where those who hold no supernatural convictions attempt to find fulfillment through a clash of ideology intended to replace the fight between moral good and evil.

Indeed, communism, fascism and Nazism are all faith systems of the moral relativist who seeks meaning in a fantasy Utopia of egalitarianism. The Constitution does not guarantee equality or absolute safety.

This shift from moral absolutes in the form of organized religion to the moral relativism of secular humanism and public consensus is the chief characteristic of 20th century thought. This trait will continue to erode traditional values until an Orwellian leader recognizes the true potential of such moral relativism.

Josh Maskow is a sophomore computer science major.

