

Battalion

McGruder reflects upon her A&M entrance, stay, transfer

BY KIFFIN COLLINS
The Battalion

I went to discuss my grade with him, and I was confronted with Ku Klux Klan literature in the office. The memorabilia presented a sense of uneasiness and created a most uncomfortable climate. However, he was not offensive to me in any way."

This was the picture of Texas when Ella McGruder, one of the first African-American females to attend the University, arrived to receive a higher education. In her quest to find a niche, she said she

found a sense of animosity that today can only be imagined.

McGruder began classes in the summer of 1976. After attending college at the University of North Texas in the fall of 1975, she transferred to A&M.

McGruder said she experienced some hardships when applying to A&M. "The process was a little difficult in that I was an African-American applying to a white-majority school," she said. "Thankfully, my mother worked with a professor at A&M, and he spoke to admissions on my behalf."

McGruder said in those times the campus was clearly separated into

two categories: black and white.

"It was a very hostile environment. I can remember people looking at me as if I didn't belong," she said. "I stopped raising my hand in class. If I did raise my hand, it would be overlooked, and the teacher would give me no response."

McGruder said she felt like an outcast outside of the classroom as well.

"I would walk across campus and never see another African-American anywhere," she said.

In an effort to unite the minorities, McGruder tried to form a sorority. However, the plan fell through due to lack of members.

"Only 20 people could be congregated within the entire student body," she said. "I was going to join another sorority already established, but I transferred too soon."

McGruder transferred from A&M to the University of North Texas the following year, due to the distressing environment.

"The only reason I even applied to A&M was because I resided in Bryan at the time and my mother wanted me to be close to home," she said. "I was glad to leave campus, though, and escape the prejudices and bitter climate," she said.

McGruder currently works for Project Unity in Bryan. She speaks openly about her experiences and gives insight as to how the campus could improve.

"There still could be significant

changes to take place at A&M," she said. "We still have a long way to go in incorporating more minorities and organizations for minorities on campus."

McGruder said the campus today does not seem much different from 1976.

"I have students in my church classes tell me they too face discrimination in the classroom and out," she said. "I really do not think the campus has changed much in regards to racial prejudice."

McGruder said this prejudice still exists only because people have a certain mind set about minorities.

"Many professors and students already have opinions ingrained in them about how to view different cultures," she said. "People discriminate and stereotype because they do not know better. Their attitudes could change if only they would make an effort to get to know others in a minority race."

Although McGruder was faced with this discrimination directly, she said she does not hold grudges against A&M or its professors.

"I was young, and I took it personally," McGruder said. "Today, I encounter discrimination so often I can not concern myself with it. Prejudiced people are just ignorant of other races."

McGruder said she would like to see more organizations and involvement of minorities on campus. She said other ideas for improvement on cam-



Fox Sports College Hoops '99
System: N64
Genre: Sports
Developer: Fox Interactive



Crash Bandicoot Warped
System: Playstation
Genre: Action
Developer: Naughty Dog

There are some sports games people can sit around for hours playing with friends and have a blast. This is not one of those games. To put it simply, Fox should stick to movies and television and let game developers make video games.

Developers like Electronic Arts make fun sports games that also have the stats, moves and plays all sports fans require. *Fox Sports College Hoops '99* has only basic game-play with few special features.

Most of the development of the game was put into the individuality of the college teams, which is excellent, but most college games feature depth in team play for the different colleges.

The game plays as a simulation of college-level basketball with the stats and seasons made to be realistic, but there are other games on the market that produce better simulation and have better gameplay.

Die-hard basketball fans will love the realistic feel of *Fox Sports College Hoops '99*, but for the money, other college basketball games tower over the rookie effort of Fox Interactive. Fox should put more effort into *Fox Sports College Hoops '00*. (Grade: C)

— Kyle Whitacre

Recreating the success of a smash console hit with a sequel is a dicey gamble. On one hand, people will buy the game because they recognize the title.

On the other hand, the sequel needs to raise the bar for video gaming even higher than the original title or it will be considered a flop.

The creators of *Crash Bandicoot Warped* knew the risks going into development and have emerged from their programming and play testing with a sequel worthy of carrying on the *Bandicoot* bloodline.

Unlike other console superstars (Lara Croft comes to mind) whose sequel games are little more than a new look and some new stages, the third game in the *Bandicoot* series pushes the envelope with all-new moves that are easy to learn and some very new twists on the strangely scrolling stages everybody loves to lose their temper over.

The result is more than a drab sequel to an established gaming dynasty.

Crash Bandicoot Warped is an incredible mix of the *Crash* of the past and a *Crash* gamers can look forward to in the future. (Grade: A)

—Stephen Wells

Sixth Annual Texas Film Festival

February 24-28, 1999

Version 6.0 Upgrade Your Independence
Wednesday, February 24

Origin of the Species

7:00 p.m.

Cinemark Hollywood, USA

A moving and gently humorous parable of human evolution, *Origin of the Species* unfolds over a weekend in a summer house, where six late-twenties friends have united for the past nine years. The retreat incites a series of life crises that force them to confront their relationships and lives, leading them to discover what it really means to grow up.

Floating

9:30 p.m.

Cinemark Hollywood, USA

When a wealthy new family moves into Van's old house, he is tempted to abandon his disabled, alcoholic father for a chance at the life he once had. Then his new friend Doug reveals the dysfunction beneath his own family's perfect facade. *Floating* chronicles Van's struggle to come of age in a violent period of emotional and financial bankruptcy.

Workshop:
(Free Admission)

Engineers in Film, by Jeremy Valdez, Library Annex Rm. 417B, 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 25

Naturally Native

7:00 p.m.

Cinemark Hollywood, USA

Naturally Native follows the lives, loves, pain, joy and relationships of three sisters as they attempt to start their own business. Of American Indian ancestry, but adopted by white foster parents, each sister has her own identity issues and has chosen a very different career path. A touching love story of family and culture, *Naturally Native* also interweaves a subtle, but strong wake-up call regarding the treatment of Native people in corporate America; and also provides some insight into the tribal infrastructure and gaming issues.



Workshops:
(Free Admission)

Remake, Dr. Marian Eide, Library Annex Rm. 417C, 2:00 p.m.

The Film Consciousness and Poetry, by Dr. Paul Christensen, Library Annex Rm. 417C, 4:00 p.m.



The Intervention

9:30 p.m.

Cinemark Hollywood, USA

Matt Hirsch is a writer who's lost faith in the power of writing. Lately, he's had suicidal inklings. They're not quite tendencies yet, but with a little practice he thinks he can get them up there. Nothing's particularly wrong with his life, but then nothing's particularly right, either. Matt believes he's learned what life has to offer and would just as soon kill himself, if only he had a gun. Unfortunately, he doesn't feel strongly enough to take action - it's passion that'll kill you every time.

Ticket Information: \$3.00 Individual Screening; \$15.00 Festival Pass (All Screenings). Purchase Tickets at the MSC Box Office (845-1234) or at Cinemark.

For More Information: Call 847-8478 or 845-1515, or check out our web pages www.texasfilmfestival.org or films.tamu.edu/festival

Persons with disabilities please call 845-1515 to inform us of your special needs. The Sixth Annual Texas Film Festival is a presentation of the MSC Film Society of Texas A&M.