

There will be no Tagging

Graffiti is not common at Texas A&M, but the lack of free expression saves students and the University money.

"I don't think it is a problem, and I attribute that to the quality of the students," said Charles Sippial, vice president of administration. He said the campus is lucky to be able to spend so little time and money on graffiti.

"It is not that bad," said Mike Goldwater, an associate director of grounds maintenance. "We have five or six times a year that somebody defaces public property. Considering the size of this University, we are fortunate."

However, removal is not always cheap, despite the fact there is little vandalism.

Goldwater said graffiti on a Texas A&M building could cost the school up to \$600 to remove. In most cases, restoration is not this expensive, but it could still cost students in the long run. Goldwater said graffiti removal using the Physical Plant's chemicals costs less than \$100 on average, depending on the size of the graffiti.

"When the graffiti is absorbed into materials like brick walls, it is more expensive to fix," Goldwater said. In one recent incident, the plant's chemicals were not working, so workers had to sandblast to remove the graffiti. The damage usually depends on which spray paint was used, he said.

"Graffiti removal is done so infrequently that we do not know how much money it costs the school," said Les Wick, interim associate director for facilities. "A lot of what we take off is chalk, so there's not a whole lot of cost there," he said.

"Occasionally someone is caught red-handed, and we bill them for the removal," said Dan Mizer, the director of operations for Residence Life, about graffiti in residence halls.

Costs include \$15.16 per hour of labor and the aerosol removal costs \$3 to \$4.

"If it is a small area, it would cost the student about \$20," Mizer said.

"We have a group-billing process in the residence halls to

pay for graffiti removal. For example," Mizer said, "if graffiti is found on the second floor of Moses Hall, the students on that floor are group-billed for the damage."

Mizer said he is pleased that graffiti is a minimal problem at A&M when compared to other schools.

"It's really more a nuisance and aggravation than anything," he said. "It causes the custodial staff to stop their jobs and remove the graffiti, which causes them to get less done."

"It takes away from our real duties. When we're maintaining the building and grounds, other things need to be done that do not get done," Goldwater said.

This form of student vandalism causes school officials to stop doing a job that benefits A&M and its students. Graffiti does not occur often enough to cause too much distraction.

Lack of graffiti at Texas A&M saves money, demonstrates respect for school

Story by Amy Rosellini

ANDY HANCOCK AND RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

News in Brief

Art lifts order

Lufkin schools

KIN, Texas (AP) —

school district has been re-

from a 30-year desegre-

order after a federal judge

approved an agreement

on the school system and

S. Justice Department.

The court order, after 30

years, has finally been lifted," said

interim district judge

David Sharp in a

decision on Wednesday's edition of

Lufkin Daily News.

U.S. District

John Hannah ends three

years that saw the districts

monitored by federal

courts.

n dumps waste

council meeting

TA, Iowa (AP) —

A man

over a problem with his

line dumped a five-gallon

of human waste at a city

meeting, splattering

members in the process.

hit everybody," said city

Paulina Schrader. "It was

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hael Joseph Murphy, 42,

and a bucket filled with

urine on a table where

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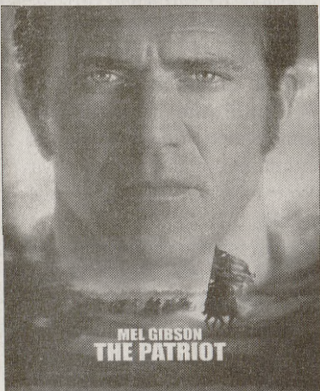
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The Patriot
Starring Mel Gibson and Heath Ledger
Directed by Roland Emmerich
Rated R

The Patriot is a risky and almost unbelievable account of the American Revolution. The film's screenplay is



adapted from a novel that contradicts the history of the United States. Creating an enjoyable, historical film based on a fictional novel is a challenge, but taking chances in filmmaking can pay off.

The Patriot's major flaw is its inaccurate and bizarre portrayal of the American Revolution. Mel Gibson

plays Benjamin Martin, a war hero who advocates American independence but strongly opposes conflict with Great Britain. The unsuspecting movie-goer would believe, Gibson's character truly fought for national freedom although Benjamin Martin is purely fictional.

The movie is filled with historical inaccuracies, but it does address the unfair treatment of American colonists that led to the U.S. rebellion.

The Patriot's focus on family loyalty during times of war saves the entire film. Martin is completely against confrontation with Great Britain, and he does not agree to fight until a British captain murders one of his younger sons. Martin, a dedicated father, enters the war to avenge his son's death, not to uphold a strong belief in freedom or nationalism. Martin's eldest son Gabriel (Ledger) is an avid believer in the independence cause and joins the war against his father's wishes. This creates tension between Benjamin and Gabriel and becomes the focus of the rest of the film.

Gibson's performance as a father torn by losing his family to war is memorable, but aside from Ledger, the supporting cast is disappointing.

The film's dialogue is filled with too much comic relief, taking away from the seriousness of the movie. Howev-

er, this sloppy script is somewhat overshadowed by superb art direction, cinematography and costumes which paint a believable picture of an early United States.

The Patriot is historically wrong, but it is entertaining. The director took a chance on a story that addresses family values and obscures historic details, but the movie's plot works. (Grade: B-)

— Dewey Badeaux

Scary Movie
Starring Marlon Wayans, Shannon Elizabeth
Directed by Marlon Wayans
Rated R



The most tasteless movie of the

summer, possibly of the decade, is currently attracting all the many teens who love *Scream*, *I Know What You Did Last Summer* and all of their multiple, hideous sequels.

Granted, *Scary Movie* has some very creative takes on these oh-so-scary flicks. During two locker-room scenes, one of the boys finds a surprise Polaroid with "I Know..." written on it, and in another scene Buffy Gilmore (Elizabeth) antagonizes the killer like Rose McGowan's character did in *Scream*. At least in *Scream*, audiences could expect characters to outrun the killer, in traditional horror-movie style. *Scary Movie* cannot even get this one right. The director must have been aiming for repulsive and unrealistic scenes, because that is what the escape, not to mention the rest of this movie, is.

It was mildly amusing to see the creative plays on the cheesy early '90s horror flicks. For example, Wayans makes fun of a scene from *Scream*, in which Sydney's boyfriend Billy climbs through her window, hoping for some good sex, or "over the clothes stuff," and she tells him no. In Wayans' warped world, Cindy's boyfriend is shocked, literally, to find that she has donned an electric chastity belt. As disgusting as it was, the play on the bathroom murder scene from *Scream 2* was shockingly funny.

This spoof is as badly written as the movies it mocks. Dialogue is reminiscent of '80s valley girl chit-chat, and the actors' poor attempts at humor are fake and forced. Of course, taking

A = instant classic B = a cut above C = average
D = don't buy it F = burn in effigy

into consideration the degree of stupidity necessary to make this movie seem funny, one would hope that they are forcing this high school locker-room humor.

The bottom line: sexual jokes are funny, yes, but they do not make for a good movie plot. (Grade: D)

— Maureen Kane

The Perfect Storm
Starring George Clooney and Mark Wahlberg
Directed by Wolfgang Peterson
Rated R

In the tradition of *Towering Inferno*, *Twister* and *Dante's Peak*, big-budget disaster movies bring nothing more to the big screen than great special effects. *The Perfect Storm* does not fail to carry on the tradition.

With creative German Wolfgang Peterson behind the camera and \$100 million in his pocket, *Storm* should be the blockbuster event of 2000; however, no matter how much money the production has, a decent script is still a necessity.

Hot off the success of *Three Kings*, the teaming of Clooney and Wahlberg was destined to please audiences. But with forced dialogue and confrontation, the two boys lack the chemistry of their previous collaboration.

Storm brought to life the bestselling novel about the doomed fishing boat, the Andrea Gale, that sank off the coast of Massachusetts near New Foundland. The courageous men aboard the

ship met their demise when 1991's Hurricane Grace met and collided with two other Atlantic storms, one from the east and one off the Canadian coast, creating waves in excess of 50 feet.

The movie is the adaptation of the men's personal trials before they set sail on that fatal October day. Who cares?

For a good hour and 10 minutes, nothing remotely entertaining happens. The movie's formula may as well



have been etched across the ship, because whenever the movie was reaching poke-your-eye-out boring, Peterson cut to thrilling drama even a 10-year-old could pen.

The waves were beautifully crafted and the ship was definitely tossed about in a believable manner, but after *Hard Rain*, someone should have told Hollywood execs to steer clear of disasters like this one. (Grade: D)

— Jeff Kempf

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