

THE BATTALION

CYCLE OF FEAR

Freshman life is not all it is cracked up to be

By JASON BENNYHOFF
The Battalion

Thousands of lost children stumble through an asphalt maze, the Texas sun beating down on their helpless backs. They scream unintelligible slogans as ringleaders rope them like sheep into a stadium while lackeys unload the children's belongings and struggle to cram them into a glorified prison cell. This is not a German concentration camp; it's an American one — Texas A&M.

For many scared sheep, this is their first time away from the flock. To that blind, sweaty, pulsating mass, I offer these words of advice — transfer now. There is no worse time to be at Texas A&M than early fall, when the professors return, angry that their vacations have been cut short and ready to take out their frustrations on the new arrivals. The older students do their best to take advantage of the defenseless freshmen, stealing their lunch money for keg parties and such.

One who has never been part of that mass of humanity known as the "fresh meat" can never understand their fear and deep sense of loss as the cliques they once called friends disappear, and the constant in-fighting that was the occupation of a full four years of high school fades away. This is replaced by an expectation that the new students can take care of themselves in the new hierarchy of students.

At the top of this chain are the athletes. These people are strong and virile and speak in one-syllable words. In their strange shadow

world, exams are sheer mystery and class schedules a mere suggestion. For them, parking spots are plentiful, and they are revered far more than a mere professor with his words and equations — the last refuge of the athletically challenged. Their days are filled with the smell of sweat, the taste of real food and the occasional nuisance of avoiding the tutor, a strange creature who can only be described as the Intelligentsia's Storm Trooper, hellbent on forcing semi-useful knowledge down the throats of the blissfully ignorant. For these people the days go by fast and the years faster.

The next strata in the University food chain is graduate students. This minority remains a mystery to even experienced undergraduates, despite constant prodding, probing and narcotic experiments. One can only wonder why these strange beings would opt to return to a university campus after previously enduring four years of torture.

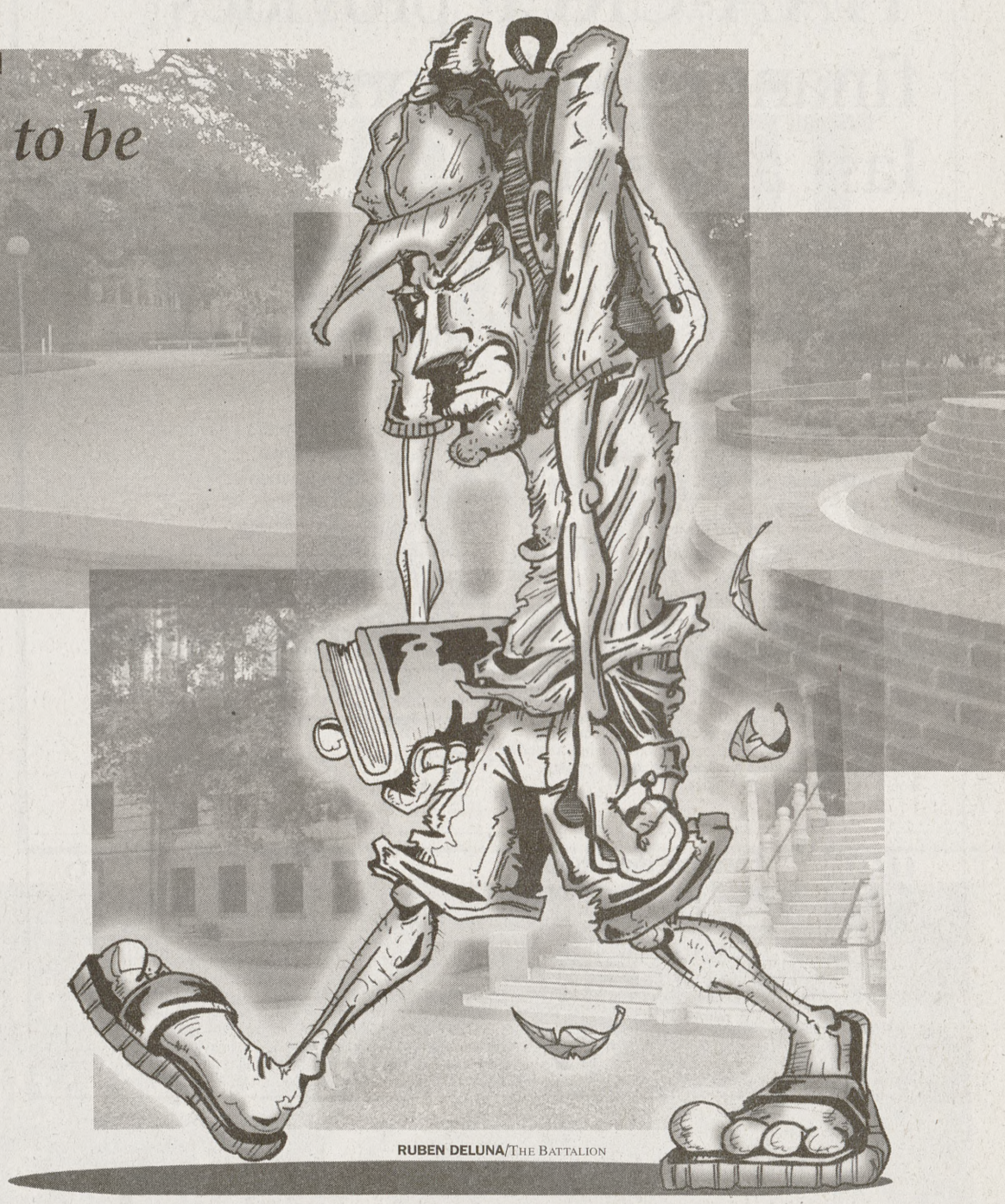
However, they are rewarded with a distant parking spot and the privilege of grading the work of their closely removed peers, the undergraduates. This is both their privilege and their penance as it affords them the opportunity to prey upon the new arrivals' need for companionship and authority figures while being thoroughly throttled by the professors. Speak to these beasts at your peril, freshmen — they will eat you.

Undergraduate students hold the next rung in the academic ladder, but they have their own sub-

hierarchy to uphold. Upperclassmen hold the higher position because they have the same ability to prey on the underclassmen as do graduate students. Upperclassmen appear to be benign symbols of knowledge. Underclassmen see them as "big brother figures." They have had the same experiences and should be able to guide, free of charge, the young babes foolish enough to cross the Aggie Tan gates. However, do not be fooled by their khaki shorts and Abercrombie and Fitch shirts, freshmen — they are not like you. These people do not want your friendship or your respect. They want your entrails.

The first week of any freshman's experience at A&M is a dizzying whirlwind of keg parties and glorified pep rallies. These are not designed to make you happy. They are held to lull you into a sense of security so that you can be fleeced of your belongings, stripped of your pride and relieved of your will to live. Do not attend these events upon fear of death. Upperclassmen will eat you.

You, the underclassmen, are the lowest rung of the ladder, except the Corps of Cadets, who hold their own ladder on which they staunchly enjoy the lowest rung. Everyone will take advantage of you. Everyone will use you. Everyone will eat you. Make this your motto; I will fear everyone, I will hate everyone and, above all, I will strangle everyone.



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TIQUE

The Cell

Jennifer Lopez, Vin Diesel, and Vincent D'Onofrio

Directed by Tarsem Singh

Rated R

Playing at Hollywood

It is often called a comedy

The Matrix and Silence of the Lambs

and the description is accurate

ough. Unfortunately, it is not nearly as good as these films.

It is based on the serial killer's last victim, psychiatrist Catherine Deane

to the mind of the murderer. Deane uses a virtual reality and experimental psychology to enter the mind and find out where the killer is hidden. The danger begins to believe the mind is reality and be forced into his demented world, which like a psychotic Whatay Come.

ke that film. The Cell is a bizarre and visually disturbing sequences in the mind. These scenes, rather than the characters, are the focus of the movie as they draw the viewer's attention. This is not an unexpected move, but a man who has written music videos.

Losing My Religion

the scenery and special effects are first-rate, the imagery is dark. The fact is this is a very morbid and often disturbing one might expect the serial killer to be. While it is a realistic portrayal of a serial killer's mind, it is likely to be too much for some. The film concerns pain and suffering, and it suffers for it. Neither Vaughn distinguish in this film. D'Onofrio has been an excellent villain, and his special effects often draw his performance. This is likely to be relegated to the same bondage clubs in a for those not faint of heart. (C+)

—Jason Bennyhoff

Godzilla 2000

ing Takehiro Murata

oho Pictures Inc.

ed by Takao Okawara

Rated PG

aying at Hollywood

ons of years, a dinosaur lumbered in an underground away from the humans. Now, he awakes, mutated by man's folly, and he is hungry for a guy in about a hundred pounds of foam rubber costume, fit for destroying sea creatures. At least he is not an over-the-top iguana accompanied by Mathew Broderick.

It is, in this day and age, computer graphics images capable of blurring the line between reality and the imagination. The sci-fi genre of film has moved upon the corny, saturated world of overgrown kids.

lost.

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