

Not so fast ... Appearance of Christmas hype before Thanksgiving ridiculous



NICHOLAS ROZNOVSKY

Thanksgiving is over, classes are back in session and the Christmas season is underway.

As happens at the end of every November, the leaves are starting to change colors, the temperature is falling, and children are starting to think about reindeer and elves.

But wait — Christmas has been in full swing for nearly a month. Although Christmas technically still takes up only one calendar day, the Christmas season has ballooned into a two-month monstrosity that now starts well before Thanksgiving.

What happened to cutting the turkey before hanging up the mistletoe? Apparently, Christmas is now too big to be contained within the month of December.

Businesses started playing Christmas music for shoppers the day after Halloween.

Santa Claus started taking pictures with children at Post Oak Mall in the second week of November.

Movigoers got to see the Grinch steal Christmas on Nov. 17. There can be no question — the 12 days of Christmas are a thing of the past.

Although the weekend after Thanksgiving continues to mark the start of the Christmas shopping season for most people, shopping for Christmas gifts has become a year-round process.

If little Johnny wants to see a PlayStation 2 under the tree Christmas morning, Mom and Dad had better have reserved one back in October.

It is no longer safe to wait until Thanksgiving to start shopping; the hottest gifts are long gone by then.

Christmas is now just a celebration of capitalism. The wreaths, lights and trees that appeared on street corners and in storefronts two weeks ago are not spontaneous

acts of holiday spirit. They are a marketing tool, encouraging shoppers to buy Christmas presents because the big day is "only" six weeks away.

In countless towns and cities across the nation, Christmas decorations are thrown up the week after Halloween.

Spurred on by business owners, local governments transform their downtown areas into virtual winter wonderlands weeks before the weather turns cold.

Fake snow and part-time Santas become common sights as merchants attempt to pull in more customers.

The only thing stopping merchants from starting the Christmas frenzy even earlier is the gobs of money they make on Halloween costumes and candy.

Sooner or later, those profits will sag and the Christmas season will be declared in the middle of October.

At its current rate of expansion, the holiday season will take up six months of the year by 2015.

To help preserve at least a shred of the sanctity of Christmas, the celebration of the holiday should be limited to the post-Thanksgiving period.

From a religious standpoint, the holiday season is a defined

period. Christians celebrate four weeks of advent. Jews celebrate eight nights of Hanukkah.

If the major religions are happy with a holiday period that does not linger through November and into December, who has any right to argue otherwise?

From a secular point of view, the extension of the holiday period does not create more holiday spirit; it dilutes holiday cheer and spreads it over a longer period.

It's hard to be excited about Christmas every day for two months. One can watch only so many badly animated television specials and drink only so many mugs of eggnog.

Like all good things, Christmas should

be enjoyed in moderation.

Most importantly, the children of America are already overstimulated. The last thing they (and their parents) need is a two-month Christmas.

Part of the reason Christmas is so important to children is because it does not last long — it is one day every year when all their wishes can come true.

When children have to wait only 10 months for the holidays to roll around, Christmas becomes less of an event and more of a

common occurrence.

Christmas will never be confined to the post-Thanksgiving period now that businesses have decided to start it at the beginning of November.

Today's children will go see Santa Claus at the mall while it is still 70 degrees outside, and their parents will buy their gifts in April.

Christmas is no longer an annual event — it is a continuous one.

Nicholas Roznovsky is a senior political science major.



ADRIAN CALCANELO/THE BATTALION

Mail Call

Conduct of Texas fans at Friday's football game dismays former student

Dear *Battalion* and *Daily Texan*,
Please help me. As a product of both Texas A&M and the University of Texas-Austin, I thought I had learned a lot. But I experienced some new things at the football game this past Friday that my education had not prepared me for. No doubt there are Longhorn scholars who can set me straight. I watched many joyful Texas fans along with a few Aggies tailgating and carousing. Super. Fall football rivalry. Spirits were literally in abundance. May the better football team win.

Then I saw things that I cannot really comprehend. I saw a Longhorn fan with a T-shirt showing a fallen-over Bonfire. The caption read, "What's wrong, Aggies? Can't keep it up?" Can someone explain that to me? I do not get it. I assure you, I get the sexual nuance, I just do not understand evil. I saw Longhorn fans mocking and taunting the fans from A&M who were in Corps of Cadet uniforms. "Little Hitlers," they were called. They were being spat at. Help me to understand this Longhorn slant on rivalry. I thought we were all against Hitler — Longhorns and Aggies. I saw a Longhorn cheerleader — isn't he supposed to represent UT in the finest possible way? — run in front of the Aggie Band, turn and face it square on and

salute with the "clicked heels," arm-above-head, "Heil Hitler" sign. What don't I know here? What didn't I learn in history class? All these things happened before kickoff. Aggies, I respect your presentation of a \$50,000 endowed scholarship as a thank you for UT's respect and support shown last year. That support obviously came from the finer 'Horns. I admired the fortitude and restraint exercised by the Corps of Cadets under attack. Unfortunately, I learned that hundreds and hundreds of Longhorns have more than one way to show the Hook 'em Horns sign. They prefer to use their middle finger. Class. Really intelligent and creative.

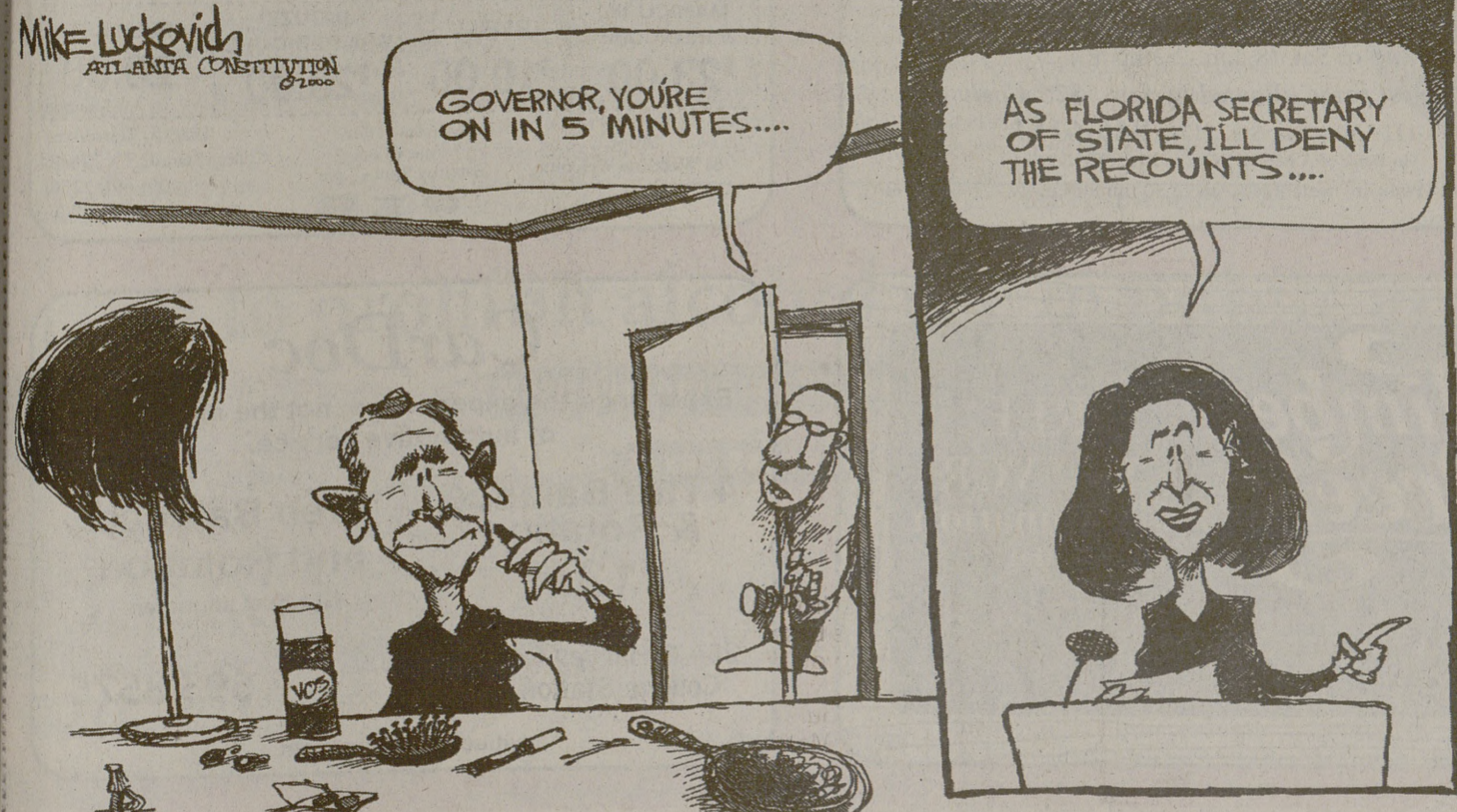
That will quickly teach those "Littlest" Longhorns how to show spirit. I just pray they get an honest chance to choose. I am learning. I have attended both schools. I will choose the higher ground.
Susan Priest
Classes of '77 and '81

Bird waste problem should be addressed by Vision 2020 plan

Maybe a good addition to the University's esteemed Vision 2020 plan would be a program to keep the sidewalks free of bird excrement, particularly by the Rec Center and Reed Arena. Such a program could consist of the procurement of water hoses and spray nozzles, followed by a vigorous routine of daily sidewalk hosage. It is easy to dismiss such dreams as walking across campus without wading through mounds of bird feces as "unattainable" or "too expensive." I would argue, however, that this is just the kind of detail that will buttress us in our pursuit of the magnificent windmill that is "top 10 public university" status.

Corry Clinton
Class of '00

MIKE LUCKEVID
ATLANTA CONSTITUTION
8/100



GOVERNOR, YOU'RE ON IN 5 MINUTES....

AS FLORIDA SECRETARY OF STATE, I'LL DENY THE RECOUNTS....

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Diversity? Sixth imperative of Vision 2020

Considering the effects that a program of such magnitude as Vision 2020 will have on the students of Texas A&M, it is important to examine the proposal.



JENNIFER RAMBY

While there are excellent points and goals within Vision 2020, Aggies need to be aware of how the school could be changed.

Blurred Vision Part 5 of 6

Administrators should focus on preserving the "Aggie" and the unique culture he or she harbors while experiencing his four, five, even six years of undergraduate education.

Continuing the dissection of Vision 2020, the sixth imperative, "diversify and globalize the A&M community," will be examined.

The precept "lead in diversity" states, "Texas A&M University must be a leader in promoting diversity in its student body, faculty, staff and intellectual viewpoints."

Diversity promotes understanding when people from different backgrounds come together to work, study and play. In order to gain a proper understanding of the real world, a person needs to be familiar with various populations.

Whenever any person "bleeds maroon," regardless of heritage, he or she should be given a fair chance to become an Aggie. However, disagreement arises when the goals of this precept are examined: "Achieve student diversity that reflects college-bound Texas high school graduates through appropriate recruitment and retention activities."

While it is a significant responsibility of administration to "reduce to zero the number of students, faculty or staff who leaves because of a perception of a less-than-welcoming environment," drastic changes in recruitment techniques should be questioned.

The goals of this precept scream affirmative action. Students should not be dragged into the University based on ethnicity if their hearts do not belong.

All students across the state should be equally exposed to recruiting efforts. There is no reason administration should seek to recruit certain students based on race and ethnicity.

A&M is not the school for everyone. There are many high school graduates of all backgrounds — whites included — who simply do not have the makeup of a true Aggie.

Race and ethnicity should not be factors when admission is considered.

On the application of the ethnicity question should be replaced with, "Do you have the strong desire to be a part of a new culture — the Aggie heritage?"

From the beginning, black, white, Hispanic and Asian need to be replaced with "Aggie."

The administration does not need to start intense outreach activities in certain areas.

All students across the state should be equally exposed to recruiting efforts. There is no reason administrators should seek to recruit certain students based on race and ethnicity.

No matter how it is done or with what intentions, changing recruitment techniques is one more step to changing the definition of an Aggie. This should cause all students of all ethnic backgrounds to come together and question the future of their Aggie heritage.

Jennifer Ramby is a sophomore journalism major.