

Nice guys don't finish last

Coach Slocum does not deserve criticism and is a valuable asset to Texas A&M



CAYLA CARR

League], but I chose to stay at Texas A&M. I am honored to serve as the head football coach at such an outstanding university."

Besides Slocum's down-home charm, dignified class and devoted character, he has groomed A&M's football team into one of the top teams in the nation — the Aggies are consistently ranked in both the Associated Press and ESPN/USA Today Coaches polls.

Slocum began coaching in 1968 — in 1972, he made his first appearance in Aggieland as offensive assistant coach.

From 1973 to 1980, Slocum served as defensive assistant coach, spending summers coaching for a CFL team.

After a brief stint at the University of Southern California as defensive coordinator in 1979, Slocum returned to Aggieland and has been here since.

Interestingly, A&M is second in the country for having the most players in the NFL. People argue that with players of this caliber, A&M should be a better team, and they blame Slocum for not utilizing this talent.

But A&M never has recruiting classes in the top five in the country. Slocum's ability to take weaker talent and produce professional players says a great deal about the man's coaching skills.

In the years between the time he recruited to play at A&M and the

time they are drafted by the pros, incredible coaching and leadership take place.

When the question is asked, "What is a great coach?" everyone has his or her own opinion.

Some think a great coach wins every

game or wins the national championship every year.

But a great coach can be someone who conducts himself or herself in a dignified manner and devotes 28 years of coaching to a single university.

Slocum's longevity and A&M's winning record and rankings show he is a great coach, but his devotion makes him a part of A&M.

Slocum believes in the Aggie spirit and the story behind the Twelfth Man.

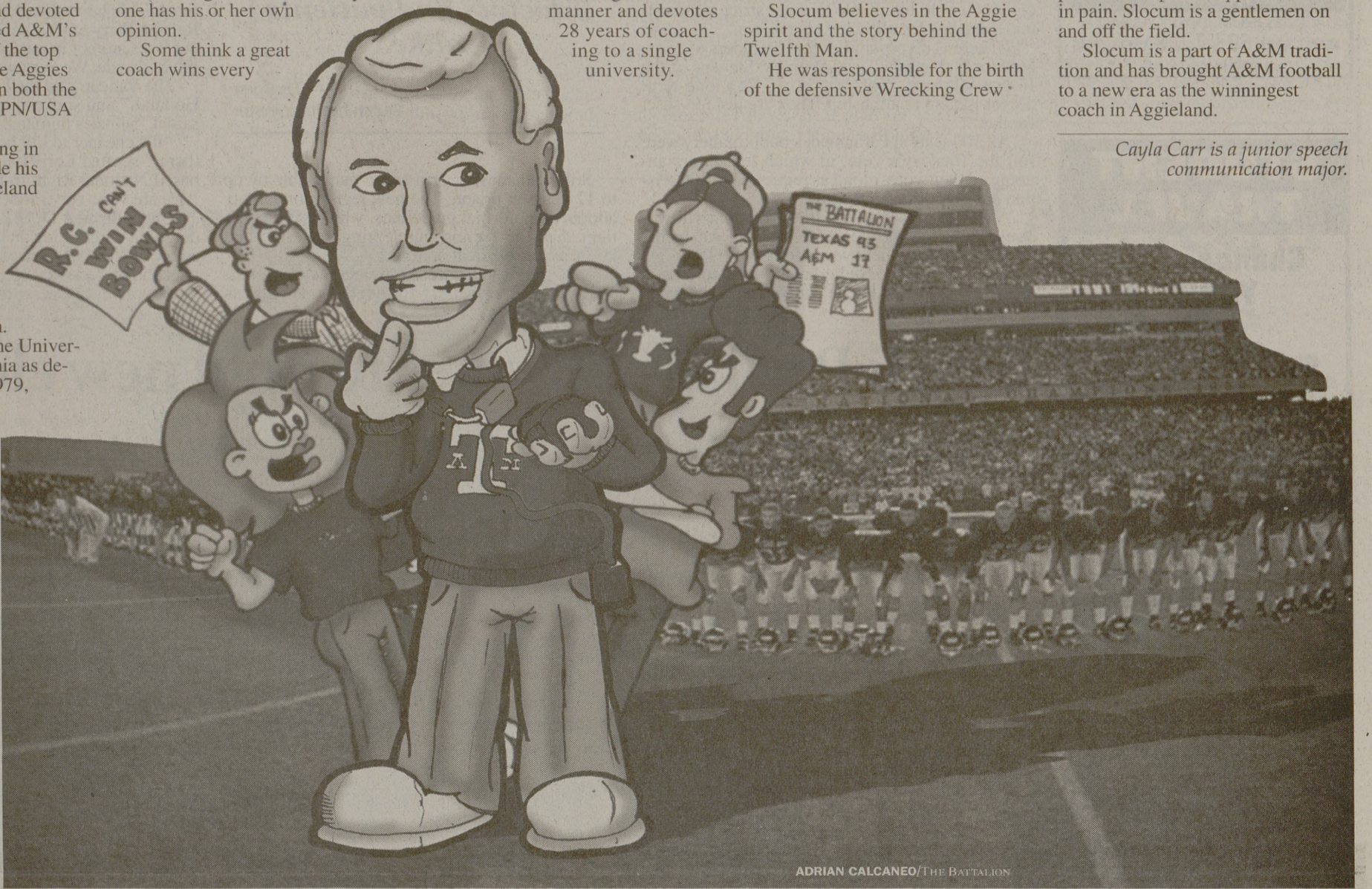
He was responsible for the birth of the defensive Wrecking Crew

tradition and has helped it thrive since 1985.

When Bonfire collapsed in 1999, Slocum and the A&M football team provided help and support to those in pain. Slocum is a gentleman on and off the field.

Slocum is a part of A&M tradition and has brought A&M football to a new era as the winningest coach in Aggieland.

Cayla Carr is a junior speech communication major.



ADRIAN CALCANEO/THE BATTALION

A needed time out

Executions should be halted until system is more accurate



REID BADER

The most severe punishment for a criminal is death. However, the legal system that sentences criminals to death is anything but fair.

Therefore, President Clinton must call for a temporary national moratorium on the death penalty.

The entire system should be taken apart piece by piece until there is no chance a son who does not deserve the death penalty is killed.

According to the Amnesty International Website, more than 350 people have been executed in the United States since 1970, and more than 3,300 others are on the row.

Death row inmates in Illinois will not be executed soon, though. Gov. George Ryan, a supporter of the death penalty, announced in May and appointed a commission to study the fairness of the death penalty.

Ryan said, "If this commission comes out and says we can't give you a 100 percent guarantee, if they can't tell me the system will be flawless, I've got an obligation to say that I can't go ahead."

Dr. James Liebman of Columbia University School of Law studied the death penalty in the past 23 years at the request of the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

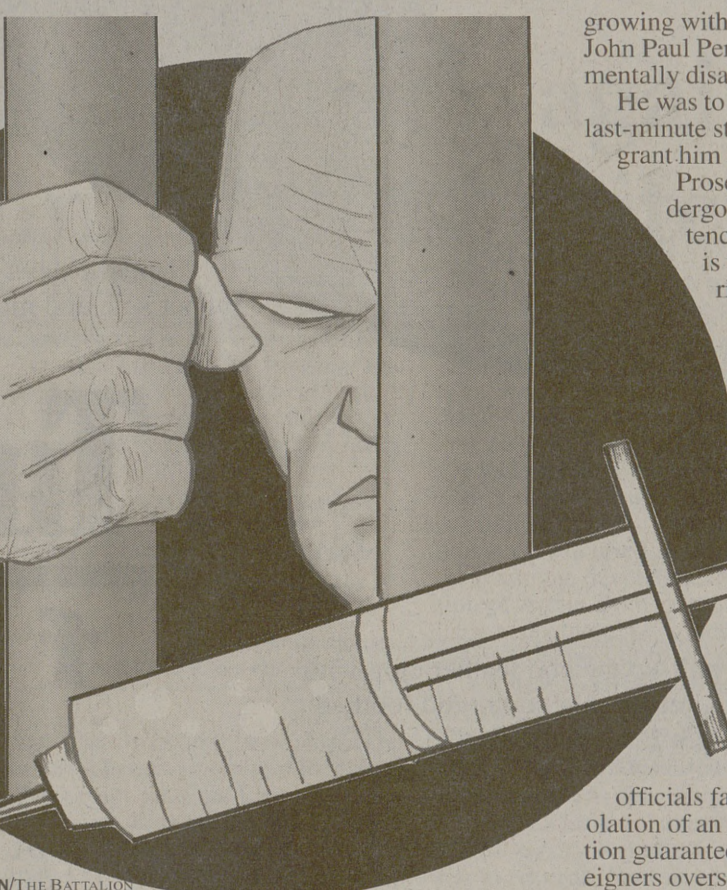
The study found that two out of three death sentences were overturned on appeal — mostly because of serious errors by defense lawyers or police officers and prosecutors who withheld evidence.

The report said, "The 60 percent and 70 percent rates of serious error that have existed nationally and in the vast majority of states have obliged courts to provide, and have obliged taxpayers to foot the bill for, an elaborate and lengthy judicial inspection process — one that, even so, almost inevitably must fail to catch and correct some amount of the error that has flooded the system."

In Texas, the death penalty controversy is growing with the planned execution of John Paul Penry. Penry is a 44-year-old mentally disabled man with an IQ of 56. He was to be executed on Nov. 17, but a last-minute stay by the Supreme Court will grant him at least a 30-day reprieve. Prosecutors of Penry, who has undergone two trials and was sentenced to death in both, say Penry is well aware of the concepts of right and wrong and can be executed execution.

The defense hopes that, because Penry still believes in Santa Claus and does not even understand the concept of an execution, he will receive a permanent reprieve of the death sentence.

The U.S. death penalty is drawing harsh criticism from other nations. Last year in Arizona, two German men were executed for the murder of a bank teller in a robbery. Arizona officials failed to notify Germany, a violation of an article in the Vienna Convention guaranteeing consular access to foreigners overseas.



JOE PEDEN/THE BATTALION

Walter Legrand, one of the German men, was executed on March 4, 1999. The day before, the World Court had issued an order to postpone the execution until the case could be heard — these events resulted in Germany asking the World Court for reparations from the United States.

On Nov. 10, Texas violated the Vienna Convention when it executed a Mexican national for murder without notifying Mexican authorities when he was first arrested.

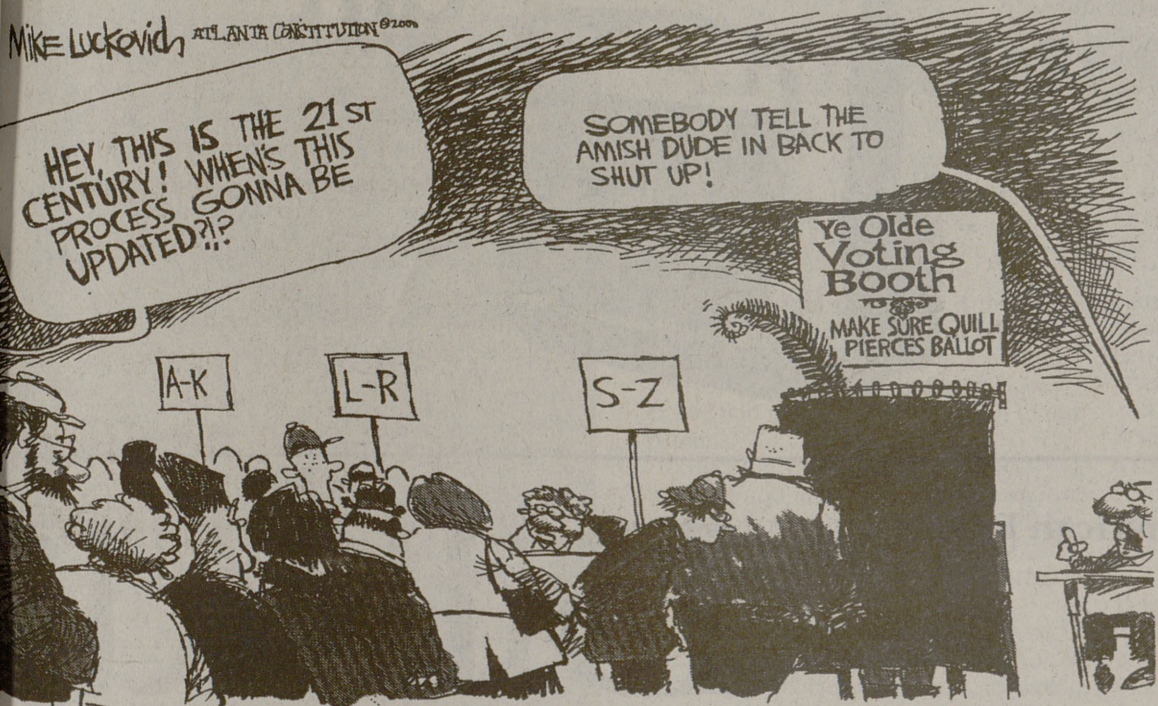
Numerous organizations have called for a national halt of the death penalty. One of the first organizations to make this plea was the American Bar Association.

Its policy proposal encouraged stopping the executions to ensure that states "provide competent counsel in capital punishment cases, eliminate race discrimination in capital sentencing and prevent the execution of mentally retarded persons and persons who committed crimes as minors."

The majority of the evidence shows there are problems with the process of executing criminals. A process with such a permanent and irreconcilable end must be carried out without errors.

The United States must stop executions to spare those who do not deserve to be on death row.

Reid Bader is a junior political science major.



MIKE LUCKEVIDH

Student appalled by Longhorn fans

In response to Susan Priest's Nov. 28 Mail Call.

Priest was right to question the relationship between Texas A&M and the University of Texas-Austin after the football game last Friday.

I am incredibly disappointed, and not because we did not win. I thought our relationship with UT was based on mutual respect, with the whole idea being that we are the best public universities in the state.

There is definitely a lack of respect.

Older UT men were calling Aggie women "whores" while making obscene and grotesque gestures.

Children were flicking Aggies off and cursing, while their elders laughed.

A stuffed animal — depicting

Mail Call

Reveille — was hung from a noose and beaten repeatedly with a bat.

Some Longhorns were cheering about the fall of the Bonfire and hoping it would happen again.

This is just to name a few incidents of sportsmanship so bad that it no longer has anything to do with sport — simply hate.

I trust that Aggies would never be so disrespectful and cruel to other human beings; no matter what school they attended.

I would rather lose and be able to hold my head up high and be proud of who I am and what I do, than win and still be the biggest loser everywhere else.

I commend all the Aggies who did not lose themselves in the outrageous antics of some Longhorns and remained the respectful and proud people Aggies are known to be.

My apologies to UT on the win, especially if winning makes them

the people they have proven themselves to be.

Leigh Elena Henderson
Class of '04

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