

Ingrateful intolerance

ROTC programs should be allowed on every campus

Since the terrorist destruction of Sept. 11, calls for tolerance and respect toward the American Muslim community have been heeded across the nation.

This is the right and rational thing to do, but several colleges still refuse to tolerate those who stand and fight against terror at home and abroad. The U.S. Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) is

prohibited from any activity in three New York City colleges alone — Columbia University, New York University and the City University of New York. Likewise, Harvard's ROTC candidates are forced to drill on the grounds of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Yale's Air Force trainees must drive 75 miles to practice on another campus and Stanford and Brown Universities are among those that have banned ROTC programs. Evidently, some forms of diversity simply are unacceptable. Such a policy is hypocritical and a disservice

to the honorable and courageous students who volunteer for military service. These students soon may put their lives on the line for the very people who disdain them. Texas A&M, with its reverence for those who defend and protect this country or the long line of graduates who have fought, does not need Vision 2020 to guide it toward one quality of an elite institution of higher learning — a large number of selfless and respectful students.

Most ROTC programs were banished at the height of the Vietnam War controversy. Some have returned to campuses but many have not. In the 32 years since Harvard disbanded its program, many efforts have been mounted to bring it back. Recently, more than 900 distinguished alumni — including former Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger — petitioned the university to reinstate the corps, without success. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reports that Harvard has no plans to consider revoking the ban.

To shun future protectors of freedom during a time when America is under attack is not only wrong, but ignorant of Harvard's role as a birthplace of patriotism. After the battles of Lexington and Concord, the headquarters of the colonial army were right in the middle of the Harvard campus. George Washington took command of the army at the Cambridge Common.

But Harvard's students and administrators now ridicule the American ideal of liberty and equality by denying the ROTC the opportunity to drill where Washington and his troops prepared to take Bunker Hill. Harvard does this in opposition of the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy. But it accepts the protection of the same armed services it refuses to support. The warped version of tolerance that universities such as Harvard that ban its ROTC program is one that holds in contempt the sacrifices that make America's constitutional freedom and liberty possible.

The diversity of cultures and traditions that they seek to find is too often devoid of a respect for the proud tradition and culture of the U.S. armed forces. The students who train in ROTC programs should not have to travel elsewhere to prepare to defend their country. They have nothing to be ashamed of. These students are possibly the only thing standing between spoiled students chanting anti-war slogans and a draft.

Unfortunately, there appears to be no room for "duty, honor, country" in some of the places where free expression is supposed to be at its best. This is a shame.

Some of America's "elite" colleges sometimes do not seem so smart after all.

Jonathan Jones is a senior political science major.

Free speech goes both ways

Albuquerque, N.M., is three hours behind New York City and Washington, D.C. When University of New Mexico history professor Richard Berthold began his first class on the morning of Sept. 11, he and his students already knew that the World Trade Center and Pentagon were in flames. Instead of trying to discuss the situation or calm the fears of his students, Berthold opened the class — and another class several hours later — with this disgusting quip: "Anyone who would blow up the Pentagon would have my vote."

The backlash Berthold felt for his inhumane and sickening remarks, which he claims were "an unfortunate attempt at humor," was immediate and fierce. Students and members of the Albuquerque community strongly condemned Berthold and called for his termination. Berthold, like other teachers who have been criticized for letting extraordinarily stupid things come out of their mouths in the wake of the nation's most bloody day in half a century, claimed his right to free speech had been violated.

Apparently, Berthold is not only a fool, but a hypocrite. Professors have a right to free speech, and people have just as much of a right to criticize them. If they cannot handle justified criticism, they should find a new line of work.

One of the more noted apologists for the terrorist acts is University of Texas-Austin journalism Professor Robert Jensen, who wrote, according to *The Washington Post*, that the "Sept. 11 attacks were no more despicable than 'the massive acts of terrorism' committed by the United States in Iraq and elsewhere."

UT President Larry Faulkner immediately upbraided Jensen, saying he was a "fountain of undiluted foolishness on issues of public policy." After saying that Faulkner's rebuke had little effect on him personally, Jensen went on to moan about the fact that he was allowed to be open to such public humiliation.

Amazingly, there are other professors who think that a public discourse means they get to say whatever they want

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and are not supposed to be subject to criticism. "There are some things here that harken back to McCarthyism," said Ruth Flower, director of public policy for the American Association of University Professors. This is nonsense.

What these egocentric individuals are facing, perhaps for the first time in their spoiled adult lives, is the revenge of common sense. People understand that what happened on Sept. 11 was a heinous attack by a group of cowards that killed thousands of innocent people, who had no part of their "global plight."

People who try to justify these actions or make them into some kind of joke are rationally bounded and devoid of any sense of human decency. Members of their university communities and the public have told them so, and they are acting like a bunch of spoiled brats who did not get dessert after supper.

In this case, the American people have every right to send apologists for terrorism to their rooms without a goodnight snack. Their comments, protected by the First Amendment, are reprehensible. People are given the right by that very same First Amendment to call such apologists idiots, should they feel the urge to do so.

It is the height of hypocrisy to watch these professors and their unions claim that they have the right to say whatever they want, yet are immune to criticism. Just as Highway 6 runs both ways, so does the public discourse in American society. If a professor cannot restrain the urge to say something that many consider dumb, what is there to stop a student from telling the professor that he made an idiot out of himself? Turnabout is not only fair play, it is, in this case, a constitutional right.

Berthold and Jensen seem to be upset that people saw their comments for the garbage they were and called them on it. This may cost them a little sleep at night, but it is perfectly fair and legal. Somewhere in their hallowed halls of learning, there must be copy of the Constitution lying around. This document sets out the rules of the debating game nicely.

Mark Passwaters is a senior political science major.



CHAD MALLAM • THE BATTALION

MAIL CALL

Aggies share some shame, too

The *Battalion* editorial Monday stated Aggies would never do something as dangerous and classless as what happened at Lubbock this weekend," but the paper's staff obviously has a short memory.

The 1995 game versus the Longhorns at Kyle field featured beatings of UT students who were tackled and punched the face by members of the Corps of Cadets. More zealous members of the Corps pulled their swords on fans to defend Kyle field. The next week, *The Battalion* rightly called the actions by the Corps an embarrassment to Aggieland.

After the 1995 UT-A&M game, many individuals also recognized the problem, but some defended themselves by suggesting that fans had asked for trouble by coming onto the field. One Aggie senior wrote to *The Daily Mean* "if anyone is to blame for this it is UT students, not the A&M Corps of Cadets."

Those defending the beatings by the Corps and other Aggies seem to forget that UT also has a memorial stadium, and that Aggie fans celebrating victory on the turf there in 1994 were physically assaulted by their rivals in Austin.

Aggies, Longhorns and Red Raiders all have been part of some shameful moments associated with heated football rivalries, and sadly, this will continue.

But this incident and the ensuing response teach us two things. First, Aggies are not good at history. Second, and more importantly, do not ever lose to Texas Tech.

Jarrad Prasifka
Graduate Student

Leave Utah alone

In response to George Deutsch's Nov. 5 column:

I was both confused and frustrated by Deutsch's column. I was confused because the point of the article was lost on me, and I am sure I was not the only one. I was frustrated because he resorted to generalizations and out-right name-calling in an apparent attempt at humor.

I think he was trying to make the point that citizens in Utah were about to lose some of their First Amendment rights with the appointment of this new "porn czar."

I suppose we should expect nothing more from an over-eager budding journalist hell bent on protecting freedom of speech for all Americans no matter the cost. And considering he is also a member of the libido-full, 20-year-old demographic, I can see where disrupting the flow of pornography would ruffle some feathers.

Well, actually, no I cannot. This is happening in Utah. A majority of citizens of Utah voted to elect a governor. That governor appointed Houston to be "porn czar," a decision he probably did not reach in the middle of the night without consulting many people. Sounds like the democratic process at work to me.

By making generalizations about citizens of Utah, particularly those belonging to the Mormon faith, Deutsch loses the point of his article and loses credibility as a journalist.

Sean O'Daniels
Graduate Student

I find Deutsch's article on Utah's porn czar to be hypocritical. He ends the piece with a very pompous "It is intolerance." But his article could be a flagship for intolerance. I lived in Utah for five years and it is indeed the nesting ground for over-zealous Mormons, but should not we be tolerant of their values?

If you have ever been to the state, you would realize that about 80 percent of the population probably does not see a porn czar as a waste of money. Who are you to tell people they are wasting their money? Do the majority of A&M students think spending money on beer is a waste of money? Probably not.

I just love how some people are so self-righteous about their quest for tolerance and in doing so they trample on values, criticize religion and poke fun at a woman for her choice to remain unmarried.

Tamara Adams
Class of 2003

Do not look at the pictures

This letter is in response to the horrifying pictures on display at Sul Ross statue. These pro-life campaigners are attempting to gain support for their cause by showing graphic photographs of fetuses. They are absolutely revolting.

Roe v. Wade has not been overturned and women have spoken. Do not dignify this garbage by stopping to look or to speak with any of the people standing in front of the booth. United, we should stand for choice.

Chris Young
Class of 2004

CARTOON OF THE DAY



THE UN-CARTOONIST ©