

OPINION

THE BATTALION

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A safer campus

Students should take advantage of Corps escorts



SARA FOLEY

I called the number for the first time, and felt reluctant to do so. I heard the voice on the phone where I was, where I needed to go and in about ten minutes I saw a khaki uniform coming towards me along the deserted street.

He told me his name, and I managed to fabricate a story to explain why I was in front of Zachary in the middle of the night on a weekend. We made small talk, and I realized I shouldn't have been so skeptical about the whole process. About halfway along our walk, I told him I might have tricked him a bit.

I wasn't in need of an escort. I was just testing them to find out if calling for an escort is as big a deal as I had thought. I don't think I'm the only one who might feel doubtful or childish about calling a Corps escort, but I can say it was better than what would have happened to me had I been walking alone that night.

It would be nice if students could safely walk anywhere they pleased without worrying about being assaulted.

Many women at Texas A&M ignore the possibility of crime, live under a blanket of false security and choose to gamble with their safety. However, crimes occur on campus and will continue to, so it is in the best interest of female students to use the Corps escort service when necessary.

Between January and August 2002, there were three rape offenses reported, according to the University Police Department.

There were 39 incidents of harassment and two cases of aggravated assault.

A&M might be safe when compared to universities of similar size, such as the University of Texas,

which reported 24 rape offenses and 17 aggravated assaults in 2001.

However, it is the belief "nothing will happen to me" that breeds victims.

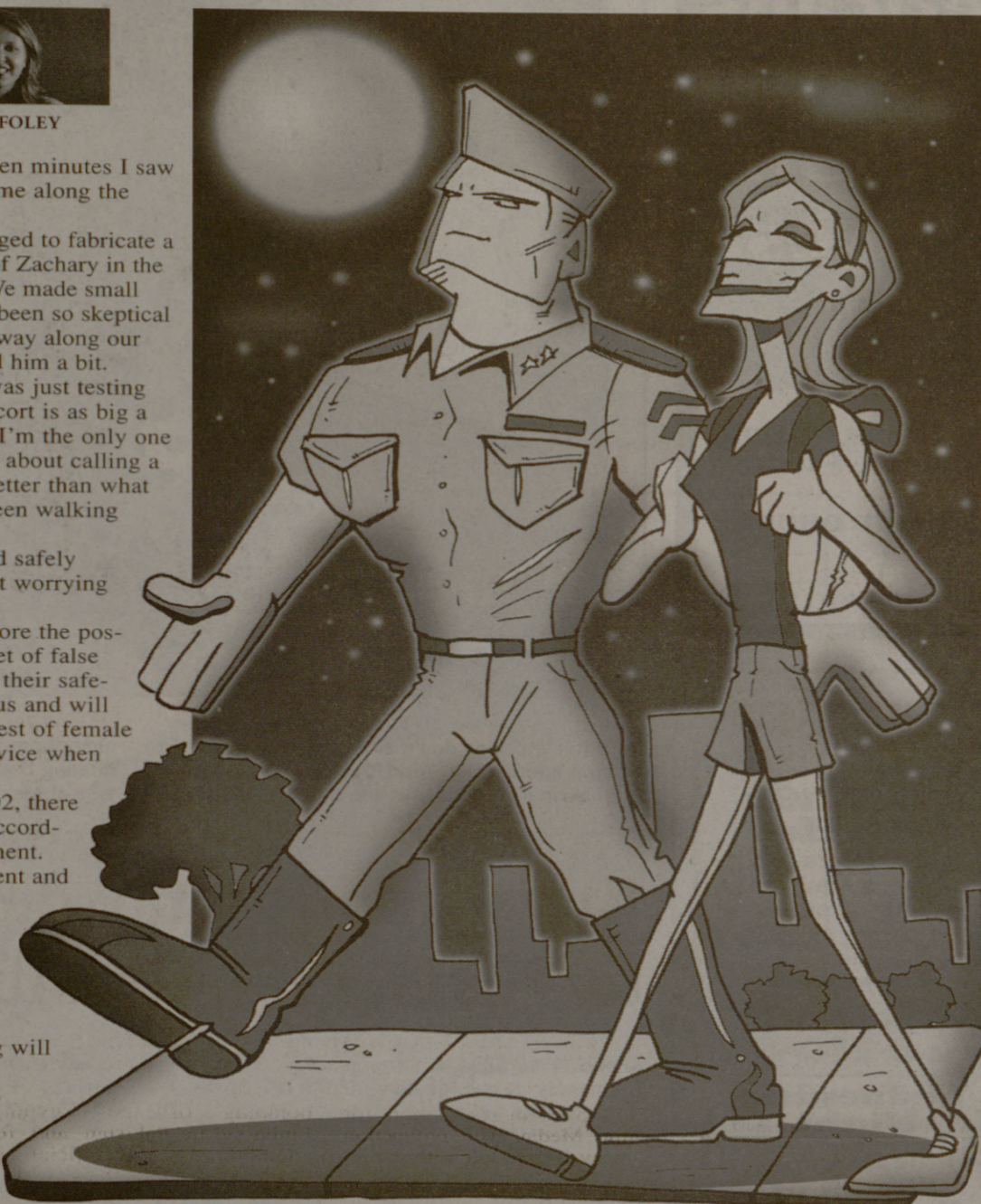
Additional crimes go unreported, so the frequency of crime on campus is higher than one might suspect.

The escort service helps prevent attacks by dissuading potential attackers.

On weekends, there are sometimes up to 200 calls a night requesting escorts, according to Larry Boykin of Company D-2.

Although the guard room receives a number of prank calls and calls from women who might think of the service as a way of meeting dates instead of assuring safety, the service probably contributes to the lower campus crime rates. At any given time, six cadets are working in the guard room and are available to accompany any females walking on campus.

However, something stops many women from using the



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service. Whether it be confidence that she can make it alone, reluctance to wait for the escort to arrive, or discomfort at the thought of actually calling and requesting one, something stops the usage of the service, and these inhibitions may lead to tragedy. Students must be willing to place their own safety above their inhibitions and take advantage of this valuable service.

Sara Foley is a sophomore journalism major.

Musical brings reality to A&M



LENTI SMITH

People don't usually think of Texas A&M as a campus whose members would associate themselves with the issues of homosexuality, sexual diseases and lower-class America, but Oct. 29 and 30 will bring these issues into the minds of many Aggies and the College Station community. MSC Opas has brought the hit Broadway musical "Rent" to the stage at Rudder Auditorium. Students should take this opportunity to witness the brutal honesty and sheer beauty in this production.

Many people coincide conservative with close-mindedness. Yes, A&M is a conservative campus, but this does not translate to intolerant or oblivious to some issues - at least it shouldn't. Being conservative should mean basing views on the accumulation of knowledge you have gathered. Bringing "Rent" to the campus can stand as a movement to project a more tolerable appearance to the outside world.

"Rent" follows the lives of two roommates, Mark and Roger. The characters are faced with small issues such as paying the week's rent and dating woes. But they are also forced to battle more serious issues - Mark's girlfriend leaves him for another woman and Roger has a continuing battle with AIDS. The musical also includes the character Angel, who is a homosexual plagued with AIDS and appears as a woman in a couple of scenes. This isn't a raunchy display of taboo topics. "Rent" closely relates these characters to the audience, immediately connecting them in the beginning.

Of course, there are serious moments, but the overall atmosphere of the play is more fun and "true-to-life" than anything.

Christina Nelson, director of publicity and advertising for MSC Opas, said, "Rent" is something students have wanted to come to A&M. We're considered a conservative campus."

Apparently, students are ready to embrace what is typically considered liberal views in the form of entertainment, and maybe some education will be thrown in as well. The play was previewed by several members, staff and student leaders of Opas on their trip to New York in January. In the playbills from previous Opas plays, Nelson said there was positive response for "Rent" in the surveys that asked for student input.

So far, there has been no negative feedback from anyone on campus or around town, and MSC Opas doesn't expect any. "Everyone seems to be excited on campus, especially since they get a chance to see 'Rent' and 'La Boheme' here in the same season," Nelson said. "Rent" is the contemporary adaptation of "La Boheme."

Issues like those in "Rent" are problems people in the world have to deal with every day, and whether or not it seems so, they are also issues that some Aggies deal with as well. Even if the audience is not dealing with a life-threatening disease, or hasn't had to deal with a drug problem or any other issue "Rent" encounters, this play still hits home in some way to all its audience. Hopefully Ags will be able to look beyond the drag costumes and drug talk to see the realistic, touching masterpiece "Rent." Maybe this is not the start of a new liberal view at A&M. However, it could serve as one way to show the rest of the world that Aggies may be conservative, but we are not closed off from the real world.

Lenti Smith is a junior journalism and political science major.

MAIL CALL

The Battalion only gives the Corps negative news coverage

In response to Richard Bray's Oct. 9 column:

While the Corps certainly has its flaws, it is unfair to focus only on the mistakes that it has made in the past, especially one that happened three years ago. I have never seen a positive article about the Corps - only things about alleged hazing and pictures of that hazing, which violate the privacy of the person being "hazed." Perhaps it would help the University's image if *The Battalion* and *The Eagle* were to publish something about how much money the Corps of Cadets raises for the March of Dimes every year. Why is that never put in *The Battalion*? Is it because then Richard Bray might be forced to say something positive about the Corps of Cadets?

David Kahn
Class of 2004

Students have a right to sell their own sports passes

In response to an Oct. 9 mail call:

I have sold my sports pass in the past. I did not do it to hurt Texas A&M, nor did I do it to buy beer and cigarettes. I sold it to help recoup some of the \$400 I spent to buy books this semester.

I am not rich. If I am not planning on attending a football game for whatever reason, why shouldn't I sell my pass and help ease the financial burden on my family? Does this make me a two-percent?

I seriously doubt that football had anything to do with Rudder's heroics on Omaha in 1944. Nor do I believe that Sully would care one way or the other about whether or not I sold my pass. Indeed, I doubt he would know what a sports pass was. The same holds true for E King Gill.

I bought my sports pass. It's mine. If I choose to give up my coveted 8-inch wide seat to someone who wants it more than I do, I see no reason why I shouldn't make some much needed money in the process.

Chris Dooley
Class of 2005

I must say that Tim Brendel sure has a talent for the dramatic. I'm not sure, however, that James Earl Rudder, Lawrence Sullivan Ross or E. King Gill could give a rip about students selling their sports passes.

What in the world does landing in Normandy have to do with whether I want to attend a football game?

I paid for my sports pass! I own it! I have every right to sell it if I'm not going to be in town. By Mr. Brendel's reasoning, I'm sure James Earl Rudder didn't land in Normandy so Texas A&M could charge me \$1.50 to park for an hour on campus. And I'll bet that Sully didn't fight to keep this college open so that people could complain about the football team.

If you own a sports pass, and you're not going to the game, sell it! Get some of your money back. You bought that ticket, and you're not using it. If someone else wants it, they're going to be willing to pay for it. Welcome to the free market system, Mr. Brendel. Isn't capitalism great?

Joey Humke
Class of 2002

For those of us who are working to pay our own way through this university, it is not always possible to go to each and every football game.

Each semester, I spend several thousand dollars of my money to attend this school, and as hard as I try, I cannot attend every sporting event. If I am unable to attend because I am working to pay my rent, there is nothing stopping me from selling my sports pass, not to buy "beer and cigarettes," but to buy groceries.

Don't get me wrong, I'll be the first Aggie to give my sports pass to any of my friends who need it, but I'm not one to pass up the opportunity to capitalize on the fact that some Corps boys want to take his high school girlfriend to the game so they can make out.

Not everyone who attends this university is a spoiled rich kid whose parents pay for everything and who has no idea of the worth of a dollar. You should not be so quick to judge fellow Aggies by calling those of us who work the hardest to be here "heaps of trash." We are the 12th Man.

Amanda K. Sexton
Class of 2003

Defining race in terms of ideas rather than race is idealistic

In response to an Oct. 9 mail call:

While Mark Gorzycki's points in his letter regarding diversity in terms of ideas and not race are noble, they are not very realistic. His arguments are very idealistic, and it's something that I wish for as well, but I know that in this world, it would not work out. The fact that we even have affirmative action policies points out that race is still an issue today and racism is still prevalent within American society.

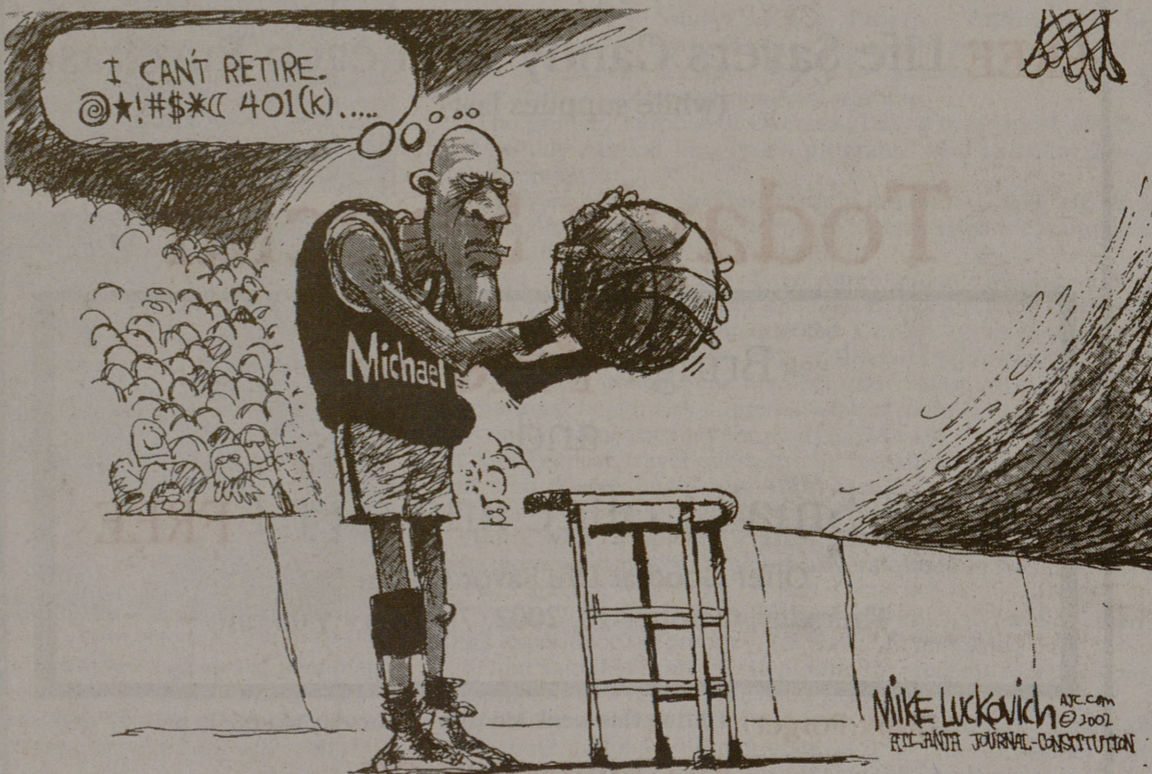
In the Corps of Cadets, I had a very good Vietnamese friend who was in the Corps at A&M-Galveston. His senior year, he was the Corps executive officer. He was more qualified and had more accomplishments than that year's corps commander. Why didn't he get the job? Many peo-

ple, including whites, thought that the only reason the other guy got the job is because he "looked the part." It's instances like that which make minorities call for action.

Even here in College Station, I have a hard time ignoring comments such as, "What're you doing here, Chinaman?" or "I didn't know we were in Chinatown" when I'm walking around campus or around Northgate. Technically, I'm not even Chinese!

The only way to defeat racism is through education and the willingness to open up your minds and your eyes. Ignorance is not bliss, although some say otherwise. The quality of education at A&M is dependent on diversity of thought, but unfortunately, not everyone is very diverse.

Albert Nguyen
Class of 2001



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