

# FORUM

THE BATTALION

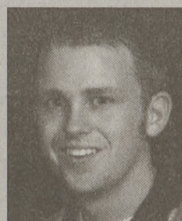
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## Students must overcome 'entitlement' mentality

Graduates who demonstrated exemplary work ethic put Texas A&M on the map, but I fear that our current generation of Aggies is being overly transformed and influenced by a contemporary American attitude of entitlement.

While A&M University President Robert M. Gates outlined an admissions plan based on individual merit, any current student who begins to feel as if he deserves to be at A&M based solely on what he has achieved in the past is sorely misguided — it is a continual commitment.

Some students think they are entitled to be here because of their test scores; others because of the maroon



MATT JOSEFY

in their blood; and still others because of some special aspect they believe they will bring to campus. While all of these can be factors in the admissions process, a sense of entitlement must be left behind upon arriving in College Station.

The moment someone attempts to rest on his laurels is the moment our collective Aggie pride stops growing. Each and every one of us who attends this institution should expect to be challenged and called to put forth our best effort at all times. Any other attitude will wreak havoc on every aspect of our University, from academics to traditions.

How guilty are we of walking into

our classrooms and expecting to receive a maximum grade while contributing only marginal effort? How guilty are we of expecting A&M traditions to remain strong, but justifying our absences at Sul Ross on Tuesday nights and Kyle Field on the weekends? How guilty are we of boasting about "Howdy!" but spending all of our time between classes on a cell phone? How guilty are we of bemoaning the diminishing atmosphere, but sitting in silence next to a person on the bus? How guilty are we of wanting to hold leadership positions, but being unwilling to undergo leadership training and development?

I certainly can't claim to have coined the phrase, but anything worth having comes at a substantial cost.

In the past, the rights and privi-

leges of Aggies have been bought through difficult and trying conditions, lives spent at war, strict discipline and financial hardship. As more of us have moved into satisfying living arrangements, chosen less demanding fields of study and become more in-tune with our technological gadgets than our neighbors, we have become less likely to understand the concepts of sacrifice and hard work.

These are the values which we must once again cherish if we are to survive the many challenges that we face as a University. These challenges range from striving to maintain our distinctive heritage and traditions to ensuring the continued sense of Aggie family and facing increasing costs to coping with the Information Age.

There are hundreds of students who want to be here and who would take your spot on this campus in a heartbeat. In what way are you contributing and giving back to this University community? Perhaps we have become so focused on debates and discussions about Aggie Spirit that we have forgotten the effort we must put forth to keep it alive.

Regardless of any other elements, our backgrounds and achievements, we must all be committed to excellence. Doing so is the only way to ensure that our University maintains its reputation for yielding graduates with a superior work ethic.

Matt Josefy is a senior accounting major.

### MAIL CALL

#### Parking problem unsolved

As a former student and current staff member, I see more than one side of the parking issue.

As a student, I had all of my classes on main campus, but worked on West Campus, out past the bus barn on Agronomy Rd.

Quite frankly, for people in the same position that I was in, the new plan for parking sucks.

It puts you at the mercy of buses, which means also that you are at the mercy of the weather, since most of the bus stops are not covered in any way.

It made me angry to think that PTTS (they will never be TS to me) would limit me to one parking lot, when I needed access to so many.

I worked with my problem in the only way I could: I blocked all my classes together one after the other and came and parked my car at seven every morning so that I would get a spot. Then I worked every afternoon and managed to move my car from a lot near Zachry to a lot on Agronomy.

I did a lot of walking. It was not much fun.

But as a staff worker now I also see the

issues that the faculty and staff raise. As a staff worker I work eight hours a day in one building and I can understand being miffed about having to fight for parking space. Here in the Vet School every day is a fight pretty much, even in this yellow lot.

There are so many people to accommodate on this campus that there are no easy solutions to the parking issues raised.

However, the person who wrote the mail call should remember: Students attend the University, but they do not necessarily run the University.

This University is primarily driven by research. I work in the Veterinary School and most of the money generated and earned is by grants given to various professors to conduct their research.

In fact, a lot of the payroll here for the undergraduate students is paid by that same grant money. So before the writer assumes that he is the most important person on campus, they should realize that their tuition does not fund everything, including the professors' salaries.

Realize that this University is a place where

people come to learn and that the privilege of learning here is just that: a privilege.

Mandi Moore Michaelson  
Class of 2003

#### Erecting walls not answer

In response to Daniel Rossell's Jan. 23 column:

Mr. Rossell states that the Israeli government is justified in erecting a wall in order to protect the Israeli people from Palestinian terrorist groups, and that it is a step towards peace. Unfortunately, the wall will not curtail the violence and injustice of the Israeli government against the Palestinian people.

Rossell contends that life will be easier for Palestinians because the wall will circumvent the need for a large Israeli presence in the West Bank, but he provides no evidence to support the alleged Israeli intention to withdraw its soldiers. He tries to show the overwhelming humanitarianism of the Israeli government due to its offer of compensation to

farmers who will no longer be able to get their fields. However, the loss of his ancestral land and a one-time compensation does not put food in the mouths of a farmer's child month after month after month. But Rossell says, "the Palestinians have to make compromises as well."

In reality, the wall will only increase the sense of frustration and the difficulties already faced by a besieged population. It was not a rare event even before the wall, for Palestinian mothers die in labor before ever reaching hospital because of being deliberately held up at checkpoints. This wall will only increase such tragedies as these. A U.N. report released just this month states that almost the entire group of refugees referred to Jerusalem for medical attention will have to cross the wall not to mention a large number of Palestinian medical professionals.

The best defense against violence born of desperation is not another wall; it is the dispensation of justice to people.

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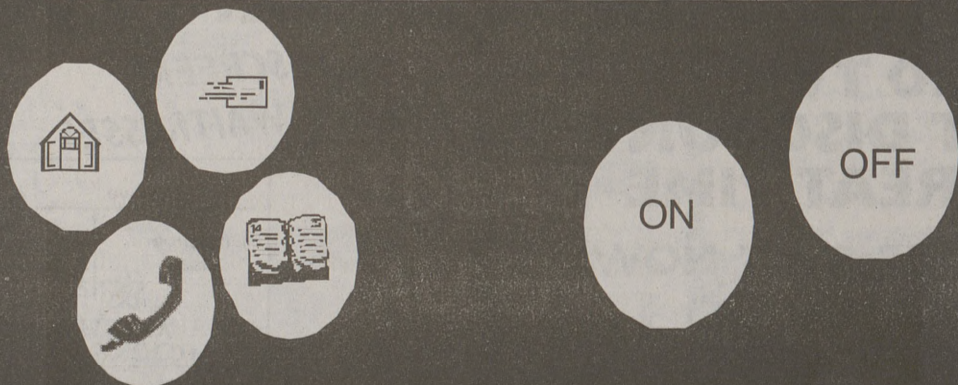
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