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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"The administration intends to mask the true spiritual ramifications involved in the 'renovation' of All Faiths Chapel..."

In 2009 I recognized that All Faiths Chapel, on the campus of Texas A&M University, was in disrepair and in fact dilapidated. The landscape was in like manner. Interpreting this as a call to renovate our Chapel, I approached Dr. Woodcock, professor emeritus in the Department of Architecture. His suggestion was to begin with an architectural/structural assessment that would cost about \$16,000.

My next stop was Dr. Lofin's office. Sharing my concern with him led him to say, and I quote, "If you are looking for a green light to renovate All Faiths Chapel, you've got it."

I then approached the A&M Foundation but encountered a brick wall.

Returning to Dr. Lofin, some time later, in a meeting with Dr. Bob Walker and Rev. Sam Hill, Dr. Walker suggested I identify a group of students, create a student organization and call it "The Committee to Renovate All

Faiths Chapel."

In the meantime money was procured by way of a Student Senate bill to do a "facelift" on our Chapel. Shortly before that work was to begin I met with Mr. Tom Reber, Billy Belmovovitz and another young lady. For an hour I presented what I believe is God's perspective on the renovation of All Faiths Chapel, a student led movement that would lead to spiritual renewal on our campus and beyond. I was ignored.

The administration intends to mask the true spiritual ramifications involved in the "renovation" of All Faiths Chapel by providing a "facelift," then having a ceremony and calling it a "done deal."

Popycock!

As in our lives, God is not calling for a mere "facelift." He is calling for a true "renovation," and may the Lord's will be done!

"Brother" John Ellison  
Class of 1982

"As Aggies we are to welcome visitors and treat them with respect instead of mockery."

I think we can all agree that there's a problem with Brother Jed [Smock], the inflammatory preacher who visits campus regularly. I'm writing to propose a solution by recalling our A&M core values.

The values of respect and integrity need to be reflected by the demeanor of our responses. As Aggies we are to welcome visitors and treat them with respect instead of mockery. Even if we face hateful speech, our integrity must be kept in the way in which we deal with such attacks. Instead of responding with similar language, we should respectfully decline to comment and report any inappropriate speech or behavior. Some students may want to engage in discussion, but given our current track record with him, it is better to avoid direct spoken confrontation.

Last week I saw this kind of view when three students stood out during lunch to call for the respect to the Aggie tradition in dealing with this preacher. It is important for our students to follow their example and become leaders when we face this type of speech. It is also the duty of this institution to provide the students with the tools to learn how to engage such type of visits. Doing anything else falls short from our call to excellence as Texas A&M.

Hector Weir  
Class of 2008

MUSIC REVIEW

Kendrick's 'Berry' aims at racial issues

The day after Kendrick Lamar won two Grammys for his September release "i," he released "The Blacker the Berry," a track addressing racial issues bluntly. The track has accumulated more than one million views in 24 hours on YouTube.

With the deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner, a spark for racial justice began and Kendrick Lamar has fueled the fire. Under the raucous snare beat, a high-pitched voice spits the lyrics, "Six in the morning, fire in the street/Burn baby burn, that's all I wanna see," referring to Ferguson riots back in 2014.

Lamar continues, "I'm African-American, I'm African/I'm black as the moon, heritage of a small village/Pardon my residence/Came



Lamar

from bottom of mankind." And after a few vulgarities he continues with an obvious message, "You hate my people, your plan is to terminate my culture."

Messages like this are not uncommon among rappers. J. Cole and Rick Ross are among rappers who have spoken out against racial injustices. Back in August, The Game released a song titled "Don't Shoot," featuring many African-American rappers.

"The Blacker the Berry" is far different than Lamar's previous single "i" and has raised the bar on the artist's upcoming, highly anticipated album following, "good kid, m.A.A.d city."

Jack Riewe is an English junior and life & arts reporter for The Battalion.



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