

# OUR

# TOWER

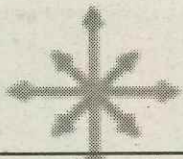
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University of Texas, Austin



Reflections on Public Space and Memory





# OUR TOWER

Created, Edited and Designed by  
**JOSHUA FISCHER**

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## Editor's Note

Essentially, we are a random audience united by a landmark in time. It is safe to say that most of us are immensely excited to welcome the Tower's re-opening, a symbolic gesture we see as representative of the University's willingness to open things up here. The status quo has ruled for too long. It is time to create new memory on this campus, surrounded by pride and excellence, not tragedy and closure.

The upcoming arrival of the Martin Luther King Jr. statue is also a timely addition to campus memory, and it is high time to grace this campus with heroes from every culture, not just confederate men who don't speak to the present or the future. Joining MLK on the

East Mall will be a plaque memorializing the victims of Charles J. Whitman, who single-handedly shattered more than just lives. He scarred our universal memories, even those of us not born by 1966.

This publication is in no way a tribute to Whitman. If anything, it is a tribute to his victims, and to others who met death from the Tower, including A.P. Thomason, a UT English professor who jumped from the 24th floor in 1945.

His suicide becomes quite symbolic if you re-visit the campus atmosphere of 1945. This is not an easy task, but research shows that year to be one of the most tumultuous in UT history, when the UT regents fired UT President Homer P. Rainey.

Rainey stood firm for aca-

demical freedom and tenure, and lost his own job. It was not the first time the regents changed history here, as the controversial Littlefield Memorial statues were all funded by former UT regent Major George Washington Littlefield. We now live with these confederate heroes welcoming the world to the heart of UT. Clearly, we need newer heroes.

It will be interesting to monitor UT today, as its tenure decisions continue to rid the campus of some of its finest faculty, especially women and minorities.

It is said that academic freedom is under attack. If that relates to students as well, then let this publication attest to our freedom as tuition and fee-paying students of this great

University to create this publication. We have received generous financial support from many sources on this campus, and could not have done this otherwise.

This is also a tribute to professor Rosa Eberly, an irreplaceable asset to this school and students to come.

She encouraged us to make something happen, rather than study things happening. This publication attests to our efforts as well as hers.

This September, the UT community reclaims one of its most cherished public spaces. Let this serve as an early tribute to everyone involved in allowing this to finally happen.

It is no longer their Tower. It is "Our Tower."



## A Stain in Our History

I was only one when the tragedy of the tower struck. I'd turn two in six days. By the time I was five, the story of the sniper in the tower, along with all the other stories of the sixties, like the deaths of great men, the shooting of civilians at Ohio State, I would know these stories by heart.

But although I knew these stories were real, that they had happened, I had no depth of their meaning, of their place in history. That reality would come later.

Re-enactments are such a tricky act. Depending on the use of narrative, of footage, of realism, Re-enactments can teach.

I learned of the Tower sniper first through a movie. A movie that tried to show the realism of the moment, of the panic, the chaos. I can't tell you the name of it, or who was in it (except I do know that Peter Bonerz of "The Bob Newhart Show" was in it. He played a reporter) or who directed it. But the images of people scattering around the campus, trying desperately to get out of the line of fire—wherever that was—made me want to investigate this stain in our history further.

From there, I studied documentaries, watched television specials—basically whatever I could get my hands on. And to this day, this story still intrigues me, still draws my attention. I can't explain why I care about it so. Perhaps it just reminds of a time I would never know, of a time when I was born and the world seemed all together wonderful and tragic.

A few months ago I caught the last 45 minutes of that movie. My wife and I were flipping around the channels as usual when we stopped upon that film. It took me a few minutes to remember I had seen it before. I tried to tell my wife all about the event, but she knew. She knew.

And as we watched that film, of people in peril, dying, fleeing, I thought about what it must have been like to be there. I thought about the people who died, and the people whose world of learning was suddenly turned into a world of fear. I still mourn for those people on that day, now so long ago.

Ian Stewart  
San Francisco, CA

Letters, comments, opinions, stories, etc. can be sent to the UT Tower at [uttower66@yahoo.com](mailto:uttower66@yahoo.com)

## Forget It

No, I don't remember that day in August in 1966, although I was alive. More than likely I was riding my bicycle to the beach that day because I was just a 12-year-old kid and I lived on the coast in California at the time.

I remember hearing about Charles Whitman but I don't recall giving it much more thought than: "I'm glad I don't live in Texas. Those people like guns out there."

As for the memorial to the murder victims the day Charles went crazy I don't like it. I am very sorry for these people and their families, but in today's emotionally unstable social climate, a memorial is bound to plant the seed in some other crackpot's brain to repeat Charles Whitman's grizzly deed. Just let the people rest. They are gone.

Memorials to tragedies and human cruelty are examples of morbid sentimentality. Did the Auschwitz Camp 'memorial' in Poland remind the Hutu and Tutsi people in Rwanda, or the Serbs and the Croats that ethnic genocide is despicable? No.

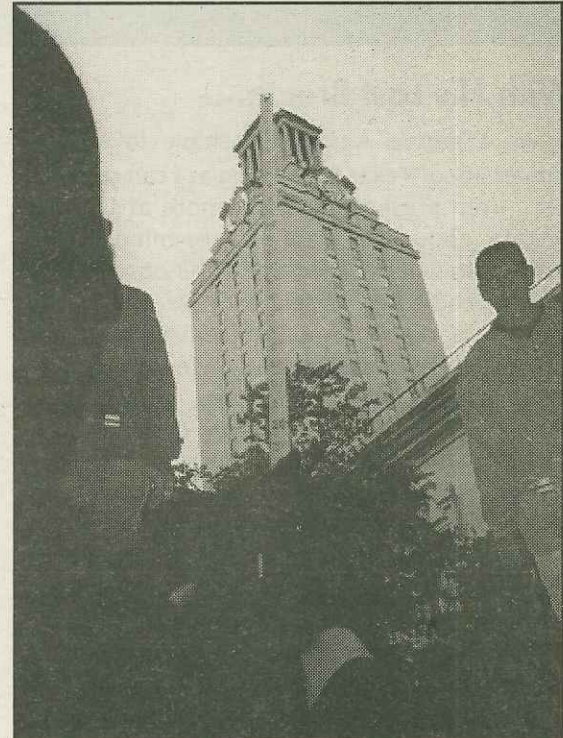
People have honeymoon photos taken in front of the Colosseum in Rome, despite the fact that this structure is a monument to human brutality where people were maimed and tortured for hundreds of years for the bloodthirsty crowds' amusement. Now the Colosseum is considered romantic. Go figure.

Forget the monument to the dead of the Austin Tower, open the tower to the public again, get a refreshment booth on the observation deck (if there's room for it) and let people enjoy the view.

There are too many nice days to let go to waste in this life just because some poor psychopath lost his mind one day and started shooting innocent people from atop that tower. It's over. Forget it.

Sincerely,

Chris Morton  
Encinitas, CA



## Irony of a Shotgun Shell

About 2 years ago, my aunt, a UT alumna who now lives in South Carolina came back to Austin to visit us, and we went to show her the UT campus again for old times' sake...we took her over to Jester dorm where she stayed in the 60s, the Cadeau, and other landmarks around campus, including the Tower.

Well, I always have found it interesting to talk about Whitman, and all the stories people tell who were there when he opened fire on the people below. Well, while standing on the south ground of the main building, my aunt began to tell the story of what happened when she was there. This particular story began to sound a lot like some of the others I heard, so instead of concentrating on her, I started to look around, when I noticed something in the bushes.

When I went up to it, it was a used shotgun shell, which I found pretty ironic. I know Whitman had used some sort of rifle when he opened fire, and not a shotgun, but the whole idea of what had happened there so many years ago, and this single shell sitting there was pretty amazing.

Zack Fogelman  
Natural Sciences Freshman

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## DEDICATION

"Our Tower" is dedicated to the memory of all humans who have lost their lives and loved ones to random maniacal violence, especially those on this campus in 1966 and, more recently, in Littleton, Colorado and all across Yugoslavia and Iraq.



# More Letters

## With His Last Breath...

As a native Austinite, I have loved the University of Texas for as long as I can remember. I am presently a sophomore at UT and ecstatic about the planned reopening of the University's flagship edifice. The observation deck of the tower is said to have one of the most remarkable views of campus and the City of Austin but, sadly it is a view my generation has not been able to see. In fact, as a child, the closed observation deck was an accepted fact of life for me, like a toddler accepts the notion a "green light means go."

However, I was determined that one day I would take that elevator ride up to the deck if I did so with my very last breath. Thanks to President Faulkner and the Board of Regents, I will probably be able to enjoy tower visits for the next sixty years of my life. As we approach a new millennium I can think of no better way for the University to begin anew. The tower will represent academia, the arts, and the athletic endeavors that are the true characteristics of UT.

Charles Whitman lived diagonally from my grandparents. My great-grandfather, had been staying with grandma and grandpa during 1966 so that he could be cared for. On July 31st, when Whitman began packing his car with rifles, my great-grandfather was watching him from the backyard. "What are you doing?" he asked. Whitman replied, "I'm going hunting!" The rest is history. I believe those who lost their lives the following day should be honored with a memorial on campus.

Now grandma and grandpa rent out their old home, and the former Whitman home does not keep occupants long. Why is it that humanity is afraid to go where bad things occurred? Painful memories perhaps. But addressing the memories can help us move on, and we can be a better people because of it.

Sincerely,  
Randy Ortega  
Liberal Arts Sophomore

## More Like Europe

One of the things I loved best about studying abroad in Europe was having the chance to view the entire city and surrounding countryside from the top of a tower. Many towers existed for the benefit of the people.

Everyone at UT should also have the chance to see campus and Austin from the tower, which is the symbol of our university. Why should it be closed off and remembered only for one or two bad incidents that happened there?

Co muzuš udelat dnes, neodkladej na zitek. (Don't put off for tomorrow what you can do today.)

Michelle Flippin  
Education Sophomore

## Memories of August 1, 1966

Yes, I was on campus that day, in the old physics building (Painter Hall) just north of the tower, fourth floor. I and my family used to enjoy the view from the tower, before it was closed and we often took out-of-town visitors there. Being very familiar with the deck and the stairs leading to it, we could easily imagine what was going on up there during and after the shooting. It has been the scene of more than one tragedy, and I can understand the decision that was made to close it.

However, I shall be happy to see it open again so that others can enjoy that view.

The Department of Astronomy occupied half the top floor in Painter Hall. We were scheduled for a faculty meeting during the noon hour, in the departmental library on the north side of the building. That coincided with the time of the event; we carried on and when the meeting ended I left the building for a short time (probably not a good thing to have done, in hindsight). It seemed as if there were people with rifles behind every building corner. A good many people had brought guns on campus and were trying to get a shot at the tower; I don't believe they were in fact discouraged from doing so by the campus police.

One of the sad memories I have of that day was seeing the obituary page in the Austin paper the following few days: it was roughly doubled from its usual daily listings, which in those days was about half a page.

Another was listening to one of the news commentators, on KTBC (now KLBK) I think; well-known but I don't now remember his name. He was reciting a list of those killed, and among them was his own grandson.

Most sincerely,  
Robert G. Tull  
Senior Research Scientist  
McDonald Observatory  
Department of Astronomy

## Tower Poet

Give me a break. There are far too many important things in life than to be concerned about going on a tower. Sure I'll go, but to write poetry?

Ode To a Tower

Oh, How I love thee, let me count the floors.  
One flight, two flights, I'm closer to the top.  
Three flights, four flights, my lungs are gonna pop.

Five flights, six flights, I think I'm gonna' die.  
Seven flights, eight flights I ask myself, "Oh, Why?"

Nine flights, Ten flights, the air is getting thin.

Eleven flights, twelve flights I cannot catch my wind.

Thirteen flights, Thirteen flights, Thirteen flights -

Is there a 13th floor in the Tower?

Duane Fish  
Pharmacy Senior

## Historical Perspectives

As a UT student from 1964-1971, I knew the top floors of the tower first as the home of the classics department. Prof. Battle, who was briefly a UT president in the teens, I think, and was chairman of the building committee for many years, put a very nice library on the top floor for his classics department.

On August 1, 1966, I was delivering food to a dormitory about a mile north when Whitman gunned down another Bob Boyer, a physicist. My wife to be was not pleased to hear on the radio that "Bob Boyer" had been killed, but she was glad to see me later.

The main use of the tower in those days was as the "stacks" for the central library, most of which has been since moved to the PCL. In those days, to get a book, one went to the front desk of what is now the Science Library, got the call number from the card catalogue, turned in a written request at the desk, and then waited for about 15 minutes. During this time, the request would be sent by pneumatic tube up to the appropriate floor, someone would fetch your book, and then your book was shipped down a special book elevator. If you were a graduate student or an especially lucky undergrad, you could get a "stack permit", which allowed you to wander through the stacks, using its two person elevator, and to sit at one of the many carrels that were found near the windows on each floor. What a quiet place the stacks were.

I started as a faculty member in 1981. Getting the chance to have an office on the 20th floor was quite a pleasure, nostalgically. At first, the 20th floor was largely an empty floor, filled with empty book shelves — surplus space where excess computer science faculty were stored. But when Dijkstra came, UT fixed up the 20th floor very nicely, and when Dijkstra moved to Taylor, I got his beautiful, woodpannelled office, which affords lovely views of the west and north campus.

I haven't been up to the top of the tower since 1970, and I look forward to its reopening this spring. I wonder if one can still see the remains of the many bullets that were fired at Whitman, as one still could in 1970.

Few people visit the basement of the tower. I only learned about this vast, dungeoned cavern when pulling the first ethernet, in 1984 or so, between the tower, Painter, and RLM. Few realize, I suspect, that UT is nicely connected underground with spacious tunnels for utilities. You can walk from practically any building to any other underground, with the proper keys.

A quaint fact about the tower is the existence of rather large airshafts that go from top to bottom, in the corners. A skilled climber could easily scramble from one floor to another through these shafts, which we mainly have used for running computer cables.

Bob Boyer  
Computer Sciences Professor



# Faulkner's Focus Opens Deck

Larry Faulkner had been UT president all of two weeks when the proposal hit his desk. For decades, students devised all sorts of plans and proposals to re-open what they considered the heart of UT—its monumental, oft-glowing Tower.

Haunted for nearly 33 years by sniper Charles J. Whitman and closed to the public for a quarter century, the UT Tower is finally re-opening. There will be no chance of another massacre, no option of suicide, for when the public is allowed onto one of its most adored possessions, a security barrier and guards will be in place.

"The University, at a very deep level, wants the Tower to stand for more positive things," Faulkner recently told a class studying the Tower and public memory. "My belief is that if we broaden the experience of the Tower, then people will go beyond the negatives. The negatives are there, they are going to be there."

Faulkner is a realist, and he's seen his share of tragedy, witnessing the aftermath of Whitman's fateful trip to the Tower only three years after he saw John F. Kennedy killed in Dallas. He knows all the risks involved in re-opening the Tower, and he knows about the heavy costs. But he also knows what the Tower means to this community, the state and the nation.

"It stands here as an important symbol of the University, but it's not a personal symbol," Faulkner said, recounting his own nostalgic memories of the Tower. Faulkner attended UT from 1966 to 1969, and says that his position as an alumnus separates him from his predecessors, who refused every proposal to re-open the Tower.

"I have a broader interest in the Tower and feel strongly that the experience from the Tower is not just another nice view. Texas is a state with a very strong self-identity, which has its positives and its negatives, but it's undeniably and overwhelmingly positive," Faulkner said. "But if you ask people what is the most important concentration of public ownership in Texas, that Texans can look at and say 'This is a part of us, a part of our culture, it belongs to us and we're proud of it,' their answer is the Capitol complex and the

University. And that's what you look out on from up there. There's this powerful sense of personal pride and ownership that comes from that experience. It's akin to what you see from the Washington Monument.

"I want people in Texas to feel like they own this University, that it's theirs and they can use it. Having the experience at the top of the Tower is a way to promote that among the broader public. They don't have to come here to study, they don't have to be alumni, they don't have to have students in their family, they just have to go to the Tower."

Faulkner is a renegade in the UT power structure, which has kept the Tower permanently shut since October, 1974, following another suicide. (There have been eight since it was built in 1937.)

In the late 80s, students proposed opening an indoor coffeehouse on the 27th Floor, with space for sightseeing. Today, visitors to the Tower's upper floors are met with signs near the windows that warn plainly, "No Sightseeing From This Floor."

Times are clearly changing at UT. Before the new millennium, the

campus will reclaim its most treasured perk, and welcome the first public statue to a minority. "The life of the University," a phrase Faulkner mentions at virtually every public event, seems headed for a more inclusive future, if not decades late.

While Faulkner deserves credit for his daring mission to re-open the Tower, it is unlikely he devised his plan alone. He knew he was succeeding a popular president, Robert Berdahl, and he knew students here were embroiled in one of the nation's uglier affirmative action battles. He could sense that people were losing or questioning their relationship with what is arguably one of the finest learning institutions in the world.

"I have felt that UT has, over the last 30 years, become somewhat more isolated from the public of Texas," Faulkner said. "I've always felt that we have to take advantage of the unifying power the Tower is a symbol for."

So when the student proposal slid onto his desk last year, Faulkner wasted no time.

"I was asked by students to look at the issue. They gave me a proposal not too long after I got here,

but I had already started thinking about it a bit in the transition between my appointment and when I actually showed up," Faulkner said.

The proposal is worth noting, because it is evidence that students—who represent two decades of Tower activists—are as responsible for re-opening the Tower as Faulkner. Students Heidi Baker, Duane Pozza and Martha Shelton submitted the proposal on April 27, 1998.

"Students at the University of Texas are looking for a means of identifying with their campus and, from a student's first taste of campus life at freshman orientation to commencement, the Tower provides just that," Shelton wrote in the proposal.

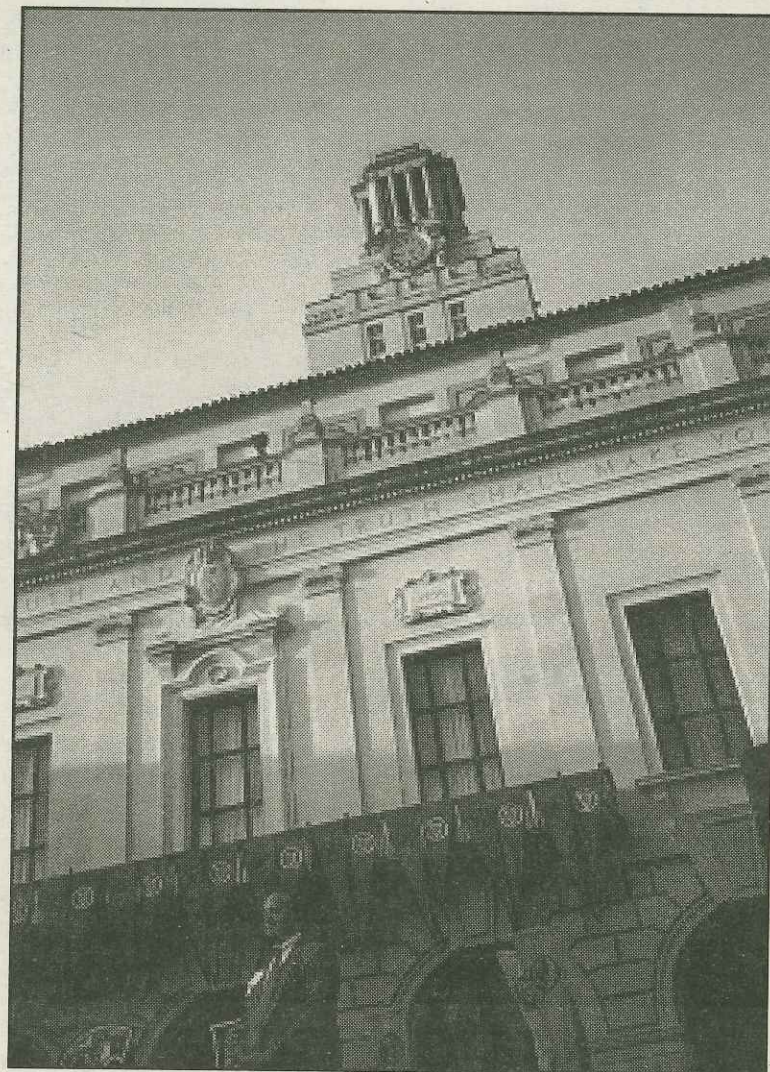
Indeed, UT uses countless images of its Tower in the massive public relations campaign it maintains. Commercials, brochures, catalogs and publications all celebrate the campus as if the Tower is the center of the party, and it is usually shown lit. Yet when students and visitors arrive here, they find out what wasn't mentioned—you can't go up there.

While the actual plans to carry out the Tower's transformation from forbidden zone to public space are still not finalized, they differ largely from the student proposal. Students imagined a student organization that would lead tours to the top, and didn't provide for the security barrier or modernization of the Tower's tiny elevators.

No final price has been set for individual visits to the deck, and Faulkner said it might end up costing nothing. "I wouldn't rule that out right now," he said. "These questions really haven't been answered yet."

Mysteries notwithstanding, the Tower moves ever closer to its big day. Some people will never make it to the top. Millions of others after them will, and that is Faulkner's goal.

"It's important for people to have a positive experience with the Tower in a personal way," he said. "You don't get that experience going over there to pay your bills."



—By Joshua Fischer



# For Whom The Bell Tolls

By Emili Cowan

*Who am I?* How was I born? I remember no significant starting point in my memory, just a gradual progression into consciousness.

I developed. I am here. And I don't know how.

What a world. What a view!

Born into this society, I feel an instinctive need to be beautiful. I think maybe I am, people stare at me in wonder, and take pictures of me at night. But others point at me and shake their heads in disgust. Now I am afraid. Have I done something wrong?

I have developed a concept of time now— I don't understand how it is measured, but I see events flow logically from one to another, and I see the bright circle pass from my left to my right on a consistent motion. I have begun to think that I am somehow important in this concept; people look to me as if I had information for them, then nod and scurry off. I feel compelled to sing many times throughout the day. The people around me explode in their presence when I sing, and then disappear again. It is most confusing.

I really love this view.

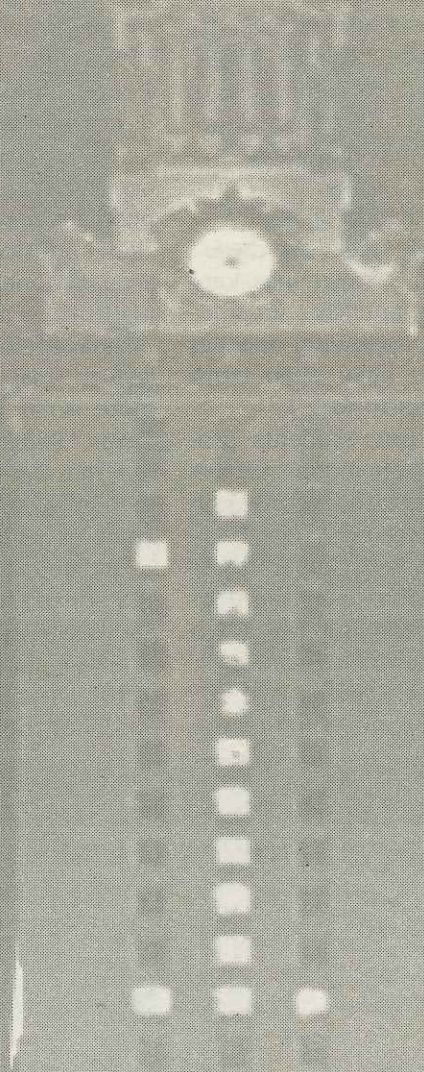
The people around me are unhappy. At first I was afraid of their pointing fingers again, but now I sense it has nothing to do with me. So why do they choose to meet around me—filling my air with their turbulence and anger?

**OH, GOD!!!**

*Please* make it stop. The explosions in my head, I can't take them anymore. I only want to stand and watch the world in peace, but I have such a terrible headache. People scream at me in anger and fright, and I don't want them to. People are running and hiding from me—me, who

would never hurt them or do anything bad to them. It is a horrible day, and I shed sixteen tears of frustration. Perhaps tomorrow will be better.

The headache has been gone for a long time now, but people still point and stare at me, like I did something terrible.



But I didn't do anything! I have done nothing but stand here and observe. It is the people, those tumultuous people who I think are called students, that cause everything to happen. Why can't my observers see that? I think I am in such a bad mood because no one is sharing my wonderful view with me anymore.

Something is very, very wrong here. I don't know why, but it is. The stars are all around my head like a crown of jewels, and the moon shining on me is a crystal globe of light through a serene night, but something is still wrong.

I can feel the badness of it coming up through me like indigestion. The pain explodes in my head without warning, and I have a feeling that tomorrow people will be pointing at me again.

It happens again. It happens again. And over, and over. I want to fall to my knees and weep, to pray that it can't happen again. But I know I can't stop it. I am powerless, I can only stand and watch. None of my people like me anymore. They stare and whisper, and give me long pitying looks. I think maybe my time here is now short, and I wish I could somehow tell them that I didn't do anything wrong.

I am alone for good, and can no longer share my beautiful vista with any of my people. At first I thought it was only temporary, like before, but I know now that they intend to lock me away for good. For many cold and warm seasons, a few would come, only those special and important, but it is not the same. I want the ordinary, laughing, happy people to come back to me.

I am almost afraid to hope, but I think something might be happening. There has been more activity, a buzzing, in my head lately. People stare at with a wishful hopefulness, rather than the accusing looks that I have grown accustomed to.

Don't get me wrong, really, I am grateful to be here, in this beautiful world, surrounded by tempestuous Life (especially on my right). But I ache for actual human company.

When will they ever understand? I stand here, I can do nothing else, yet am somehow blamed for their misfortunes and mistakes. I am powerless to change their minds, but must just stand here and sing the true story to them.

I don't think they ever really listen.



# Will a Ritual Work?

The Vision of Asian Studies Professor John Nelson

Something besides chance caused me to bump into a former professor that April day, right near the Littlefield House, in the shadow of the University of Texas Tower.

"There's a familiar face," he said, somehow recognizing me after a year. I had always liked John Nelson, a diligent assistant professor of Asian Studies.

His dedication to his subject and his students was memorable. His knowledge of Japan and especially its intricate spirituality spiced up an otherwise plain semester.

We stood there and exchanged news, then, like I've been doing all semester, I popped the question:

"What do you think about the Tower's re-opening?"

Without hesitation, Nelson told a story that presented an idea so remarkable that I had to schedule an interview to hear more details.

Nelson explained his "unfulfilled fantasy," a desire to see the Tower "cleansed" before its long-awaited re-opening in September, just three months prior to year 2000.

"Since the millennium has seized the imagination of so many in popular culture, to start the next 1,000 years without this purification would bode ill for the University," he said.

By bringing in a core of "religious specialists" to conduct a ritual cleansing, Nelson believes the Tower can enter this new era with a clean slate.

"In the countries and

societies where I work in East Asia, and in the Native American culture, they have this tradition of purification, where you clean up a place and at the same time attempt to calm and control those spirits that may be lingering.

"Because the Tower has so much negative history associated with it, despite its positive presence, there's always that shadow there, the alternate reality of the Tower that people can't escape," he said.

"There needs to be some sort of acknowledgement and attempt to control those images and those associations, and a ritual provides that mechanism."

In Asia, where concepts like Feng Shui have remained popular since the last millennium, land and what is built upon it form a spiritually charged relationship. Buddhist religion is very aware of ancestors and their place in cemeteries and in home altars, while Shinto, Japan's oldest religion, is concerned with remaining in balance with nature, especially natural energies that can be as destructive as they are beneficial, such as wind, water, sun and earth.

Therefore, rituals of purification are often needed before new buildings are constructed to cleanse an area of past misfortunes and calm the spirits of the place itself.

Nelson is an internationally recognized expert on Shinto, who incidentally will be on leave in Japan when the Tower is finally

re-opened. In the remaining months beforehand, he hopes the University will listen to his idea and consider bringing in the group of specialists who can see his fantasy to fulfillment.

He recommends a group that includes, but is not limited to: a Native American shaman; a Buddhist priest; a Catholic priest; a Shinto priest; and a Protestant minister. They would gather for a very private ritual conducted upon the observation deck, and then for a public ritual in front of the Tower on the South Mall.

From our conversation, I can tell that Nelson is a bit worried about the reaction to his non-traditional, yet highly appropriate idea. He fears that some people might not understand the Asian-influenced motivations behind such a ceremony.

I tried to convince him that fearing what may result is not as important as doing the right thing. He agreed, to an extent.

"It's not so much that the ritual is necessary, but what can it hurt?" he asked. "In fact, that's what a lot of ritual practices are. Belief, Nelson said, is not a criterion for religious practice, while "propriety of action" is what motivates a ritual.

"For most places, it is doing the ritual that is important, following through with what is proper. Through that, people can take some assurance that the right thing has been done, the bases have been covered. We'd show that we are sensitive to

the broad-based, diverse, multiethnic, multinational student body."

Clearly, Nelson has done a bit of independent thinking about the Tower since he came to work here in 1994. I have always called the internal spaces of the Tower "maze-like," while Nelson sees it as a "labyrinth."

"Oh, man, there's that Tower," Nelson recalled thinking when he first saw it in 1994. "It gave me the creeps. Still does."

Back then, Nelson had just finished graduate school and was teaching courses on Japanese religion in the Seattle area.

"Then I came down here where there's this big, prominent Tower that seemed to be calling out for some sort of ritual to deal with its dark history," he said.

I often trust the experts, especially when the subject matter is Asia, many of whose countries have 5,000 years of history from which to learn.

The beautiful, necessary process of ritual cleansing certainly offers great benefits to American society, where so many places—even UT's prized Tower—are marked by tragedy.

Nelson told me that he has contacts with all the religious specialists needed for the ritual. He figures he'd throw his idea out there, looking for the chance that others might be interested in helping it happen. According to Nelson, the process would be easy to accomplish, as long as there is enough support. Count me in.

By Joshua Fischer



# The Tower is Home to Hopes and Dreams, Rallies, Protests and, Above All, Symbolism

By Nicole Tomich

From a desk that sits beneath a window on the 4th floor of the Texas Student Union, one can see the west clock atop the UT Tower against a brilliant blue sky.

The chimes that sound every quarter-hour remind a diligent student exactly how long he or she has been studying. On that same clear day, one may also find many students basking in the sunlight on the stairs at the base of the Tower.

The students at UT quickly catch on to the Tower's brilliance shortly after they begin their years here. Likewise, the administration has realized the Tower's impact on the campus community and has begun using it as the center of its advertising campaign. All of the new campaigns, such as "We're Texas," centralize on the Tower as an icon.

There has been debate about whether this is false advertising because some people claim that the Tower houses primarily administrative offices and does not serve as the center of student life.

The use of the Tower as a positive icon for public relations is legitimate because the Tower serves as the center for student functions and student life, as well as a symbol of pride

and achievement shared by the Texas community.

The welcoming event for all freshman students is a program during the first week of school called "Gone to Texas." The event is a student's first chance to congregate at the base of the Tower with thousands of other freshman. I will never forget the year I attended "Gone to Texas."

The featured speaker was Tom Penders, the former basketball coach, and though I don't remember his speech, I remember him pointing to his new freshman players. Everyone turned to see a group of heads sticking up above the crowd and everyone cheered. "Gone to Texas" is just the beginning of a long list of student activities that assemble at the base of the Tower.

As a very active student on campus, I try to attend as many spirit events as possible. Just this year, I have attended the Torchlight parade (which ended at the Tower), the Hex Rally, and the Hoops Rally. I am in an organization that stands on a raised stage between the featured guests and the student body during all of these rallies.

It is amazing to see the South Mall beneath the Tower fill with students

ready to cheer for the football team or basketball team. Everyone goes wild when Alpha Phi Omega, a National Co-ed Service Organization, unleashes the huge Texas Flag from the 4th floor, covering the entire front of the Main Building.

Also, I recently participated in a campuswide talent show called Texas Review. The Review Committee set up a huge stage at the base of the Tower for all of the participating organizations to display their talents. The free Friday night show drew a crowd bigger than I had ever seen at the Tower.

Even students who are unhappy with some aspect of campus life choose the Tower as a point of congregation or a place to express their views. Earlier this year a student protest supporting affirmative action led to nearly 40 students actually sleeping inside the Tower until they got a response from the University's President, Larry Faulkner. The disgruntled students knew they would get the most attention if they demonstrated in the Tower.

Years from now, UT students will recall the memories that stem from congregating around the base of the Tower. Using the Tower as a symbol to sell

our University is valid because it is home to meaningful physical functions that unite the campus community through its symbolism.

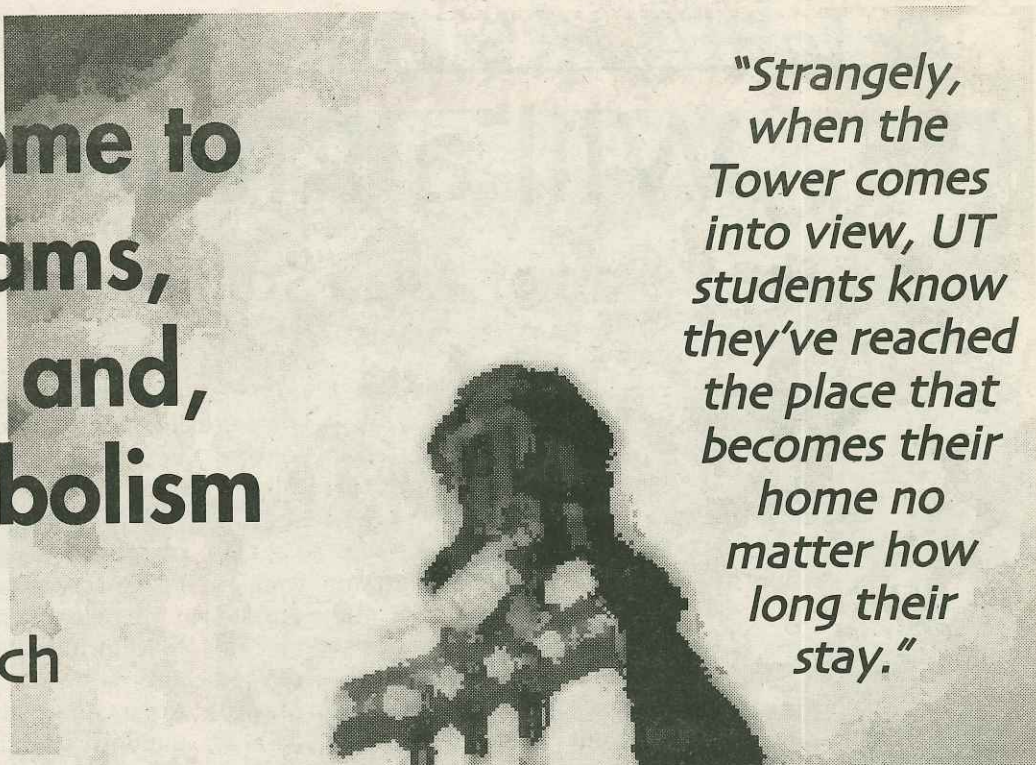
When a physical object is attributed to an event in time, the object can become a symbolic memory. The sharing of a symbol by a variety of publics also justifies its use commercially. The new advertisements are designed to spread the wonderful news of exactly what the Tower represents, and to give those unaware of its symbolism the chance to come share in the splendor.

The clock tower has become more than just a building, but symbolizes student life at UT. The tower as an icon represents not just our university but also stands for pride, ownership, and unity.

Strangely, when the Tower comes into view, UT students know they've reached the place that becomes their home no matter how long their stay.

The Tower's symbolic legacy reaches its greatest height when it is lit bright orange in celebration of a significant event.

This year the Tower was lit orange with the number 34 outlined in the office windows in honor of



*"Strangely, when the Tower comes into view, UT students know they've reached the place that becomes their home no matter how long their stay."*

Heisman trophy winner, Ricky Williams. That evening, the Tower gave everyone a sense of pride and the feeling that just by going to UT they could share in Ricky's accomplishments.

There are those who argue that because the Tower primarily houses administrative offices, it is nothing more than just another office building. Undeniably, that is how the Tower is filled, but that is just a very efficient use of space. The fact that students must pay tuition beneath the roof of the Tower further contributes to its dominant role as the number one building on campus.

It is almost comforting to know that the best money you ever spent supports the individuals working within the Tower.

Though the students at UT may forget the building where they earned that A in calculus or struggled for that C in chemistry, they will never forget that the building was draped by the Tower's shadow.

The very song the Longhorns sing at the close of all ceremonies, "The Eyes of Texas" is a reminder that all of their efforts on the UT campus are being "watched" by the clock eyes on that great Tower.



# UTPD Officer Prevented Another Tower Massacre

On a fateful September afternoon in 1991, the University of Texas was nearly the scene of another mass murder. Though John H. Oliver was no Charles Whitman, the disgruntled student appeared to have every intention of murdering then-President William Cunningham, carrying a loaded .357 Magnum and 92 rounds of ammunition into Cunningham's suite of offices on the Tower's fourth floor.

Oliver didn't murder anyone, but he certainly tried, firing his weapon only inches away from the face of UT Police officer Don Marquez. The 26-year veteran officer, who earned a medal of valor and lost 20 percent of his hearing after the ordeal, calmly recounted that bizarre day, one that once again indelibly marked this University's trigger-happy history.

After a long struggle with the feisty Oliver, Marquez restored order single-handedly, while his colleagues dealt with a rowdy student demonstration against tuition hikes just outside on the West Mall's Free Speech Area.

"I had a very, very close call," Marquez said, his voice wavering. "If I hadn't jerked my head when I did, I wouldn't be here right now."

This conversation took place in the outside lobby of President Larry Faulkner's office, one of the most royal locales inside the Tower. Just inside the glass-paneled doors nearly eight years ago, Oliver tried his Whitmanesque crusade, only he couldn't see Marquez, who—for some "odd reason"—was sitting with his back to the win-

**Marquez survives a close call in the President's Office, stops disgruntled student with gun.**

dow, a "no-no for every police officer," he said. Yet, that critical mistake may have saved a bunch of lives.

Today, Marquez often relieves fellow Officer Norm Arn, who most people likely mistake for Faulkner's secretary upon entering the outer lobby. Arn's desk, complete with name plate, computer and phone, looks just like a secretary's station. But Arn has a far different agenda than any of Faulkner's secretaries, and he carries a gun.

Thanks to the 1991 incident, the President's Office is guarded at all times by a plainclothes commissioned officer. Arn said he spends most of his time giving out directions, but his primary duty is to "diplomatically screen all visitors to the President's Office."

"This is a sensitive area, and I am here to diffuse any situation before it begins," Arn said. Formerly a street officer, Arn notes that his position—which he's held since 1993—gives him a better chance to use his college skills. He graduated from the University of Texas, Arlington with a degree in speech communication.

Arn is congenial and welcoming to fourth floor visitors, essentially ensuring that no one slips into the President's Office without first passing his scrutiny. He said he doesn't know if other universities offer this type of protective service to their presidents, but that con-

sidering UT's history, his post is necessary.

## The Final Straw

"The Olivér incident was the final straw," Arn remembers. "There was a series of events at the University at that time that were controversial, mainly involving divestment from South Africa and freedom of speech protests. Marchers would come here and disrupt the office by demanding to see the president."

Oliver had been a computer science freshman until he dropped out several days before he showed up with his gun. He was acting independently of the ongoing protest on the West Mall, though his motives are still unclear. Reports indicate that Oliver was unhappy with how UT treated him, and that he wanted to seize control of the President's Office and force him to resign at gunpoint.

Though Cunningham was not in his office when Oliver barged in, Marquez said Oliver was there to kill someone.

"It's hard to say what he was going to do," Marquez said. "During his confession, he said that he had bought the gun from McBride's, and two boxes of ammunition, then the following day he went to a firing range by Manor, and fired eight rounds at a target, just to see if he could actually fire the weapon. Then he came back to school and was sitting on the West Mall debating when he was going to do it.

"When he came up, he had a goal and a mission, and his mission was to get to the President by



Photo Courtesy Steve Olson

**UTPD Officer Don Marquez saved the President's Office from a potentially deadly confrontation in 1991. He retires next year.**

whichever means possible. It's hard to say whether he was going to kill the president, but when somebody goes to the extremes of pointing a loaded weapon at somebody's face and then shooting it at a police officer in uniform..."

Marquez leaves the rest to individual conjecture. He doesn't dwell much on John Oliver these days, following his civil suit and Oliver's eventual nine-month jail sentence in 1996. Following the shooting, Oliver was expelled from UT, though he tried unsuccessfully to re-enroll a few years ago, Marquez said.

"He had some of the best lawyers in the state," Marquez said. "I had a meeting with his parents, and we found out that Oliver had mental problems, but his parents never accepted that their son was actually sick."

Marquez received an \$8,000 settlement from his civil suit against Oliver, though he was seeking \$1 million. As a result of the incident, Marquez also was honored with the Chief Donald R. Cannon Distinguished Police Officer Award, which provided him with a plaque and \$3,000.

Officer Marquez is retiring next year, coinciding with the re-opening of the Tower's observation deck. Haunted for 33 years by Whitman's infamous massacre and a spate of demoralizing suicides, the Tower is the scene of many past tragedies.

In a day and age far more

violent than the sixties or seventies, some people fear a continuation of the Tower's sad history once the deck re-opens. Others welcome the re-opening as a new chapter in University history, one that accepts and finally dismisses the past horrors.

Marquez said he doesn't envy the officers who will patrol the Tower's deck.

"Whoever's up there is always going to have to be on their toes," he said, not really sure if opening the Tower is a good idea.

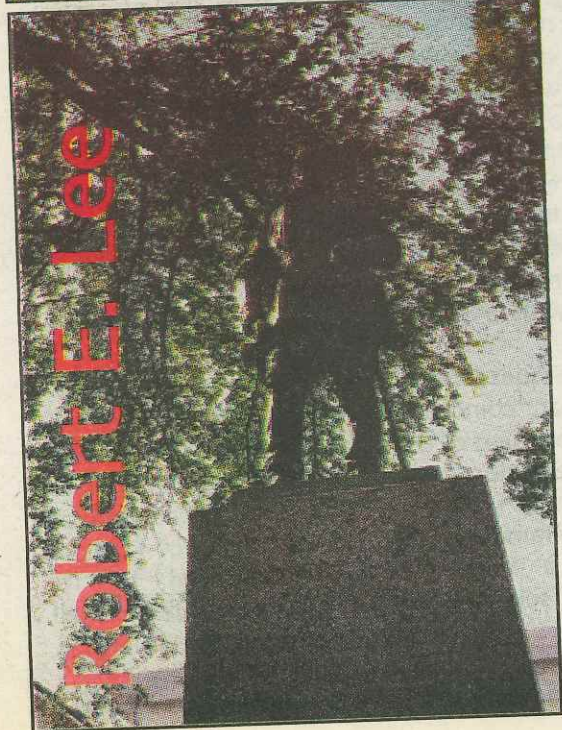
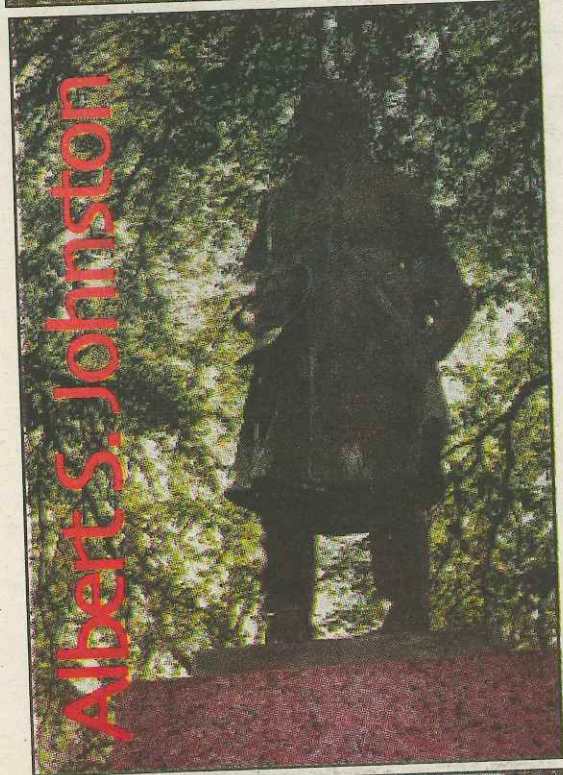
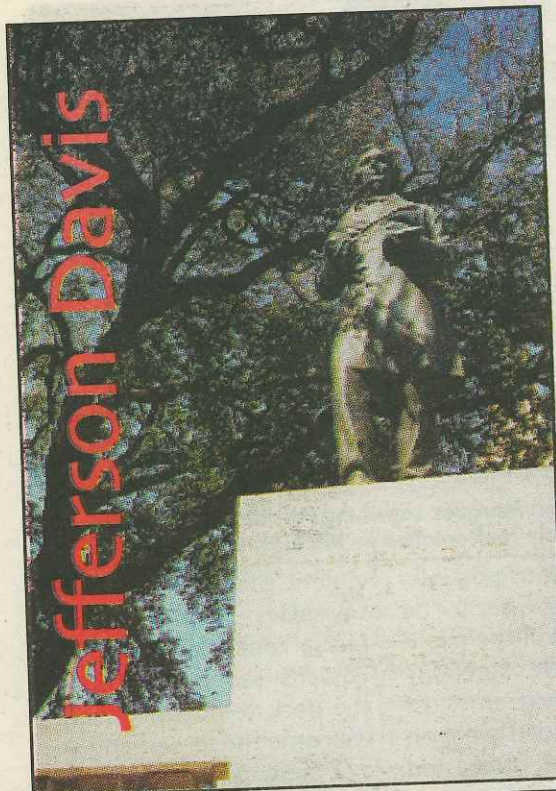
"You never know how the human brain works. You never know how a person is going to react. And you never know when a person has a mental problem. When you encounter a person on a one-to-one basis, you don't know what that person is thinking. You don't know what that person has been through. You don't know if that person has family problems, or personal problems, or financial problems. So you never know a person's breaking point."

Noting that UT currently has fewer police officers than it did in the seventies, yet double the student population, Marquez stood, walked toward the elevator and smiled knowingly, as if his upcoming retirement will finally separate him from the chaos that frequently abounds at the University of Texas, a school marked by its haunting tragedies as well as its glowing triumphs.

—By Joshua Fischer



# Analyzing The



Along with the Tower, the Littlefield Memorial and its statues represent the University of Texas. But do they?

We may never know who first called the South Mall buildings and statues the "Six-Pack." We do, however, get to live with this true Texas-style moniker every time someone refers to the gorgeous, sprawling area beneath the Tower and just in front of the larger-than-life statues of Jefferson Davis and Woodrow Wilson.

"Six-Pack" could refer to the six somewhat identical buildings found beyond the South Mall, including Rainey, Parlin and Batts Halls, among others. Or perhaps it refers to the six statues, not counting George Washington, that decorate the area, including Robert E. Lee and Albert Sidney Johnston. Either way, when one thinks of the "Six-Pack," this area immediately comes to mind.

What might not come to mind is the controversial nature of the men eternally captured in bronze, and the man who financed their creation, Major George Washington Littlefield. The six statues, along with the Littlefield Fountain, comprise the Littlefield Memorial.

"...the Confederate president and generals of the disjoint and far-flung Littlefield Memorial continue to be something of a liability in UT's high-profile struggle to recruit more black students and professors," writes Avrel Seale, editor of *Texas Alcalde*, the normally conservative Texas Exes publication.

Today, University regents no longer randomly install statues on campus, but Littlefield, appointed as a regent in 1911, did everything he could to ensure the livelihood of the Confederacy on campus. He even donated \$100,000 to promote the study of Southern history at UT, due to his belief that textbooks featured a Northern bias.

Over the years, people have come to question the integrity of the men Littlefield permanently immortalized on the University's most picturesque landscape. Does the University really want Woodrow Wilson and Jefferson Davis as the official greeters to the Main Building?

These men speak to the past, not the future.

In 1998, students Ed Donovan, Zan Dumbadze, Jemima Pierre and Tamela Saldana collected reactions to the "Six-Pack," offering huge sheets of paper for passersby to record their opinions, wishes and sentiments.

"Through various activities on the South Mall, including the presentation of alternate statues, we sought to discover students and others' understandings of the histories represented by the six-pack monuments," states a brochure created by the group.

Some of the anonymous responses gathered by the students are found on the next page. We thank them for sharing their research with the community.

—Joshua Fischer

"Art has many functions, learning to appreciate its form. Art is, among other things, a weapon in the culture war."

—Sanford Levinson



As one of the richest men in Texas, George Washington Littlefield spared no expense in building the Littlefield Home, 1000 Whitis Avenue. A Littlefield built the house in 1880. The house he placed on the site of the Littlefield House behind it, the quarters of Nathan





# Six-Pack”

some of which can be reduced to  
d aesthetic criteria of beauty and  
gs, both the terrain of and often a  
that course through societies.”

n, UT Professor of Law  
n in Stone”



ople in Texas, Major George  
ve) had money to burn, and he  
uilding what is now called the  
on the corner of 24<sup>th</sup> St. and  
ng to a University brochure,  
“as a testimony to the impor-  
wealth.” It features a Carriage  
part of which was “the living  
Littlefield’s body servant from  
hood.”



What do you think about the statues in this mall  
and the history they represent?

“I think what’s more interesting are the bible and Confederate  
quotes throughout the campus. Whatever happened to separation  
of church and state? I also find it disturbing that the great women  
of the state were never chosen to be memorialized. Very typical,  
however, of a Southern state which consistently pushes for institu-  
tionalized racism and sexism.”

“This school glorifies war and promotes ambition for power.”

“The current statues are texts not about the essential values of  
some imaginary university, but about the interests and memory of  
those who control the funds and space needed for statues.”

“I think they represent a history that many would like to forget, not  
honor.”

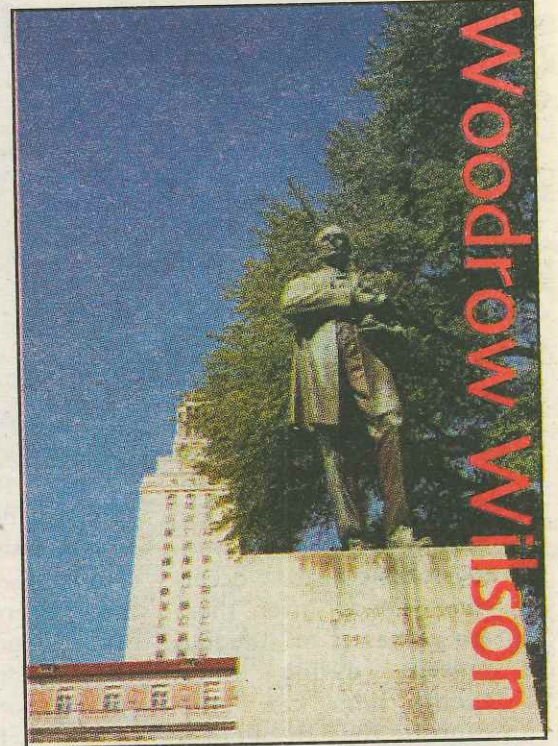
“These statues are a mockery of the ‘institution’ (freedom and  
democracy) that many races spilled their blood throughout history  
to see, touch, hear and feel. We stole, cheated and robbed the  
Native Americans. They gave us land and medicine. We gave them  
death, disease, casinos, gambling, drugs and the Trail of Tears.  
Other nations revere their tribal origins, we burn, trash, mock and  
desecrate them. The despicable and detestable are raised to promi-  
nence while the original and the just were shackled, tortured and  
branded as savages when they fought to protect what was rightful-  
ly theirs. The pompous ignorance of these detestable men somehow  
wound up gracing our courtyard to be revered. Justice? Freedom?  
Equality? I think not. These men should have been hung, not hon-  
ored. The Native, Mexican, African and other Americans who risked  
their life and limb to breathe reality into the original American  
dream should be standing up there. They are the true patriots.  
Those men need to be melted down and made into something  
worth looking at that truly represents them—a copper toilet.”

“Fat Southern guys don’t represent UT anymore, necessarily, but at  
one time they did. These need to stay up so we will know how far  
we’ve come, but more statues need to be added to reflect change.”

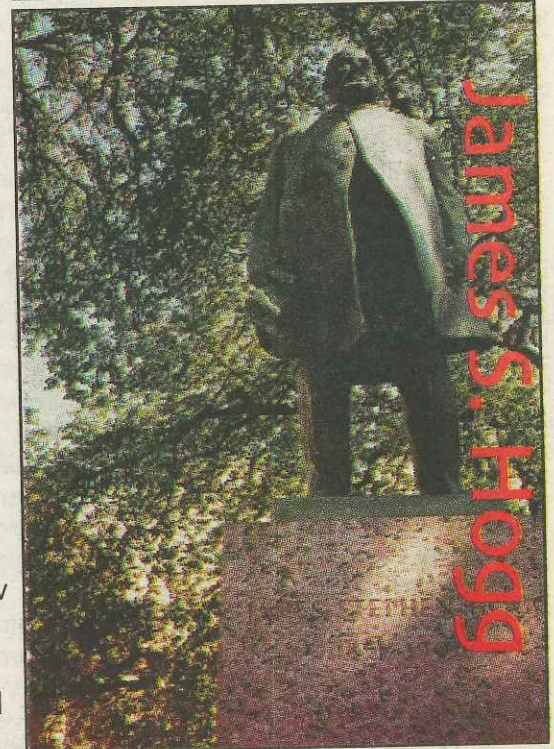
“These statues remind me that property-owning white men have  
set the agenda in our political history and that this land was gained  
through an act of unjustifiable aggression.”

“History is important—no need to deny or revise it....just learn from  
it. Make new assessments about who we are and how we got here.”

“I’m torn. On one hand, if you destroy them you take away a  
reminder of how our society has come to be the place of racial dis-  
cord that exists today. On the other hand, maybe we need to get  
rid of them in order to move forward.”



Woodrow Wilson



James S. Hogg



John H. Reagan



# Remembering Kathleen Whitman

## A supervisor recalls the sniper's wife and the hidden tensions

JFK's assassination and the Challenger explosion are two examples of historic events that needed an explanation for why they occurred. Prior to any event in life, many stages of linking events have already occurred. Sometimes evidence of this is recorded, and it can help decipher the reasoning for the historic occurrence. Most often there are witnesses or standbys present during these events who can later explain the chronology and give outside information concerning the event.

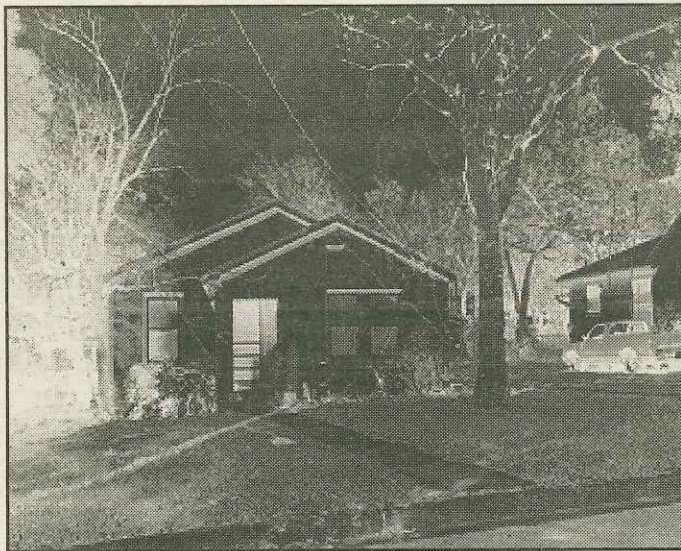
Sharon Rhodes is one of these individuals. Back in 1966, she was a supervisor of Kathleen Whitman at Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. Today, Ms. Rhodes works for the University of Texas in the department of Athletic Media Relations. Kathy's late husband, Charles Whitman, climbed the UT Tower and created a siege upon the University with his sharp talent for sniping on August 1, 1966. What possessed this man to inflict this deadly act is still debated by many individuals. Whether it consciously or unconsciously happened, the destructive act occurred and scared numerous people from that day on. The curiosity of knowing what happened before this event is about to unfold. The opportunity for unanswered questions was achieved by a personal interview with a sincere lady, Sharon Rhodes. Through the stories that Ms. Rhodes explained during our interview, many of her memories emerged. Some of these memories conflict with other studies and provide a different outlook on the massacre. This perspective is strictly her individual memory recalling details from a historical event. As you will

see, her accounts of the massacre differ greatly from those in Gary LaVergne's book, *A Sniper in the Tower*. She also provided an interesting chronology of the events that took place leading up to and during the Whitman massacre.

Ms. Rhodes first started working for the phone company in the fall of 1965. The headquarters and her office were located at 909 Colorado St. Through the year she had obtained the credibility to hold the position of Assistant Chief Operator. The work was rather stress-free, but occasionally the phone switchboard got overloaded and required Ms. Rhodes to stay at work longer than expected. However, she did not mind the job. It was accommodating to her social life and the times she attended class. As a benefit, Ms. Rhodes had her college tuition paid for since her father was a professor at the University. He made her pay for everything else with the money she earned from her job.

In the summer of 1966, Ms. Rhodes employed a sophisticated lady named Kathleen Whitman.

"Kathleen desperately needed the job to pay her husband's college tuition and their rent on their home," explained Ms. Rhodes. "Coming from the same situation about paying rent, I understood and thought she'd be an asset to the company." Mrs. Whitman was always eager to earn extra money outside her regular pay-



The Whitman house, at 706 Jewell St. in South Austin

check, and often stayed late, worked on Sundays and even holidays.

While working as supervisor, Ms. Rhodes went out of her way to get to know her employees on a more personal basis. She remembers odd phone conversations between Kathy and her husband, Charles. There always seemed to be a bit of discomfort between them. When scheduling times to work, a rule of Charles' required her to check with him first.

"I would often analyze the situation and wonder if something bad was happening between the couple," Ms. Rhodes said. She also commented that Charles would always be away while Kathy worked and made all the money.

One afternoon, Ms. Rhodes remembers speaking to a neighbor of the Whitmans'. The neighbors said that sometimes they would hear yelling, and always were on the lookout for trouble. Ms. Rhodes wanted to inform Kathy of the company's counseling service if Kathy thought it was necessary. Ms. Rhodes often thought to speak to Kathy about the situation, but then came to the conclusion that Kathy would mention something if she needed her help.

The night before the

massacre, Ms. Rhodes arrived to work around 9:30 p.m. At that time, the switchboard turned the office into chaos. Ms. Rhodes recalled asking Kathy to stick around to help out, knowing Kathy would jump at the chance for extra money. Kathy went to call Charles as usual to check with him. To benefit the female workers, the company paid for a cab so they could all arrive home safely. Kathy was allowed to stay if she took the cab ride home. At 2:00 a.m. (now August 1, 1966) Kathy Whitman and four other employees headed home in the free cab. Ms. Rhodes could not recall the names of the three other co-workers in the cab. After Kathy's departure, Ms. Rhodes had no idea she would never see her again. She mentioned that a woman from the cab saw the light by the front door and Charles standing there waving.

In the early hours of August 1, 1966, Ms. Rhodes was still at work on an assignment that was due at the district office. Oddly, at around 4:00 a.m., her switchboard began flashing from somewhere in downtown Austin. The male's voice startled her as he identified himself as Charles.

"He was calling to report that Kathy would not be able to come to work for her 1:00 p.m. shift due to a bad stomach virus," explained Ms. Rhodes. She questioned her friend sitting next to her, Ms.

Hawkins, about "why Charles would be calling from his mother's apartment." Ms. Hawkins thought it was weird, but had no other reaction. Ms. Rhodes sat and thought about it but reassured herself everything was all right considering his voice was calm and polite. She went on to finish her report. Once she finished she left for home not knowing how soon she'd be back at headquarters.

Shortly after the shootings began, Ms. Rhodes was awakened by a phone call that led her to a friend's house nearby. As soon as Ms. Rhodes arrived, she helped her friend console the parents of one of the Tower sniper's victims.

As soon as she looked back at all the distinguishing characteristics between Kathy and Charles, she admits that she felt something bad could possibly have occurred.

This chronology comes from Ms. Sharon Rhodes' unique perspective. Being an individual in Austin and working with Kathy gave Ms. Rhodes an extraordinary perspective of the tragedy. Noticeably, her individual and first-hand knowledge was not heavily detailed at some points. This further proves that just because an individual may be present at the time of a historic event, it does not mean that later in life the individual will remember every detail.

However, the intimate chronology that Ms. Rhodes told of August 1, 1966 makes her perspective stand out from others. Her interview answers many questions and adds a different perspective to the events that preceded the tragedy of Charles Whitman's massacre at the University of Texas.

—By Allison Krueger



## TOWER PROFILE: Jack Lewis

# First To The Top: Texas-Ex Recalls Historic 1934 Climb.

**"It was thrilling, it was illegal, and it was sophomoric, but I enjoyed it."**

**By Garner Peterson**



The University of Texas Tower has had a significant impact on many lives. Numerous students and alumni have very vivid memories that are marked with the image of the prominent Tower. The preservation of these memories, as most would agree, is important. Ex-UT student Jack Lewis of Ithaca, New York holds one of these memories that deserves to live on. Mr. Lewis is a retired clergyman who was born in San Angelo, Texas. He came to the University of Texas as a freshman in 1933.

Things have changed since Jack Lewis' freshman year. His room and board cost \$30 a month at a boarding house on University Ave., and tuition was \$25 per semester. Today, these prices would cover rent and tuition expenses for just over one day. Another thing that changed was the old Main Building that was

brought down and rebuilt in Jack Lewis' sophomore year. The Main Building had become old and needed replacing. Along with the birth of the new Main Building came the 28-story Tower that still stands proud today.

During most of his undergraduate years, Jack Lewis questioned if he had chosen the right field of study, as many students do.

He would often walk to campus at night by himself and wonder what he was going to do with his life. On one of these nights in 1934, while wondering (and wandering), Jack looked up and saw the steel superstructure of the Tower that was under construction.

He was intrigued by the tall skeleton that was lit up by a full moon and the construction lights. He came from west Texas where there were no tall buildings, and there before him was one about 300 feet high. Jack could not overcome the desire

to see the campus from a new perspective. So despite the signs that read "no admittance," he went through the surrounding fence and began to ascend the metal structure.

Careful not to be seen, Jack climbed a couple flights at a time, stopping periodically to "drink up the view." The whole time he had to move slowly so that he would not get caught. Every time he stopped and looked out over the campus and the town, he got a better view and wanted to continue a little higher.

His curiosity carried him up high enough to make him scared before he came back down. For Jack, this was a great experience.

In his own words, "it was thrilling, it was illegal, and it was sophomoric, but I enjoyed it." He also said that he does not regret it and never feels guilty about breaking the rules. It was a personal experi-

ence for Jack and he never told anyone until just recently, 65 years later. After it was completed, every aspect of the Tower made him proud. The classes he took in the Tower, the library, and the way they would light it up orange after victories all gave him a special sense of pride.

While he continued his studies, Jack Lewis attended classes in the Tower with several distinguished professors such as Battle, Parlin, Ransom, and Dobie. As a member of the TEJAS club, the head cheerleader in 1936, and an active member in the University YMCA, he had an full college career.

In September of 1936, he married a Bluebonnet Belle named Mary Muller who he met at a summer dance in the Texas Union. It was after his marriage that Jack decided to go into the ministry. He went to seminary school just north of

the UT campus until 1940. After graduating from seminary school he served as a Navy and Marine corps chaplain for four years from 1942 to 1946.

He then was the campus minister of University Presbyterian Church and in 1952 he started a program called the Christian Faith and Life Community. In 1964 Jack was called upon by Cornell University to become the director of the Cornell United Religious Works. Before he left Austin, Jack was around the University of Texas campus for nearly 20 years. His experiences at UT, and with the Tower have had a tremendous influence on his life.

After his thrilling climb, Jack Lewis became the first student to go up in the UT Tower. The Tower remains a source of pride for Jack Lewis, and his story is one that should be remembered.



# Whitman's Ghosts Live On in Littleton

## Undeniable Similarities Must Remind Society That The Killers Are To Blame.

Outcast...reject...loser...are stereotypes prompting two students at Columbine High School to brutally murder twelve fellow students and one teacher. The ridiculing classmates are to blame. The murderers neglecting parents should have noticed their evil plans and schemes. The children should not be left alone despite the fact that they were able to drive a car and just months shy of being legal adults. The parents are to blame. The National Rifle Association was to hold its convention in Denver following the brutal incident advocating the right to bear arms. The NRA is to blame. Many people are quick to point fingers at our corrupt society, the uninvolved parents, the vast amount of information on the Internet, or anyone who seems legitimate. When do we wake up and realize that a teenager is capable of committing these horrendous acts? When do we point the finger at the murderers?

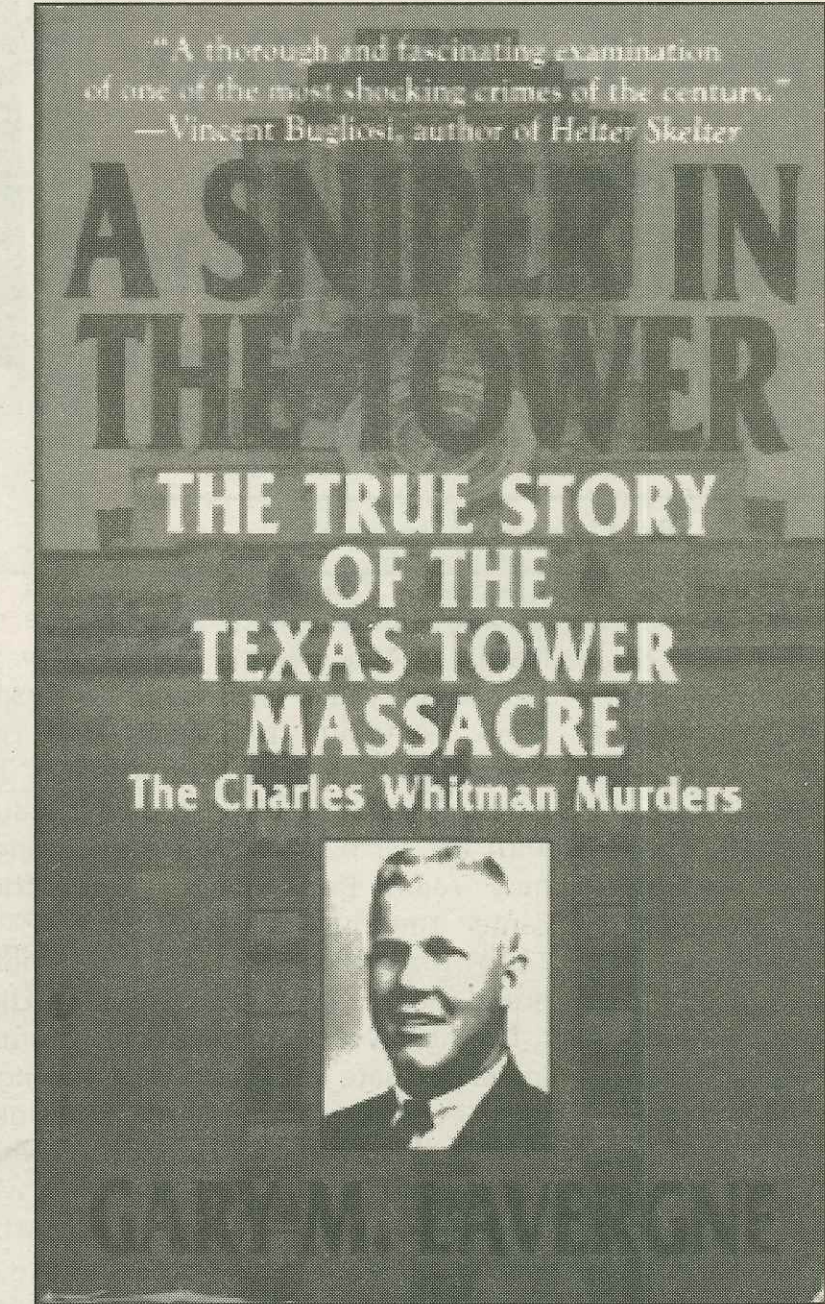
The University of Texas shooting from the top of the Tower in 1966 bears some striking similarities to the recent incident at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. These tragic incidents in Austin and Littleton public schools involved the use of guns and other weaponry to cause injury to other students, teachers, and innocent citizens. Undoubtedly, the families of the victims of both crimes shared feelings of confusion and loss of con-

trol, for the police power proved feeble and inadequate in halting both of these episodes.

Not only are the specific details of these occurrences congruent, but similar issues also resurface when such an act of blatant brutality transpires in this country. Questions concerning motive, possible means of intervention, and changes in legislation arise following such an event. Currently, debates concerning parental accountability and gun control laws are in process.

Both genetic and environmental factors shape an individual's personality at a young age. Though parents may intervene to deter or reinforce personality traits, a parent cannot possibly be held accountable for a young adult's bad choices. The boys from Columbine conducted research independently, built and obtained weapons, and carried out the scheme by their own free will. Even in the hypothetical situation in which a parent encourages a teenager to commit a crime, the fault ultimately lies with the adolescent. Conversely, parental guidance against certain behaviors or beliefs often simply drive teens to further pursue them.

Charles Whitman's father, who admittedly abused his son, is not held accountable for his son's violent act. Just as Whitman's father is not responsible for his son's irrational decision to shoot innocent bystanders, the parents of these high school



students cannot be held legally responsible for their sons' plotting and executing of such a vindictive crime. The central difference between these two incidences is the decade in which they occurred. In the 1960s the blame for such a violent act was not pawned off, but Whitman was considered fully at fault. Surely a few years age difference cannot eliminate an individual from responsibility, and over three decades passing will not blur the simple truth: Charles Whitman, Eric Harris, and Dylan Klebold are murderers.

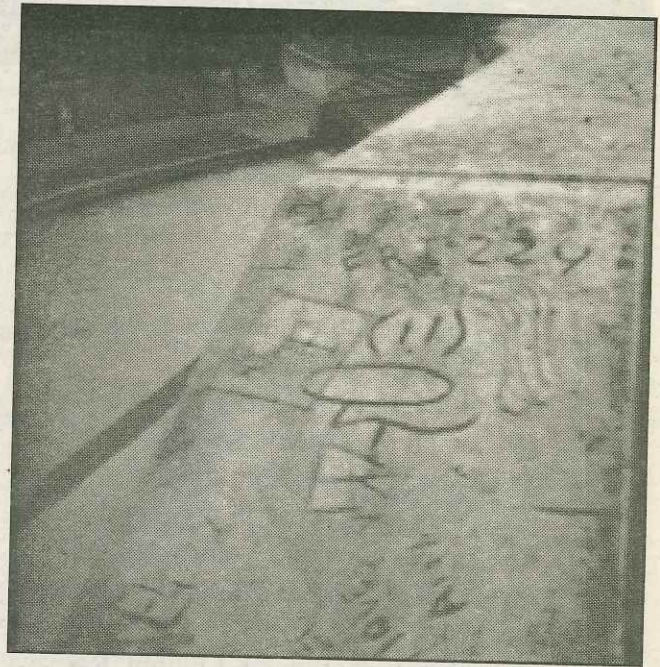
Now in the aftermath of

the high school shootings, what developments in legislation will arise? Surely the American people realize the students are to blame for this national uproar. If we choose to establish a law citing the parents as a responsible party in their adolescents' criminal activity, we have further let the youth of today off the hook. Get real! A 17-year-old is considerably past the point of questioning the morality of an action. Anyone who can figure out how to construct a bomb can figure out that it is wrong to use them.

—By Shelley Cook



# IS GRAFFITI ART?



## Carving a Niche in History — By Nicole Tomich

Public monuments are not only icons of cultural history, but are also tablets for personal history. When a sculptor designs a monument, his intended purpose is to construct a figure that represents the past. Monuments take on positive double identities when they become places of public inscriptions.

The primitive practice of marking a place to further historical record lives on. The vast amount of inscriptions that accumulate over time come to symbolize the diverse history of the lives that have crossed that very place. When onlookers realize generations of people have visited a site, the monument becomes even more awe-striking and authentic.

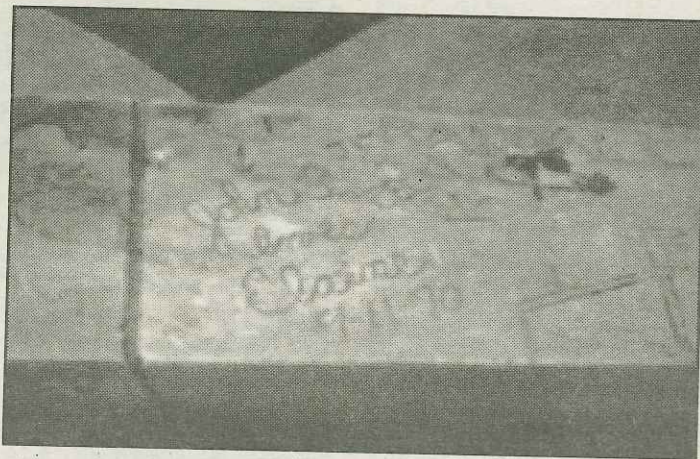
The denotation of lives coming and going from these specific spots signifies the sharing of a monument by various publics, thus indicating that one of the original purposes of monumental construction—public admiration—is, in fact, served.

The carvings found on public monuments cut the lines between controversies surrounding public monuments. These inscriptions say nothing about feelings for or against the actual monument itself, or what it stands for.

Basically, the public embraces these places for what they are—public spaces. They utilize the idea that to externalize any statement, most commonly the declaration of a relationship, there is no better place than a public space.

Take, for instance, the Littlefield monument at the base of the South Mall. The horses sculpted into the beautiful fountain are a dedication to the sons and daughters of the University of Texas who lost their lives in the first World War. The fountain's personal history occurs on the wall behind the water. That wall is inscribed with thousands of initials and messages that have accumulated over many years. It's obvious that very old messages have been worn away by years of weathering, but very deep inscriptions from years past remain and are intriguing. The most popular engravings are initials, declarations of love, peace signs, and hearts. Also included

on the wall is a proposal: "Brian Proposed to Michaela 2-6-84," a humorous inscription: TUBBY BUG + CREAM PUFF, and many faint old dates (1943 being the oldest I could find.) There is even an inscription symbolizing a particular family's history. It reads: "David Kearn and Nan Harington—67," then right under it says: "Erik



Kearn and Amy Oakes—95." I was driven to assume that Erik Kearn is the son of David and Nan and that he returned to the same spot where his own parents declared their love for one another.

Another heavily inscripted site on campus is the Pease Fountain on the East Mall near the stadium. The basic initials can be found here as well, but this site also has some other neat messages. There is letter-

ing that says, "She said if I loved her I'd carve our names here: BILL LOVES PATI K." while another says, "We swam here once and fell in love." There are also some fascinating pictures around the fountain, from cartoon characters to artistic birds.

Yes, the monuments on this campus were erected to symbolize some point in history and to further

beautify the campus, but the inscriptions do not take away from these purposes. Rather, they typify the care-free youthful years of college life. A grown, married

couple would be less likely to carve their initials in a monument than a young couple in love who wants to announce that love to the world.

Who knows what has happened to the people who carved all of these messages?

Maybe many of the engravings of love marked the beginnings of prosperous futures, or maybe they merely marked a foolish moment of the past. Most

of all, these carvings remind us that we are just one of many. Although carving those initials may have marked a major milestone in an individual life, such an action (or personal milestone) barely scratches the surface in the grand scheme of things.

For those who feel that these inscriptions are, in fact, degrading, I ask you to think about the depth that such actions add to each monument.

I agree that the initiatory act of carving something into a public place is not what the monument was designed for, but I feel that these actions add more for future visitors to behold.

I know many people travel to great monuments as vacation destinations, while others stop and admire them while passing by, while still others may pass the same monument numerous time and never wonder what its original purpose was.

But I believe that those who are intrigued by history itself will find not only the monument as symbolic, but also the carvings that surround it.

Those carvings are symbolic of the lifetime of the monument itself, of the human lives that have passed that place, and of the changing times.

—Photos by Nicole Tomich



## MoNuMeNtal

8 eyes transfer a single glare as one.  
If they wish to argue, I'm here to picket!

Why must i reach out, to touch you?  
Why must i call out to hear your names?  
I look in all the shadows,  
but all i find is darkness...  
The smell of dust and sand,  
left from your creation,  
leaves an awful taste in my mouth.  
If i kissed your lips, would you feel,  
every bit as dead as you are?

Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Roosevelt....  
You are my friends for life?  
Do you all see something that I do not?  
What are they all looking at,  
that is so important anyway?  
Clairvoyance would be such an addition here!

If I ever become President,  
I would not want my face to deface—or turned to stone,  
“in order to form a more perfect union.”

The steel chisels cut their deep mark  
in the Stoic cliff wall,  
only to scar it  
with the image  
of those responsible for its demise.  
Permanent fixtures to stand trial  
for the crimes of america

If they represent our country's best,  
then everyone should be allowed to ask,  
and know.  
“why?”

—By Gil Grabow

## Witness

I stand above the heart of Texas, our mighty state  
A monument hewn of strong rock and steel;  
Rising from cluttered ground to the lofty clouds, dear God did create  
A center for the University's pride, unquestioned and real.

From my brow, the land lies open and silent  
To my children, this world was reserved for their eyes;  
In my shadow, protests called out for change loud and defiant  
For my children, I stood to welcome to their youthful cries.  
Along my feet, crowds gathered to cheer Orange-clad gods  
For my children, this space was theirs to gather and talk;  
Beneath my mantle, ants scurried back and forth exchanging hurried nods  
For my children, life was too full and promising to simply relax and walk.

From my brow, the land was full and ready for him  
To my children, this world was meant for pain;  
In my shadow, teary eyes closed the sun cold and light so very dim  
For my children, I watched the blood flow from unholy rain.  
Along my feet, bodies did lie in open sun  
For my children, this space was theirs to whimper and mourn;  
Beneath my mantle, the ants no longer seemed to run  
For my children, life ended too soon by the hand of one.

From my brow, the land was stained and chipped  
To my children, this world tried to move on;  
In my shadow, hands pointed high to my face and heads solemnly dipped  
For my children, groups gathered united by a stronger bond.  
Along my feet, students once more walked in hurried pace  
For my children, more than once heads did look up in frightful fits;  
Beneath my mantle, more than George had damage time could not erase  
For my children, 66' shook a generation's collective wits.

I stand above the heart of Texas, our mighty state  
A monument hewn of strong rock and steel;  
Rising from cluttered ground to the lofty clouds, dear God did create  
A center for the University's pride, damaged and trying to heal.

—By Ted Bosquez

Journal entry—April 28th, 1999 7:48 p.m.

...had another dream about it earlier this evening...this time, he jumped from the ledge before I could make it to him in time. Kind of strange how I look at today's date, and realize that it was a year ago, to the day, when the *Texan* headline read something like, “Students propose reopening of Tower observation deck.” And here I am, a year after the fact, still having these disturbing dreams about people committing suicide, people shooting people from it, and people being killed on it. It's kind of fucked up—the fact that there are two “things” that often cross my mind when I think of what I have to be proud of at this university. First comes summer orientation, then comes “reopening the Tower observation deck.” It's kind of fucked up that the latter of the two gives me nightmares (while thinking about the former puts a bounce in my step and makes me grin like an idiot.)

Nightmares—didn't realize it would affect me this much—even when I was in Mexico last semester, I would awaken feeling as though I'd made a huge mistake...I mean, I didn't make a mistake, at least that's what I tell myself—Jesus Christ, that's why six months worth of my late nights were spent in the damned UGL reading about the Tower, checking and rechecking details, refining, reading, and re-reading that damned proposal...so much so that the night staff and I are now on a first-name basis. hmmm...

So this dream went something like this: It was late at night and I was walking on the main mall. I, of course, looked for the three rain spouts as I looked up at the clock face—I notice those things now after having read about Whitman's use of them. Anyway, so when I looked to the rain spouts, I saw someone standing up there...standing on the ledge of the observation deck, beneath the clock face. I don't know, nor do I remember who it was—it's always that way...I can never see who it is...sometimes, I think it's my brother. Anyway, I could hear him yelling, “I'm gonna do it!” I remember feeling panicked—I started running, and there I was, on the 28th floor of the Tower in the waiting area that leads to the observation deck. And then I just couldn't run any faster...the world slowed down as, in my dream, I tried to make it to the glass-paneled door so that I could step out there and prevent something that would haunt me for the rest of my life.

And then it quickly became like the others—I just couldn't make it in time, I just didn't make it in time. I saw his shoes on the ledge, he'd left them for me. There was nothing I could do.

People do things that I can't control, that I don't want to control...but he was up there because I had taken the initiative—I had been a “proactive student leader” and helped to reopen the Tower (that phrase makes me want to vomit these days.) Woke up with this sick feeling, and then I quickly reminded myself that “they” had gone with the barrier option (an option dismissed in our proposal because “such a barrier would be seen as a hindrance” to the aesthetically pleasing visage of the structure.) “They're doing the barrier...nobody will be able to jump...it'll be okay...” I told myself as I hurried on over to Littlefield to work my desk shift.

Still can't shake that feeling...he left his shoes on the ledge for me...

—By Martha V. Shelton



# Fiction by Jessica Strickland

## Charlie's Legacy

The graduate psychology student lit a cigarette as he made his way to his car. He fumbled for his keys in his pocket, an awkward enterprise while holding a lit cigarette... Ding-Dong, Ding-Dong... the Tower chimed as the noon hour struck, lending an absurd and fleeting sense of meaning to the mundane act...there they were.

A moment later, he was driving north on Lamar, tapping out the rhythm to some hopelessly lame pop song on the steering wheel. The drive, short as it was, combined with the central Texas summer heat, put him in an almost trancelike state—he had donned the zombie driver gaze without realizing it. His mind began to wander, and invariably as ever over the past few weeks, his thoughts turned to her. She, Her, The girl—he had no idea who or what she was but he had memorized her face. He could see every angle of it now, every line; with his eyes closed... green light—go.

The cheesy pop tune ended. He turned left on the road leading up to the hospital, drove up the hill, was authorized at the entrance at the gate designed to keep the wrong people in. He was there. He put his cigarette out and shook his head, in a feeble attempt to clear his mind. Stepping out of the car, an unexpected sense of dread washed over him, and it was as though he was being watched—not so much by an animate being as by something lifeless and daunting. Slowly he walked up the steps and entered the institution through the front door, feeling the difference in the energy

inside it the moment he crossed the threshold. Some kind of vacuum existed inside the building that seemed to sap the life of its inhabitants, it was strange, he had never noticed it as acutely before. Even the guard seemed more susceptible to it than usual. "The doctor said for you to meet her in room 218 today," was his only greeting. The student went back inside his head as he set out for the specified room. These weekly volunteer visits were pretty basic, really, a few hours spent doing somewhat menial chores in exchange for...what? He didn't know, exactly. The building seemed to draw him inside and for all his rationalizations of "It's my field," etc., there was some strange force the institution exerted on him, beckoning him back every few days.

The hall to the room he was looking for was endless, or so it seemed. Dull blue-tiled walls and dirty cracked linoleum only intensified the bleakness surrounding him. Compulsively, his thoughts turned to the image of the girl as he staved off an anxiety attack. Just thinking of her face comforted him, its exquisite balance and coloring. She was fair-skinned and with light hair, but had the blackest eyes he had ever imagined. *Where are you? And then... You are my destiny and I will find you.* The instant he thought it, he knew it was true. Whoever this person was, this vision, she was real. She existed, lived and breathed somewhere. He luxuriated in this insight for a moment, oblivious to his circumstance. 219, 221, 223... oh, turn around, other side.

The door to room 218 was slightly ajar. He pushed his way in shyly, to find the doctor staring intently at a row of monitors attached

to the wall. Black and white images of people filled the screens. Suddenly the doctor sensed his presence. A little startled, she addressed him curtly, telling him to simply observe the screens and make note of anything interesting. After this brief instruction, she mumbled something about the hospital being understaffed for the day and made for the door. It swung closed behind her, and the student was left alone in the room, monitoring the monitors. There were 12 in all, one for each of the most compelling psychiatric cases. Here was a woman sleeping, not too exciting... a man in 3 sobbing loudly, enough of that. The videos were complete with sound, but he could only select one room at a time to listen to. He spun around in the office chair and randomly pressed 6 on the remote. And then a voice poured out into the room with such a heart-breaking quality to it that he sat completely still, not facing the monitors, simply paralyzed. "...He was my twin..." she was saying. "He was my twin. He was me. And I saw him gunned down at my feet."

The student swiveled around in the chair and when he looked up, his heart stopped. Warped by age, distorted by pain, but undeniably *her*, the girl from his dreams.

He rose from the chair, slowly, and put his hand to the screen, needing whatever contact he might be able to forge with her. "We were just children, exploring campus that day... and then he was dead. Bleeding at my feet. They dragged me away from him. I didn't want to leave him. I didn't want to leave him there alone." Her dark eyes shone with tears, and he was at once back with her there on that day, feeling some fraction of her torment.

## TOWER



## MASSACRE MUSICAL

The Shirk Worker's Onion presented the "Tower Massacre Musical" at the Atomic Cafe. While it often departed from the facts, it represented a serious effort to view tragedy as comedy.



Ramiro Martinez and Houston McCoy, the cops who finally downed Whitman, are portrayed comically by Todd Lowe and Mark Stewart, while Andy Fisher expertly acted out Whitman's insanity.

### Director's Notes

"The Tower Massacre Musical is presented to you in Shirk Workers Onion's contemporary, Austin, Texas version of Absurdism. The absurd movement has always thrived as a response to senseless violence. It rails against any belief in an ordered and logical universe and can be so powerfully offensive that performances sometimes end in riots.

Our show has no theme or message. There is no excuse for what Charles Whitman did to Austin in 1966. He was a monster who acted without sense or reason. We cannot extract a moral from the tragedy, there is nothing we should learn from it and I cannot believe the Tower Massacre added to the "greater good" of anything. So we present this horror as a piece of absurdity in an attempt to fulfill our obligation to the mythological life of this community.

I hope you smile, laugh and tap your toes. But if you never feel disgusted, outraged, or bewildered, we haven't done justice to the actual event. Afterall, you can't lance a collective boil without an awful lot of puss. Enjoy!"

"The Texas Massacre Musical" was directed by Anna Krejci, and written by Chase Staggs.



## The Littlefield Memorial

# Confederate Icons Belong Here

Every year, The University of Texas at Austin holds its university-wide commencement on the Main and South Malls of the campus. The South Mall is turned into a magnificent stage for graduates and their families to remember forever. Every student who comes to the University of Texas will always remember the view of the Tower from the fountain, and also the memorable view from the Main Mall toward the State Capitol.

This part of campus is considered the heart of the university. About this time each year, from the attention of commencement, the question of Littlefield Memorial arises about the appropriateness of the statues, if they represent the university, and if they should be taken down. Obviously, this is a valid but difficult question. However, as a student at The University of Texas, I believe that the statues of the Littlefield Memorial are part of the history of the university and should remain.

### The Powerful Regent

Former UT Regent Major George Washington Littlefield funded the memorial created by Pompeo Coppini, which includes Jefferson Davis, Woodrow Wilson, James Steven Hogg, John H. Reagan, Robert E. Lee, Albert Sidney Johnson and George Washington.

Littlefield chose these men because of their efforts to bring peace within their lifetime. The question of whether these men represent The University of Texas arises because some of these men supported the Confederate Army, and therefore slavery. This may not necessarily be the conclusion. The men who supported the Confederacy, Robert E. Lee, John H. Reagan, Albert Sidney Johnson, and Jefferson Davis believed in the state's right to make slavery decisions.

Obviously, now looking back, slavery is considered wrong, but these men fought passionately for what they believed in: states rights. These statues represent the freedom this university teaches us, that we should fight for our beliefs with the passion of these leaders.

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*"The idea of removing the statues is absurd. In no way are these statues offensive, which some may argue, but instead a lesson in history, and how we have progressed in this nation."*

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The statues in the South Mall are as much a part of the university as anything on campus that gives the university its characteristics and history.

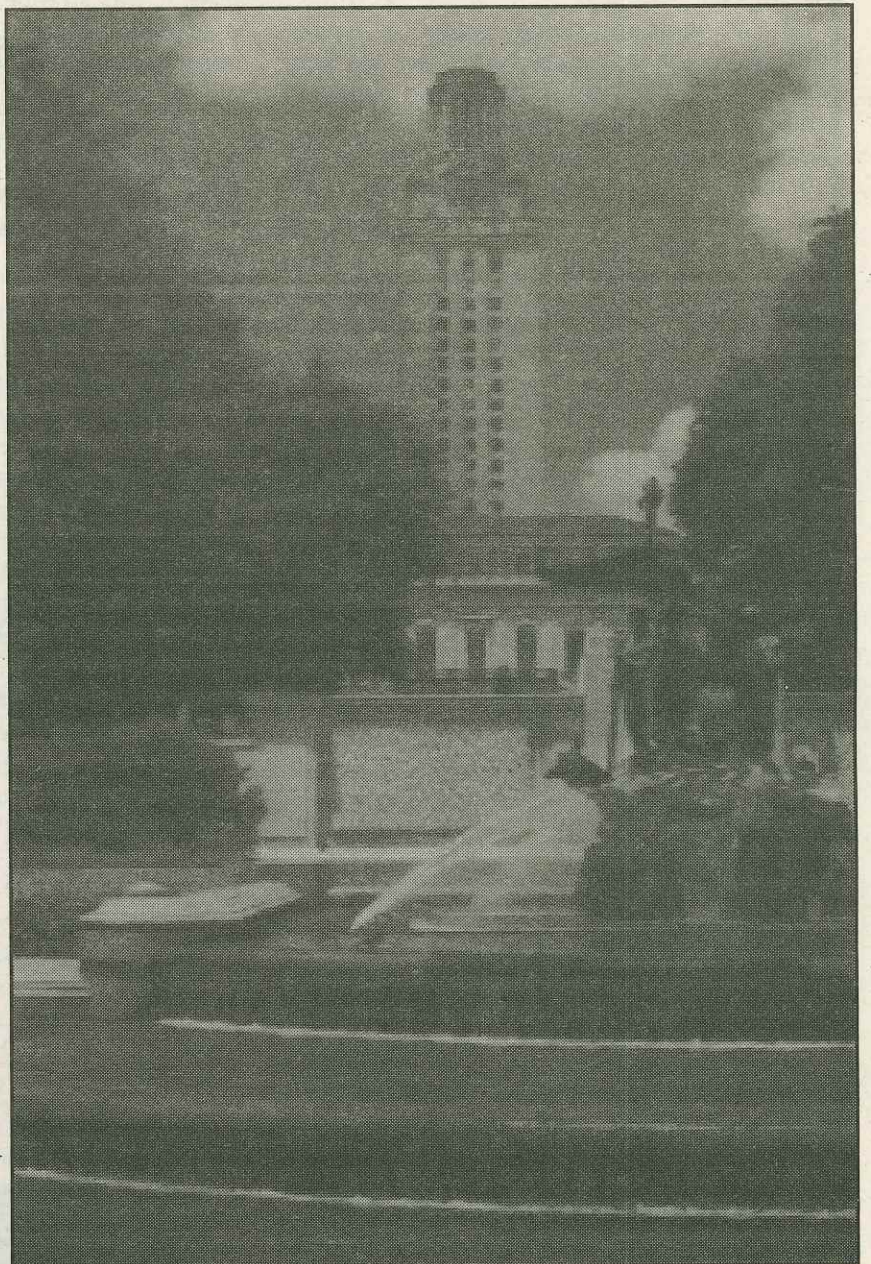
The idea of removing the statues is absurd. In no way are these statues offensive, which some may argue, but instead a lesson in history, and how we have progressed in this nation. The statues may have changed in what they symbolize, but as long as we can debate on the representation of these statues and learn from them, then they have done their duty.

### Progress?

Also, if we decide to remove these statues, what would we replace them with? If the statues are removed, history is removed and lost. History is history no matter if it is good or bad. That is up to each person to decide and learn from. Without history, there is no progress.

The university is showing progress with the creation of the Martin Luther King Jr. statue on the East Mall. This statue is the best answer to the change in beliefs and culture from the lessons of the past. Again, this statue will represent what the other statues symbolize, a man who passionately fought for what he believed was right.

The ability of this university to grow, diversify and keep the traditions and history is what makes it one of the more unique schools in the country. As Robert Heinlein once said in *The Notebooks of Lazurus Long*, "A generation which ignores history has no past and no future."



In conclusion, people are worried about the image of the statues and how they represent us. As long as the students of the University of Texas understand the meaning of the statues—beyond the idea of slavery as a focus—then that is all that matters. Yes, we can be critical of the slavery in the Confederacy, but not of the men whose other contributions made the country what it is now.

There are more positive than negative characteristics of all the men in the Littlefield Memorial, and it is unfair to just focus on one characteristic to judge that person as a whole.

As part of our education, we are taught to debate and ponder what we believe in, and there is no doubt that the memorial is up for

criticism and debate, as long as something is learned at the end of that journey.

A great university of higher education and tradition is what I think of as I look up the South Mall. I don't think of the details and the faults of the men of the Littlefield Memorial, but instead I look at them as a whole, and what they accomplished.

In the end, as I am on the South Mall for the final time for the commencement ceremony, I will look back, and remember what the Littlefield Memorial means to me, an image of the university I will always be proud of.

—By John Bui



# Can Texas Overcome its Tragedies?

BY JILL GIBSON

The assassination of the 35th President of the United States of America, John F. Kennedy, on November 22, 1963, was devastating to our nation. No one group felt this pain more than the residents of Dallas, Texas.

On August 1, 1966, an ex-marine took the elevator to the top of the University of Texas Tower and began to shoot at the moving targets below. Charles J. Whitman, a UT student, killed 14 and injured 31 others on that sobering summer afternoon. Closer to date are two more horrific tragedies that occurred in the state of Texas. Thirty-five year old George Hennard opened fire at a neighborhood Luby's Cafeteria in Killeen, during October of 1991, and murdered 22 people during lunch. Finally, David Koresh, a charismatic cult leader, led a flock of followers in a mass suicide in the placid city of Waco. The Branch Davidians perished in 1993 after the U.S. government tried to intervene with tanks and tear gas.

For those who do not call Texas their home, these events may be a way of negatively categorizing the state. The tragic outcomes resulting from such events have tarnished the view that others have of the Lone Star state.

## A Hero Falls

Grassy Knoll. Texas School Depository. Dealey Plaza. Triple Underpass. After 30 years, the mention of these few words is all that is needed to take most Americans, even those born

after 1963, back to a single tragic event. Dallas has been trying to overcome a negative nationwide image that has existed since the nation lost its innocence due to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Lee Harvey Oswald was perched on the sixth floor of the School Book Depository when he fired several shots that decapitated our 35th president. Once called the "City of Hate", Dallas would like to forget the past and the infamy that the murder brought to the city. Dallas county officials explain, "The further away we are from the assassination, the more objectively we can deal with it." Dallas, Texas has been battling with these issues for more than 30 years now, but people outside of the state will always remember this city with a graphic image of a dying president.

## Whitman's End

On a sweltering summer afternoon in August of 1966, Charles J. Whitman murdered 14 people from the top of the University of Texas Tower in Austin, the state's capital. Whitman took the lives of his wife and mother prior to the massacre, to "save them from the embarrassment." This incident was one of the largest mass murders to date, and in many ways defined the concept. No one can be exactly sure of what this young man's motives were. Today, many people place blame on the tumor discovered during Whitman's autopsy. Gary

Lavergne, author of *A Sniper in the Tower*, alludes to several possible causes but ultimately concludes that it was Whitman's desire to kill that took him to the top of the University's Tower. These shootings created awareness for the need of SWAT teams to handle emergency situations such as these. Later generations have continued to learn of the Tower shootings from references to Whitman in several films, such as *Full Metal Jacket* and *Parenthood*. Charles Whitman's vengeful behavior continues to adorn the state of Texas with negative connotations.

## Luby's Saddest Day

The massacre in Killeen, Texas, on October 17, 1991, occurred after George Hennard, 35, viewed a screening of *The Fisher King*, which included a massacre scene in a New York City restaurant. Hennard then smashed his truck into a neighborhood Luby's Cafeteria, and began pumping scores of shells into his victims with two semiautomatic pistols. George Hennard took the lives of 22 Luby's diners that afternoon; some were shot and some were spared all at random. Was the Luby's Massacre a reflection of the media's influence over society? Or was Hennard just a severely disturbed individual? Again, we may never know, but non-Texans will remember this incident as yet another irremovable scar placed across the face of Texas.

A fourth tragedy occurred when Vernon Howell, otherwise known as David Koresh, began recruiting a group of followers to form a cult called The Branch Davidians.

During February, 1993, a 51-day siege ultimately resulted in a mass suicide at the cult compound in Waco, Texas. Koresh was a charismatic man with an "apocalyptic vision" that was partially to blame for the disaster that took the lives of more than 80 of his followers and six federal agents. Although there were several errors made by the U.S. government, while trying to put an end to the siege, this Jim Jones-esque character was central in yet another tragedy that occurred in Texas.

## We Must Move On

Numerous conclusions can be drawn to explain why Texas assassinations, massacres, and suicides have taken place. These horrific events may be reflections of mental illnesses, the media's influence, or merely other unknown outside pressures. The sheer number of incidents that have occurred in Texas may be a result of the large area and population of our state. Texans sadly recall these tragic events but have tried to internalize these images and proceed with their lives. We may never have the answers to these puzzling questions; however, Texans do know that our image will forever be altered for those who are unfamiliar with the state.



*From Tower Chimes to Wedding Bells...*

# Love and Other Towering Symbols

Recently, two friends of mine became engaged. Everyone within our circle of friends was anxious to hear the details of the proposal. First, they went to see the sunset atop Mt. Bonnell. Then they went to dinner on a private riverboat that cruised Town Lake for an hour or so. After that, they started heading home. The guy stopped in front of the Tower, turned, and proposed. The fact that it was Valentine's Day was, I suppose, romantic enough, but the fact that the proposal took place in the presence of the Tower means so much more once you know a bit about this groom-to-be. Just about everything he owns is orange and white or has a University of Texas logo on it. His car has a giant longhorn across the back window. He cannot point without making the hook 'em sign with his hands. Of course, this was a mannerism he had to teach himself to do. He either buys or receives as gifts almost every piece of UT paraphernalia sold in the UT Co-Op, be it books about Texas/UT history, t-shirts, koozies, hats, jackets, dolls, stickers, posters, noise-makers, etc. One year for Christmas I made a wooden clock for him in the shape of a longhorn. He loved it. His fiancé is not as gung-ho as he is, but that does not mean she is lacking UT spirit; she just doesn't advertise as much.

Why am I telling you this? Well, I believe the Tower is very much a symbol of the University. Even taking into account the suicides and Charlie Whitman's shooting spree, people still consider it to be one of the most cherished symbols of the University. Anyone who has ever seen the silhouette or a picture of the

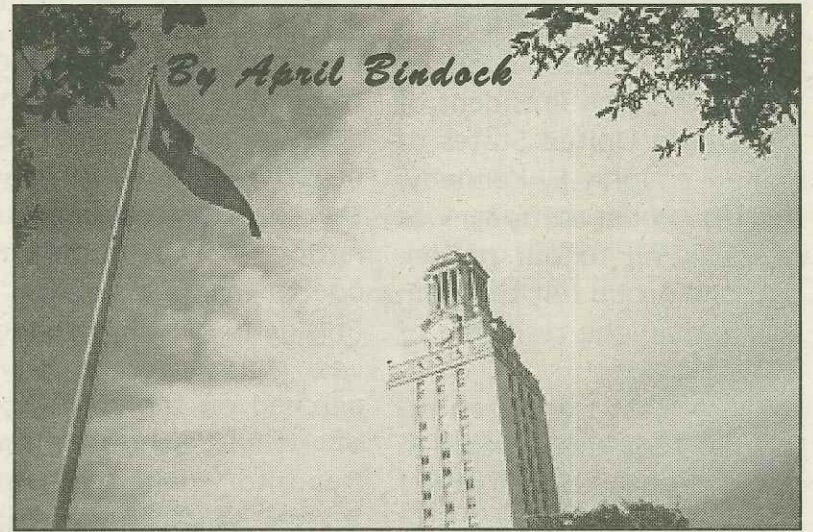
Tower can recognize it right off the bat. The only other most recognized symbols of the University are the inter-locking UT, Bevo, and the longhorn shape.

Why are symbols even important? They are abbreviations. Every ounce of emotion, good or bad, that accompanies a particular event, place, person, or anything can be summed up and unified by one symbol. For example, during the Vietnam conflict, Tony Orlando had a hit with "Tie a Yellow Ribbon 'Round the Old Oak Tree." Millions of people began wearing yellow ribbons on their lapels, draping yellow ribbons on their houses, stores, cars, etc. During the Gulf War in 1991, people began wearing the yellow ribbons again to show support for the troops at war. When you see one, thoughts of patriotism and duty come to mind. Of course, lately, the ribbons also seem to be accompanied by thoughts of right and wrong since Vietnam, the Gulf War, and the current situation in Kosovo have not been wholeheartedly supported by the American public.

Contrast this with the American flag. This is a symbol of the free democracy defined by the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. Most grade school children learn about Betsy Ross and her creation of the first American flag. We sing the "Star Spangled Banner" and about the "rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof through the night, that our flag was still there..." We have statues of several World War II soldiers erecting a flag on Iwo Jima. We have photos to commemorate the first moon landing which

reveals, lo, and behold, an American flag planted there. We honor former military personnel and high government officials by draping their coffins with American flags and then making grand presentations of those flags to the family members. We, as a nation, have a lot of pride in the American flag, but the flag itself is just some cloth and thread. All together, it costs about \$10 in raw materials to make. The metal poles we use to mount them on our houses cost maybe another dollar. Nonetheless, every fourth of July, millions of Americans drag out the stepladders and the flags and celebrate their pride in their country with a \$15 symbol.

How is the Tower a symbol? It's majestic, divine, and phallic. Its mere presence oozes pride and grandeur. Every fifteen minutes, it talks to you and reminds you, no matter where you are on campus, that it is still there. It says, "Hey, come adore me. Hear my chimes, and gape at my awesome size." The other day I was studying in the Union when I looked up and realized that the Tower was peeking at me over the UGL. All I could see was the top of it. It reminded me of a Transformer, those silly action figures kids played with in the eighties that started out as a car or something, but could then be manipulated into a robot. The top looked like a face and the clock looked like a voice box. Only enough of the trunk of the building was showing to



appear as though the thing had shoulders. It was a lot closer than I had imagined and it looked as though it was leaning in to peer over the side of the UGL in search of me. I froze and I felt as though I was going to wet my pants. I was reading Gary Lavergne's *Sniper in the Tower* for class when this occurred, so my imagination was already fixated on the Tower itself.

The UT Tower is a symbol of pride because it glorifies the Texan attitude. It is a large, tall building near the center of campus. It is boastful and omnipotent. People joke that most Texans think that they're God. Some commonly observed characteristics of God are that he's always present and physically inaccessible. The Tower is similar in this regard. From nearly every place on campus it can be seen or its reflection can be seen.

From those few places where it cannot be seen, it can be heard every fifteen minutes, reminding us of its presence. And ever since 1974, the observation deck has been physically inaccessible. Most students don't even know that you can go up into the other floors of the Tower. All of the floors have locking doors that won't allow you to get off the elevator if the doors are closed, so those floors

are also inaccessible.

Back to my friend's marriage proposal. After the bride-to-be finished telling us the story, another, older friend mentioned that there must be something about the Tower because her husband proposed to her in front of the Tower, too. In fact, he'd taken her out to dinner, dancing, and so on, and had also waited until the ride home to propose in front of the Tower. Both women made it very clear that these guys had ample opportunity to propose earlier in the evening, but they didn't take advantage of those moments.

Symbols are very powerful for human beings. Ancient cave dwellers drew symbols of animals and men involved in the hunt. Most humans have symbols all over their daily lives. Everything from the small, localized icons, like the Tower or the longhorn, to the large, wider-scale symbols like the American flag or yellow ribbons.

People, particularly Americans have a tendency to abbreviate everything. They write "thanx" because that extra letter needed to write "thanks" properly takes too much time. They write "@" which isn't any faster than writing "at" out. So why not have symbols that can stand as universal indicators of certain events, people, places, things, etc.?



# KINKY FRIEDMAN

On March 9, the distinguished UT alum, songwriter and novelist lectured a group of Plan II students about what he's learned since graduating. Among other gems, the Kinkster said "Politics is a horrible place for the truth. Fiction is a great place for the truth."

Amidst stories about his Peace Corps days in Borneo and harboring political fugitive Abbie Hoffman on his Hill Country ranch, Friedman also recalled penning "The Ballad of Charles Whitman," a controversial song that appears on his 1973 album *Sold American*.

Friedman seemed indifferent to the administration's recent decision to re-open the Tower deck, from which Whitman opened fire in 1966. The incident is the focus of several other songs, though Friedman's is the most daring in its lyrical content.



## "The Ballad of Charles Whitman"

He was...

Sittin' up there for more 'an hour  
Way up there on the Texas Tower  
Shootin' from the 27th floor...(Hey 'eee)

He didn't choke or slash or slit them  
Not our Charles Joseph Whitman  
He won't be an architect no more

Got up that morning, calm and cool  
He picked up his guns, and walked to school

An' all the while he smiled so sweetly  
Then he blew their minds completely  
They never seen an Eagle Scout so cruel

Now won't you think of the shame and degradation  
For the school's administration  
He put on such a bold and brassy show...

The chancellor cried "It's adolescent"  
"And of course it's most unpleasant"  
"But I gotta admit, it was a lovely way to go"

**CHORUS:**

There was a rumor, about a tumor  
Nestled at the base of his brain  
He was sittin' up there with his 36-magnum  
Laughin' wildly as he bagged 'em  
Who are we to say the boy's insane?

Now Charlie was awful disappointed  
Else he thought he was anointed  
To do a deed so low down and so mean

The students looked up from their classes  
Had to stop and rub their glasses  
Who'd believe he'd once been a marine?

Now Charlie made the honor roll with ease  
Most all his grades was A's and B's  
Real lip snortin', trigger squeezer  
Charlie proved a big crowd pleaser  
(Though he had been known to make a couple C's)

Some were dyin', some were weepin'  
Some were studyin', some were sleepin'  
Some were shoutin' "Texas Number One" (Yee Haw)  
Some were runnin', some were fallin'  
Some were screamin', some were ballin'  
Some thought the revolution had begun

The doctors tore his per' brain down  
But not a stitch of illness could be found

Most folks couldn't figure just a' why he did it  
And them that could would not admit it  
There's still a lot of Eagle Scouts around

**CHORUS**



# Academic Prowess. Should Light Tower Orange More Often

*A Proposal by Will Rhodes*

Even though athletics generate recognition for the University of Texas nationwide, receiving an education is the central mission of college.

Because it is the largest university in the nation, UT students are often seeking a way to identify themselves. Sometimes, this identity is found in the Tower. But what is the Tower? I believe the Tower is the focal point of the UT community and a great identity measure for faculty, students and ex-students.

## Athletic Victory

However, when the Tower is lit orange, it signifies a victory by one of our athletic teams. This lighting singles out a team and distinguishes this group from the University. If the University is going to single out a varsity team or an individual in order to light the Tower orange, members of the UT administration should also consider student life and education as additional reasons for lighting the Tower.

In addition to athletics, the Tower is a monument that brings recognition to both Austin and UT. UT is an institution of higher learning, and the Tower is its primary symbol. Commencement exercises take place beneath the 307-foot landmark, pre-game rallies are held on its steps, and most importantly, the Tower is a uniting fixture among University of Texas faculty, students and ex-students.

Quite often, faculty, students and alumni gather around the Tower to view

its beauty at night, especially during the school year on occasions when an orange tint lights the sky. Preceding this orange lighting is usually an athletic triumph, a national holiday, or a graduation.

But should these be the only reasons to light our Tower orange?

Even though celebrating athletic achievement is appropriate, the UT administration should consider honoring individuals who have made an impact at the University in either education or student life.

For example, the UT Law School debate team recently won the national championship in a "mock" trial competition. Even though a mock trial does not fit under the category of "varsity sports," a national championship was won and the Tower could have been lit orange in celebration of these law students.

Specifically, this championship would certainly fit under the criterion, "On occasions marking great distinction and achievement in the life of the University, as determined by the President."

## Rhodes Scholarship

Another example "marking great distinction" to the University would be UT senior Sean Braswell, who just received the school's first Rhodes Scholarship since 1992. Once again, the central theme of college is education, and it could be argued that Braswell is accepting one of the highest awards offered to a student who is pursuing his.

Coincidentally, Braswell is a current member of the Longhorn baseball team, and honoring an individual by lighting the Tower is not uncommon here at UT. Remember the picturesque No. 34 on all four sides of the Tower last December?

Hasn't Braswell done something that will enhance his career (receiving the Rhodes Scholarship), just as Ricky Williams did (winning the Heisman Trophy and breaking records)?

It would also be feasible to celebrate the life of UT, specifically the Forty Acres Fest, UT Interactive and the newly elected office holders of our Student Government.

Didn't teams of people work to make these activities or campaigns successful?

Maybe these events won't bring national exposure to UT, but it is certain that the goal of these activities is to enhance student life and the educational experience at UT.

## Great Distinction

Despite the national attention and "great distinction" UT receives from athletics, UT should light the Tower orange in celebration of student life. This monument is our Tower, and it is the symbol of our college community as a whole. It is a symbol that should not be reserved for athletics.

One of the most distinguished landmarks in Texas should not be only a celebration of athletics, but rather the reason students are here in the first place—education and student life.



If you have ever wondered what officially enables UT administration to light the Tower, here are the criteria:

### I. Complete Tower Orange With The Number 1 Displayed On Each Side:

1. On occasions marking great distinction and achievement in the life of the University, as determined by the President.
2. On nights a National Collegiate Athletics Association national team championship is won in any approved varsity sport (excluding club sports).

### II. Complete Tower Orange:

1. At commencement.
2. On nights of football victories over Texas A&M University.
3. On nights a basketball tournament championship is won in the National Invitational Tournament or National Women's Invitational Tournament.
4. On Honors Day, March 2, and July 4.

### III. Tower Shaft White, Observation And Column Decks Orange:

1. On nights of football victories other than those involving Texas A&M.
2. On nights on which a [Big 12] Championship is won in any team sport.
3. On nights of basketball or baseball victories in a [Big 12] Tournament so long as the team is in the running for the tournament championship.
4. On nights of each victory in NCAA team district or regional championships so long as the team is in the running for the national championship.
5. On nights of each basketball victory in the NIT or NWIT.
6. On Easter, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas.

### IV. Tower Shaft White, Observation And Column Decks Alternately Orange And White:

1. On nights of a tie for a National Collegiate Athletics Association national team championship (excluding club sports).
2. On the night of a tie for a [Big 12] Championship in any approved varsity team sport (excluding club sports).
3. On nights of tie football games [no longer applicable].

Source: Margaret Berry's "UT Austin: Traditions and Nostalgia"