SIGNPOSTS OF UNIVERSITY LIFE
COVERING NEWS, RECORDING MEMORIES

SWT STUDENTS HAVE EXCELLED NOT ONLY ON THE athletic fields but also in the campus newsrooms. The constant references in this centennial history to the records of the Pedagog and Star indicate how important they are to the memories of thousands of students and others. The Pedagog was first published in 1904, the Star in 1911.

William Dyer Moore was the first editor-in-chief of what was originally spelled the Pedagogue, the school yearbook. The first three decades of the Pedagog combined photographic portrayals of the campus with text describing life on the Hill. The Pedagog staffs worked long hours to put together their reminiscences of each particular year, and still do.

During the 1920s they became increasingly interested in the quality of their publication and experimented with its format and layout in an effort to attract national attention and awards from the publishing firms and intercollegiate press associations.

The Pedagog editorship became one of the contested appointments in campus politics. Of course, the editor controlled the placement of copy within the yearbook and even a superficial study of the erratic placement of the Harris-Blairs or the Shakespeares or the Idyllics shows that there was a link between the choice of editor and the location of clubs and literary society. Furthermore, the notorious "Cat's Claw" section in the Pedagog gave the vindictive or satirically inclined editor an opportunity to ridicule rivals.

The "Cat's Claw" proved so irritating to President Evans that he refused to distribute public copies of the Pedagog until he personally had examined every segment of this section. On several occasions he ordered the entire section purged from the yearbooks sent to the Regents and other officials. No matter how vigilant the editor or faculty sponsor, something objectionable was sure to creep in.

The Pedagog had a long history of outstanding achievement. The 1926, 1927, 1928, and 1929 books won Texas Intercollegiate Press Association and National Scholastic Press Association honors. In 1926 it was voted one of the six best in the nation. In 1927 it repeated. "Modern Wonders" was the theme with Wonder No. 3 being television, though it would still be a quarter of a century until TV was common. In 1929 the yearbook again got All-American honors but then the Depression hit and resources got tight.

The Pedagogs bore a direct relationship to the growth and financial stability of the school, so the annuals increased in size and featured new techniques in photographic display and arrangement during the prosperous 1920s and in the
years after 1945, when the sacrifices of World War II were in the past. Conversely, the yearbooks retrenched during the early 1930s and during both world wars.

Seeking novelty, editors added and deleted sections. Editor Esther Peterson and her staff discontinued the old “Cat's Claw” section and replaced it with “Catty Camera” in their 1938 Pedagog. They also restructured the yearbook as a photographic portrayal of college life rather than a verbal description of the year's experiences. They added a “Who’s Who” section and expanded the photographic coverage of club and faculty activities. Since these sections were continued, the editor and staff of the 1938 yearbook assumed increased importance as innovators.

During the late 1960s another change occurred—the Pedagog became the staff's personal statement about the nature and quality of college life. Pedagogs pictured the changing social mores and the new social tensions that characterized student and national life. By the 1970s the costs of production and growing student disinterest in the publication led to the decision to abandon the Pedagog after the 1975 edition.

In 1978 the Pedagog was resurrected by the Student Foundation as part of the seventy-fifth anniversary celebration. Though the publication has continued since 1984, the Student Fee and the Student Publications Committees have recommended its abolition after 2000. As a measure of the technology that has changed so much else about SWT and the world, it will be replaced with a video disk which will capture pictures and recollections of each year. Thus the Pedagog will reflect the continually changing nature of the student experience in the most dramatic restructuring in its near-century of existence.

The Normal Star was the special concern of Frederick Ward Adams, who believed that SWT needed a student newspaper. He canvassed the campus and the community to raise sufficient funds to start publication. For Fred Adams this was merely the beginning of his contributions to SWT and education in Texas. In 1973 the Alumni Association honored Adams for his accomplishments in education, business, and public philanthropy. His name lives in the Fred Adams Scholarships administered by the Department of Mass Communication.
Distinguished Alumnus Walter Richter, who received his bachelor's degree here in 1938 and his master's in 1939, was director of Journalism, publications, and ex-student affairs at SWT from 1939 to 1948.

When the first Star appeared in 1911, T. H. Leslie was its editor. It has served as the record of student activities at SWT for the succeeding eighty-seven years. As SWT changed its status, so did the Normal Star, becoming in turn the College Star, and the University Star. Today, in recognition of its four-day-a-week publication, it is the Daily University Star.

Like many student newspapers, it exists to serve the university community and seeks to keep this special audience of students, faculty, staff, and administrators aware of what is happening on campus. It also serves as a training laboratory for Mass Communication majors and other students interested in print journalism. As such it becomes the practical vehicle by which generations of undergraduates have practiced reporting, editing, advertising, and photographing the news.

Since the Star is both a member of the press and a laboratory, producing a publication identified with SWT, various reporters have found themselves in conflict with other parts of the university community, notably the campus administrators. Conscious of their responsibilities as aspiring journalists, students report campus news in ways that can conflict with the expectations of the administrators who may view the paper as a vehicle to convey their policies and points of view. Occasionally, they also transgress the journalistic standards of their advisors.

During the 1920s, the Star staffs naively proclaimed that their reporting and editorial comments "attempted, as a mouthpiece of the student body, to voice the student opinion at all times, but in so doing they had not conflicted with the aims of administration."

The Star, however, did upset President Evans, who repeatedly affirmed the need for censorship. "There is nothing inadvisable, unwise, or dangerous in the censoring of school papers," he explained to Sam Houston President H. F. Estill. "Any college adopting any other policy than that of reasonable censorship will come to grief."

President Evans disliked student complaints about class schedules, campus and cafeteria regulations, and especially the school's strict absence policy. Invariably the Star was the vehicle by which campus disagreements became matters of public controversy. Then too, the infighting between campus organizations such as the Black Stars and White Stars occasionally spilled over into the Star, especially in the editorial columns.

President Evans' response to these challenges was strict faculty supervision of Star activities and articles. For several years in the early 1930s the Star was edited by Professor Gates Thomas and trusted English majors, who turned the newspaper into a virtual literary journal. When student complaints ended this arrangement, the paper returned to student control with first Tom Nichols and then Deacon Wright serving as its faculty sponsors.

During the mid-1930s each year's staff reaffirmed its "one desire," "fervent hope," "unsuppressed desire," and "wish" that the Star be permitted to continue under student control with a minimum of faculty censorship. In retrospect, few of the Star's articles or editorials have seemed that controversial, but the problems of a too-free press and too much censorship have plagued the relations between every SWT president and the editors of the student paper.

In proof that no one ever sees anything the same as someone else, groups of students have also criticized the Star for not representing them, or for being a tool of the administration. Though the Star continues to serve as a laboratory for aspiring journalists, critics have created alternative newspapers.
During the later 1990s, the File has operated as a periodic publication that claims to produce the in-depth analysis and commentary that its rival often does not. Focusing especially upon campus issues such as curriculum, evaluation, student governance, faculty governance, program assessment, and expenditures of funds, the File has earned the attention of segments of the university community with its interesting analysis of issues and investigative practices.

Meanwhile, the Star continues to serve as one of the principal vehicles for the dissemination of campus information. Recent surveys of students indicate that the Star is their primary source of information about campus events and activities.

In addition to the Star and File, SWT students operate an FM stereo broadcast radio station KTSW and a television news operation on a San Marcos cable television channel which features public interest programming. The radio station, which supports instructional activities of the Mass Communication Department, also involves students from elsewhere on campus in its work. The television news is strictly a classroom laboratory.

KTSW has become especially important as it is the only locally operated radio station in San Marcos. Programming targeted at the traditional portion of its student listening audience reveals a considerable difference in musical taste and other interests from that of others in the area who may listen in. Its decision in summer 1998 to drop San Marcos High School football coverage because its listening audience preferred contemporary music also created a brief flurry of controversy in the community. The station's coverage of the flood of 1998 brought further discussion.

Although it would be some years before broadcast news classes were offered at SWT, Bruce Roche, who served as Journalism instructor, news service director, and then department chair from 1958 to 1967, involved (and mentored) students in broadcast news production starting in the early 1960s when the department had a direct line hook-up to the local radio station.

**RELIGION AND THE HILL**

Since its inception SWT has had a long tradition of active student religious organizations. Even the links to the Chautauqua movement suggest that religion was an important aspect of life in San Marcos. The first Announcement of the normal school described San Marcos as a community

*Former Star Editor and Distinguished Alumnus Dionicio "Don" Flores, Class of 1973, executive vice president and editor of the El Paso Times, is one of many "rising star" communication graduates.*
renowned for “its churches and the high moral tone of its citizenship.” Elsie Ely remembered that in 1907-08 church activities and Sunday school had been an important part of the student’s life.

That very year saw the creation of the first campus religious organization, the YWCA. According to the 1908 Pedagog the YWCAs objectives were to “develop Christian character and to train members for service in the churches as well as to prosecute Christian work to win women to a Christian life.” In its first year on campus the YWCA attracted eighty-five members, enlisted 320 women in its Bible study program, raised $50 for state YWCA work, and assumed the service function of providing refreshments during the registration periods.

For the next thirty years the YWCA and its male counterpart, the YMCA, sponsored assorted religious and community activities. Organized in the midst of what historians call the Progressive Era, the YWCA and the YMCA adopted the broad commitment for social and spiritual renewal characteristic of the period. In 1909 the YMCA invited “every young man in the Normal, whether Christian or sinner, to its meetings, since it strives to better the social and moral atmosphere as well.”

In 1913 the two organizations raised enough money from students, faculty, and regents to hire a full-time general secretary, Mabel Gaines. With this newly acquired professional help, the organizers opened the first campus store. Located in the Main Building, it sold school supplies and snacks. In essence the “Y” store is the ancestor of the present University Bookstore and LBJ Student Center. In addition to its store, the YMCA published the earliest student handbooks in the late 1920s.

The programs of the various YW–YMCA study groups focused upon missionary work in China and Latin America, Bible study, contemporary morals, the peace movement, social hygiene, science and religion, and community action. It was this last phase of the Y activity that spawned the Country Life Club (CLC) in 1918 and the Mexican Night School, two of the most interesting activities to develop in the early years. The CLC sought to make efficient social leaders out of prospective rural teachers. Filled with the era’s reforming zeal, its members studied “such rural problems as the lack of cooperation in the country, the exodus to the cities of county young, and the dearth of organized play [in the country].”

The Mexican Night School was an even more ambitious enterprise that seems to developed from 1919–21 study groups who called upon the students to ask “What can I do in my community?” At SWT the students answered the question by organizing a special school for Mexican American children. Training themselves for public school teaching, the students naturally sought to educate the Mexican American youth of San Marcos. Besides such serious undertakings, the “Y” groups also sponsored recreational activities for their members and the general student body.

The first Catholic student association, the Newman Club, appeared in 1914. Like its Protestant counterpart, it fostered the development of “moral earnestness and the serious realization of true Christian citizenship through a knowledge and practice of the Catholic Faith.” Though small, the Newman group held regular meetings, engaged in religious study and planned an active social calendar. Today’s Catholic Student Center on the corner of LBJ and Concho Streets is both a linear descendant of the early Newman Club and a visible symbol of diocesan outreach to the students, faculty, and staff of SWT.

Strongest of the Protestant denominational groups was the Baptist Student Union organized in 1926 and sponsored by Professor W. I. Woodson. During the 1950s it established a permanent youth mission center at 518 North LBJ Drive.

In the 1940s other Protestant denominations established their own college youth groups which in 1959 coalesced into the Campus Christian Community (CCC) which provides ecumenical activities for students belonging to the Christian Church, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, and the United Christian Church. Like its predecessors, the CCC established a physical presence with its first building on the site of the old Student Center-Education Building complex and its new one at 604 North Guadalupe.

The Church of Christ supported a separate ministry to the campus and built its center at 506 North Guadalupe. Newer religious groups include the Jewish Student Association, Lutheran Campus Ministry, the Latter Day Saints Institute of Religion, and others.

During the 1950s SWT students and their University Christian Mission supported an annual Religious Emphasis Week, which brought speakers to campus who discussed moral and ethical problems confronting students and American society. Though these programs were abandoned in 1963, the more recent H. Y. Price Lecture Series sponsored by the CCC has brought campus and community together to study the meaning of faith and religious experience in the late twentieth century. This series has brought prominent social and religious commentators to campus and to the affiliated Christian denominations in the community. While the early religious integration represented by the YWCA and
YMCA has disappeared, the religious associations continue to play an important role in the lives of SWT students.

One interesting legacy from this earlier era is the role that the religious centers had upon the creation of the current Religious Studies minor in the Philosophy Department. In the earlier era the directors of several of the religious centers taught college courses in religion. When officials decided in the early 1980s that such courses were inappropriate unless taught by regular university faculty, the religious centers continued to offer these courses through extension arrangements with denominational universities in the state.

In 1997 SWT officially established a Religious Studies minor which offers both traditional Religion courses, Philosophy courses, and specially focused courses in areas such as Anthropology, Art History, English, History, and Political Science. Thus the institution adjusted to and validated the desires of students who remain interested in their spiritual heritage.

THE OUTSIDE WORLD

The 1920s were years of great social change throughout America; nowhere was this more apparent than on college campuses. Sinclair Lewis chronicled America's main streets and Babbits, while the irreverent H. L. Mencken chided the nation's leaders in the American Mercury. The "Great Commoner" William Jennings Bryan visited San Marcos twice in the years before he went to Dayton, Tennessee, for the famous Scopes Trial. The acerbic Mencken wrote that if Bryan "was sincere, then so was P. T. Barnum," but students and San Marcans enjoyed these visits by the famed Democrat who had once moved the hearts of millions with his "Cross of Gold" speech.

Throughout America this was the era of Prohibition and the Ku Klux Klan; for San Marcos both of these had special significance. The passage of the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act temporarily ended several decades of bitter strife between the "wets" and the "drys." Then San Marcans, and later SWT alumnus J. Edwin "Smitty" Smith remembered that his stepfather made some home brew in those years and encountered pressure from local Klan members who objected to his employing black meat cutters in his market.

Klan presence in San Marcos was undeniable, but President Evans, whose half brother Hiram Wesley Evans was the Texas Klan chieftain, kept both his brother Hiram and Klan activities away from campus in an era when Governor Miriam Ferguson was virulently anti-Klan.

Thanks to the research of English Professor Leticia Garza-Falcon, we know that SWT's first Hispanic student was Elena Zamora, who attended the normal school in 1906 and 1911. Zamora was the lone student of Hispanic ancestry until the late 1920s. Thereafter students with Hispanic surnames appear regularly in the Pedagog, but less commonly appear among the SWT seniors.

In the case of African Americans the situation was dramatically different. Both state law, in the form of the school's charter, and institutional practices systematically excluded African American students from SWT. Though important case law challenged segregation in Texas during the first half of the century, even the seminal case of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas did not immediately end segregation at public colleges and universities in Texas.

Instead Texas, like other Southern states, had created a parallel, segregated system of public higher education which
With a nationally recognized creative writing program in the late 1990s, SWT can look with pride at a history of former students who have become outstanding educators and writers. Among this 1906 “Junior 2” group photo is SWT’s first Hispanic student, Elena Zamora, teacher and novelist. Distinguished Alumnus Tomas Rivera, Class of 1958, is recognized today with a writing award named after him.
included institutions such as Prairie View A&M and Texas Southern University.

According to the September 14, 1962 San Antonio Express-News, eighteen-year-old Dana Jean Smith of Austin had applied for admission to SWT the day before and was rejected because the school charter required that students be white Americans. President John Garland Flowers reportedly told Miss Smith that he "felt that Miss Smith would win her case in a civil suit then in progress] in time to be admitted to the College for the spring semester."

Asked by reporters if she was willing to go to college somewhere else, she replied that she would go to SWT even if "I have to register myself." She explained that she wished to enroll at the university because "both of her parents were once employees of the College and she knows what a good school it is." Smith, a graduate of Anderson High School in Austin, said she intended to study Speech Therapy.

President Flowers was right. In February 1963, Dana Jean Smith and three African American women from San Marcos—Georgia Faye Hoodye, Gloria Odoms, and Mabeleen Washington—registered at Southwest Texas State College. The next day, they were joined by Helen Jackson, a transfer sophomore from Huston-Tillotson College.

When these students enrolled, they later reported that they encountered some racial slurs and subtle discrimination, but nothing comparable to what early African American entrants to major Southern universities encountered in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

In August 1967, Dana Jean Smith graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Education degree in Elementary Education.

There is no specific documentation about when the first Native American came to SWT, but enrollment remains small. Meanwhile Hispanic students constitute approximately 19 percent of 1997 enrollment and African Americans add another 6 percent.

**Hatpegs of History**

During almost every generation of students, something happens that becomes a hatpeg upon which they hang their memories. Each, looking back on a long life, can focus on births, deaths, graduations, weddings, promotions, and personal anguishes, but there are also events which provide a common bond; those which almost always lead to “I remember where I was when...”
The attack on Pearl Harbor provided that hatpegs for the World War II generation and perhaps the death of President Franklin Roosevelt in 1945 since he had been president for most of the lives of SWT students. Those older might remember the explosion of the airship Hindenberg in that way or Lindbergh’s solo flight across the Atlantic.

The 1960s, in particular, seemed to be punctuated with those hatpegs. Charles Hughes, here during the first half of that decade, remembers what has come to be called the Cuban Missile Crisis when the world nearly teetered into nuclear disaster. It made “us aware that we did not have the control over our lives that we might have hoped.”

Less than a year after the black women integrated SWT, John Kennedy lay dead or dying in a limousine in Dallas. The shock and shame that many Texans felt was accompanied by a pride that Texas’ and SWT’s Lyndon Johnson was there to take over. “I think it was difficult to handle the complex mixture of emotions—anger, loss, pride, fear—that we all felt in varying degrees,” Hughes remembers.

And the hatpegs seemed to run on and on. Robert Kennedy was assassinated in California; Martin Luther King in Memphis. But in a rare moment of triumph, 1969 saw “one small step for a man.” We were on the moon.

The 1960s wouldn’t be end of such hatpegs of course. The trauma of Vietnam would grind on into the 1970s, leading in part to the shooting of four college students at Kent State University in Ohio. A few years later, an impeachment process would lead to President Nixon’s resignation. And in the 1980s, a generation of students would remember where they were when the shuttle Challenger exploded, destroying a crew which included schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe. The 1990s would bring the loss of hundreds of lives in the Oklahoma City federal building bomb blast.

But the accumulation of history seemed to weigh most heavily on SWT during the 1960s. It was in many ways childhood’s end. Hughes recalls, “I guess each generation must lose its innocence in its own way. That time... seemed to me a foretaste of the discord, anger, and fear that would mark the years ahead.”