

unfair treatment

Effects, and How it can be Eliminated," discipline letter also stated. Sherman noted that the cadet was punished within 13 days of telling the freshmen to avoid meeting females. Sherman cited the case as evidence that the Corps is prepared to deal harshly and quickly with

ORDEAL IN AGGIELAND

Texas A&M U of Cadets has under public scrutiny for two months. A female cadet Texas A&M's elite Cavalry unit allegedly attacked by male unit on Sept. 17 and attacked again or Within two days 20 sophomore m Cavalry were suspended. Most of the public Parsons Mounted curtailed on Sept. Thomas G. Darling of the Corps, who University Police charges. "Words like 'sh



Bill Youngkin '69



Liz Tisch '91



Ty Clevenger '91

HOW A CORPS COMMANDER & THE BATTALION REPORTER SAVED THE CORPS

BY LAURA SIEGEL '98

The Battalion

Vol. 91 No. 32 USPS 045360 College Station, Texas

"Serving Texas A&M since 1893"

10 Pages

Tuesday, October 15, 1991

Female cadet reports abduction, second assault Alleged victim refuses medical examination

By Liz Tisch
The Battalion

Wiatt said the female... alone to her...

Student leader says media gave Corps

Reprinted with permission from Bryan-College Station Eagle of Oct. 25, 1991.

By Jade Boyd
Eagle Staff Writer



Corps Commander John Sherman '92

Sherman said Darling formed an advisory panel for a discrimination-free Corps of Cadets in October 1990. This 19-member committee advises Darling about all forms of discrimination in the Corps, and it includes faculty, male and female cadets and civilian students, and officers from Darling's office.

All cadets are free to speak with reporters and write uncensored letters to the media, Sherman said.

"There's been some myth perpetuated about this," he said. "In the military, you have to (submit public statements to commanders for approval), but in the Corps you don't."

As to the last recommendation, Sherman said the majority of military personnel in the Trigon are active-duty military officers who do not have to advise units in the Corps.

Corps commander responds to harassment allegations

By Liz Tisch
The Battalion

charges were never filed.

One female cadet who alleges she was raped by a male cadet never pressed criminal charges as advised to do so, Sherman said.

Volunteer honor company and Squadron 15, an integrated Corps unit, was temporarily suspended from command Oct. 16 when a freshman female Asian-American cadet alleged that he paddled her with an ax handle. A letter written by the cadet requesting that her ROTC scholarship be transferred to the University of Texas at Austin said:

called the paddling said it wasn't me anyone.

The unit commander on Oct. 25 and an investigation is being determined.

It all took place almost 35 years ago, but for the Texas A&M Bush School of Government and Public Service Dean John Sherman '92 and his wife, Bush School Assistant Professor of Practice, Liz Sherman '91, the memories still stir emotions. Aggie students in 1991 no doubt recall when a coordinated campaign to fatally wound the reputation of the Corps was launched in newspapers and television and how a fearless team composed of then-Corps Commander, Sherman, and *The Battalion* City Desk reporter, Liz Tisch, stopped the vicious attack in its tracks.

Those who were not students at the time will lack familiarity with the details, so here is a summary. It began with an allegation of a sexual assault on September 17, 1991. When Tisch confronted Sherman at the guard room for comment, he not only gave none but had Tisch escorted out. Soon, more allegations cropped up and the media blitz began.

"There was a cascade of allegations and media attention," says John Sherman. "This included hazing and discrimination. At that time the Anita Harris and Clarence Thomas hearings were going on. I was advised not to comment. I followed those orders."

Tisch published a story in *The Battalion* reporting the allegation. As the situation escalated, she was invited to meetings with people affiliated with the university from certain factions who had biases against the Corps. After a while, Tisch realized those involved were not interested in the truth but in capitalizing on the allegations in order to withdraw Corps funding and satisfy their personal hatred for its traditions.

As Corps Commander, John Sherman felt the burden of understanding the truth and defending his beloved institution. He published a rebuttal of the claims, and reported on the investigations of each incident, one by one. Certain unit operations were suspended, and Sherman was forced to

relieve classmates of their positions on just suspicion of wrongdoing.

"Everyone was hypersensitive. There was zero tolerance and so much scrutiny," he explains. According to *Keepers of the Spirit*, by John Adams '73, a climate of suspicion of harassment and hazing had developed around the service academies and military colleges around the country at the time.

Meanwhile, as Tisch kept publishing claims about the Corps, she felt uneasy about continuing to attend the meetings of those certain factions.

"I had a feeling they were just using me," she says. "I began to see it was a concerted effort to destroy the Corps."

Tisch and Sherman were joined by fellow *The Battalion* reporter and former student body president Ty Clevenger '91 to make the truth known. The Corps of Cadets Association did not exist at the time, so, they chose to approach the Association of Former Students for help. At the meeting, help was granted by Association of Former Students President Bill Youngkin '69, and the Association used their vast connections to raise awareness in different regions for a proposed press conference to out the nefarious actors. "The courage it took for John and Liz to stand up to these entities was quite enormous," explains Youngkin. "There is a lot more to this story and one that should be told but their actions may have saved the Corps."

On October 25, the press conference occurred that finally revealed the truth about the group effort to impugn the Corps. The media story died. The allegation was proved false.

Sadly, Tisch was ostracized by her journalism colleagues, fired from *The Battalion*, and suffered depression from the stress of the ordeal. "I thought my life was over," she explains. "I didn't think anyone would hire me after that."

A bit later, a dozen roses were delivered to her door, along with a sincere, heartfelt, and handwritten thank you note from John Sherman.

"He wasn't hitting on me, he simply wanted to thank me," she says. "He gave me back my respect. Later, he asked me out multiple times before I said yes."

As truth and love always win in the end, so it was with John Sherman and Liz Tisch. Now married for over three decades and both of them stepping back from decades of service in the CIA, the Shermans are giving back to Texas A&M and the Corps they defended.

"We couldn't be more devoted to the Corps and to cadets," Liz says. "We are fierce protectors of this university, and we want to see cadets succeed."

The Shermans note that as serious as the event was then, they say they were too young to feel the full significance of it.

"What if it hadn't gone the right way?" asks John.

The CCA thanks the Shermans for sharing their story with The Guidon. For more details into this significant story and insight from Bill Youngkin '69, visit: corpsofcadets.org/courage.

Today, John Sherman '92 and Liz (Tisch) Sherman '91, are happy to be back in Aggieland.

