

Listen up

# Meaning of token economics given

**Editor:**  
I applaud the editor and reporters of the Battalion for their interest in civil liberties issues. Unfortunately the recent stories on the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and token economics contained several misleading statements about token economics and incorrect statements about my own research in token economics.

Token economics are reasonably complex institutions and there are quite often substantial differences between programs which go under the name of token economics or behavior modification programs. The legal issues surrounding token economics and other behavior modification programs are quite complex and are only now beginning to be litigated in the courts and discussed in the law journals. I cannot do justice to either explaining token economics or the legal issues surrounding them in any reasonable amount of space and suggest that

those interested in understanding the basic rationale and structure of token economics begin by reading *The Token Economy* by T. Ayllon and N. Azrin (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968) and those interested in the legal issues begin by reading Wexler, David B. "Token and Taboo Behavior Modification, Token Economics and the Law" *California Law Review*, 61 (1973): 81-109.

With respect to the token economy at Central Islip State Mental Hospital where I have done some research, the token economy provided supplementary goods and services for the patients and did not charge tokens for goods and services that would have been provided free without the program. The token program did not deprive patients of their usual rights such as room and board but added goods and services on the ward that would not have otherwise been available. Our experiments were not designed to

study the effects of inflation on economic behavior but rather involved increases in the prices of some goods with simultaneous decreases in the prices of other goods. The experiments were designed with the full knowledge that changes in economic conditions could adversely affect patients' behavior and we restricted our changes in economic conditions to those the psychologists running the program were confident would not have adverse effects. As an additional safeguard the cooperating psychologists were on the ward every day and were quite prepared to modify or abandon the study if what we were doing was damaging to the patients. The results of our studies have provided us with a better understanding of economic behavior and a better understanding of token economics. The latter has proved useful in suggesting ways to improve token economics and to make them better vehicles for pa-

tient therapy.

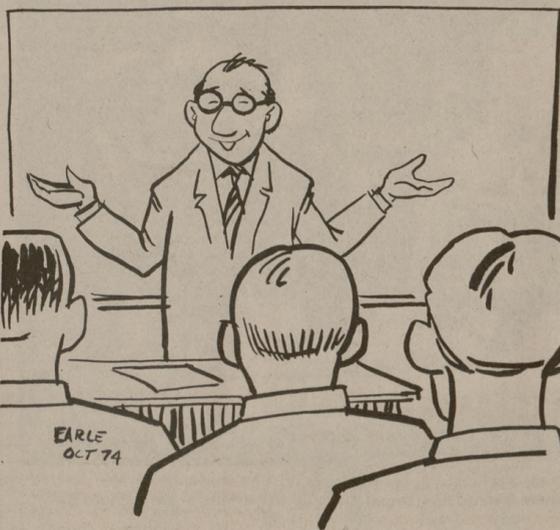
As a member of the ACLU I am actively concerned with seeing that individual rights as defined in the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution are guaranteed for all citizens. Token economics and behavior modification programs can, and at times have, abused the legal rights of individuals in these programs (see Wexler). It is not possible to rely on good will of people working in these programs (including my colleagues and myself) to insure that individuals' rights are not abused. Part of the process of determining

what individual legal rights are is by arguing cases in court. While I am not aware of the particular arguments in the Virginia ACLU case, and may well disagree on specific points with that case, I strongly support the principle that the operation of token economics must be in conformity with the law. If this means that a particular token economy program must be abandoned or radically altered, or that particular studies not be conducted, then I support the law.

Dr. John H. Kagel  
Dept. of  
Economics

Slouch

Jim Earle



"This is to relieve you of the effort required to think up an excuse for missing Friday class. We'll hold class on th' train to Kansas!"



PEANUTS



## The Battalion

Opinions expressed in *The Battalion* are those of the editor or of the writer of the article and are not necessarily those of the university administration or the Board of Directors. *The Battalion* is a non-profit, self-supporting enterprise operated by students as a university and community newspaper. Editorial policy is determined by a majority of the editorial board.

### LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed, show the address of the writer and list a telephone number for verification.

Address correspondence to Listen Up, *The Battalion*, Room 217, Services Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

Members of the Student Publications Board are: Jim Lindsey, chairman; Dr. Tom Adair, Dr. R. A. Albanese, Dr. H. E. Hierth, W. C. Harrison, Steve Eberhard, Don Hegi, and John Nash, Jr.

Represented nationally by National Educational Advertising Services, Inc., New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles.

### MEMBER

The Associated Press, Texas Press Association

The Battalion, a student newspaper at Texas A&M, is published in College Station, Texas, daily except Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and holiday periods, September through May, and once a week during summer school.

Mail subscriptions are \$5.00 per semester; \$9.50 per school year; \$10.50 per full year. All subscriptions subject to 5% sales tax. Advertising rate furnished

on request. Address: *The Battalion*, Room 217, Services Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

The Associated Press is entitled exclusively to the use for reproduction of all news dispatches credited to it or not otherwise credited in the paper and local news of spontaneous origin published herein. Right of reproduction of all other matter herein are also reserved. Second-Class postage paid at College Station, Texas.

Editor ..... Greg Moses  
Assistant Editor ..... Will Anderson  
Managing Editor ..... LaTonya Perrin  
Sports Editor ..... Mike Bruton  
Photo Editor ..... Alan Killingsworth  
News Editor ..... Hank Wahrmond  
Copy Editors ..... Cynthia Mael, Carson Campbell

News Editor ..... T.C. Gallucci, Steve Bales

City Editor ..... Rod Speer  
Special Assignment Reporters ..... Teresa Coslett, Ray Grasshoff, Richard Henderson, Paul McGrath, Tony Gallucci, Mark Weaver, Gerald Olivier, Joe Matthews, Steve Gray, Jack Hodges, Judy Baggett, Barbara West, Wendy Wetzel  
General Assignment Reporters ..... Dave Johnson, Richard Kotrla, Kanaya Mahendra, Jim Peters, Chirra Reddi, David White, Hazel Campbell, Steve Uekert, Cindy Taber, Linda Lea, LeAnn Roby, Roxie Hearn, Debi Holliday, Rose Mary Traverso, Ron Amsler, Robert Cessna, Mary Russo  
Photographers ..... Doug Winship, David Kimmel, Jack Holm, Steve Ueckert, Glen Johnson, Chris Svatek, Gary Baldasari, Rodger Mallison.

## Have You Heard About OPAS?

What Is OPAS?

The Opera and Performing Arts Society — a functioning committee of the MSC Town Hall Committee

What Will The 74-75 OPAS Premiere Season Include?

Soviet Georgian Dancers & Tbilisi Polyphonic Choir  
Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra  
Isotomin-Stern-Rose Trio  
The Dance Theatre of Harlem  
Bach Aria Group  
Alicia De Larrocha

Where Is All Of This To Be Held?

In the three-auditorium complex in the University Center.

Why Should I Get Involved in OPAS?

To get involved in continuing a great new cultural program at Texas A&M.  
To get first option on season tickets.  
To get my name listed in OPAS programs and brochures.  
To receive invitations to after-performance parties and the Opera Gala.

How Can I Become A Member of OPAS?

A contribution of \$5.00 to \$19.00 makes you an associate member.  
A contribution of \$20.00 or more makes you a member.  
A guarantee of \$50.00 or more makes you a member.

How Can I Buy A Season Ticket For OPAS?

Buy them at the MSC Boxoffice in the Rudder Tower.

OPAS — Town Hall

## CANOE

ON THE SAN GABRIEL RIVER OCTOBER 5 & 6



OUTDOOR REC COMMITTEE — CALL 845-1515