



"Okay, if you want to make an issue of it, where does it say that two wins in a row is not a winning streak?"

OPINION

Television tricks aren't for kids

Glued to the tube, many of us grew up with little firsthand knowledge of life. Oh sure, we watched Beaver play with friends on TV, and Captain Kangaroo told us how healthy it was to run and read books. But few of us believed him — it was easier to watch the magic. Now a group of parents in an affluent Detroit suburb have realized the danger. They set out 18 months ago to wean their children from television — by coaxing rather than dragging them away from the tube. They say their efforts are working. The program encourages reading, sports, hobbies and other activities that children can enjoy alone or with their families. The program was prompted by national studies indicating the average child was watching 40 hours of TV a week. Those two full-time jobs leave few hours for anything else. The goal is cutting by half the time youngsters spent watching the tube. While not reaching the goal, informal surveys indicate an average 25 to 30 percent drop in TV viewing in some households. But it's still a success. One organizer explained, "Our intention was really to inform parents that they do have a right to say no or yes to what their children watch and that there were many alternatives many people seem to have forgotten about." We just wish our parents hadn't forgotten about the alternatives.

the small society by Brickman



THE BATTALION

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TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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ANALYSIS

Britain's Open University employs varied curriculum, lofty standards

By BRYAN SILCOCK
International Writer's Service

LONDON — A good deal of skepticism originally greeted the new educational institution when it began. But now, as it marks its 10th year in operation, Britain's Open University is considered a unique success, even by academic professionals.

The concept, which is functioning as planned, has been to provide those who never earned degrees with the chance to get their college diplomas. More than 33,000 men and women have graduated since the project started, and some 70,000 are currently enrolled.

The students, most of them adults with full-time jobs, must fulfill stiff requirements. Typically, they devote about eight hours a week over an eight-year period to completing the courses, studying mainly at home. But the Open University is more than a glorified correspondence school.

Central to its operation is a close link with the national television and radio networks of the British Broadcasting Corporation. At the planning stage, in fact, its suggested title was the University of the Air.

In the early morning and late at night, before or after their regular working hours, students can tune into lectures or televised laboratories that supplement the written material they use. The BBC also

broadcasts longer Open University programs on weekends.

The Open University is primarily financed by the government, with students paying only modest tuition fees. It actually has a campus, but it is primarily an administrative set-up in which its academic staff does its own research, packages new courses and updates old ones.

Just as the Open University's degrees are widely received, so its materials are considered to be exceptionally good. About 30 other countries around the world now imitate its approach, and many buy its taped and published courses.

The high quality of the curriculum is due to the fact that, from the beginning, the Open University recruited a faculty of first-rate professors who have taken a keen interest in their mission.

In their view, the curriculum had to be broad in scope, covering subjects ranging from literature and foreign languages to science and technology. Above all, they sought to impose lofty standards, so that the experiment would not be regarded as one of those diploma mills advertised on match-books.

In addition to reading, writing, viewing and listening, students can purchase low-cost equipment for their courses. For example, an inexpensive microscope has been developed for their use at home.

Open University specialists also furnished advice to a manufacturer to produce a telescope at reasonable prices.

Arrangements have been made as well with 260 universities and colleges around Britain, which cooperate by allowing Open University students with access to their libraries and computers.

This not only represents an endorsement of the project by the nation's traditional institutions of high learning. In a practical sense, it also offers dispersed students an opportunity to mingle with each other in different areas.

Some 5,200 part-time tutors around the country maintain more or less personal contact with the students, grading their exams, commenting on their progress and giving them advice.

Each student is assigned a tutor who lives in his or her neighborhood, and they meet periodically. Tutorial sessions are conducted by telephone, too. And every year, during the summer, students must spend a week of residence in a designated study center.

Applications for enrollment in the Open University are currently running about 80,000 per year, of which one-fourth are accepted on a first-come-first-serve basis. No prerequisites are demanded, since, as its name implies, it is truly open to all.

The students must be strongly

motivated, since they pursue their courses after long hours of regular work, often noisy children with regular earshot. Not easy to awaken early or go to bed late in order to catch the television or radio lectures.

But the drop-out rate is surprisingly small — much lower, in fact, than in conventional British universities that have a tremendously competitive entry tests.

With all this, though, the Open University has failed to live up to expectations in one respect. Despite the idealistic hopes of its founders, who thought it would attract many unskilled workers with no experience in higher education, it principally appealed to school-leavers, technicians and other white-collar employees who consider an Open University degree a way of advancing their careers.

Another sizeable category of students are housewives who may be seeking a return to the jobs after their children are up or are merely seeking some form of intellectual stimulation.

On the whole, however, the Open University has achieved its aim, a pioneering effort, after a decade, has come a part of the educational establishment here.

Silcock writes on science and technology for the London Sunday Times, the weekly paper.



DICK WEST

'May beets grow in your navel' would work better than 'denounce'

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON — One frequently hears the lament that name-calling isn't what it used to be.

Connoisseurs of castigation claim the art of billingsgate is dying — that our flair for vituperation has degenerated into a bland, cliché-ridden obloquy that barely qualifies as insulting.

To some extent, these complaints may simply be wistful manifestations of the national nostalgia binge. Yet they cannot be dismissed out of hand.

We have within the past month seen hard evidence of a deprecation breakdown in high places. I refer to the Senate Ethics Committee's resolution of disapproval directed at Sen. Herman Talmadge, D-Ga.

As the whole world knows, committee members groped desperately for the proper words with which to convey their criticism. They examined such terms as "censure" and "condemn" in the manner of an old dog worrying a bone — sniffing at them, turning them over with their paws and walking stiff-legged around them.

The verb they finally settled on was "denounce," a compromise, pedestrian choice that some members felt was too highly pejorative but that Talmadge seemed to view as almost a compliment.

At some point, probably later this month, the resolution will come before the full Senate for action. It will be subject to amendment on the floor. Which means the Senate will have an opportunity to express itself in a more eloquent way than

the committee recommended. Before getting involved in these deliberations, senators might do well to borrow my copy of the latest edition of "Maledicta, the International Journal of Verbal Aggression."

Issued twice yearly by the Maledicta Society of Waukesha, Wis., this learned publication provides scholarly compilations of invectives from all over the world, and explains all the nuances.

As the publisher, Reinhold Aman, a former medieval languages and literature professor, put it:

"Our main areas of interest are the meaning, origin, history, etymology, use, spread and influence of verbal aggression and verbal abuse of any kind — swear-words, insults, terms of abuse, curses,

damnations, threats, nicknames, and racial, religious, ethnic and sexual slurs and stereotypes."

Surely, out of all that, senators could find language that articulately sums up the sentiments on the Talmadge case.

Most of the more forceful phrases would be a mite too coarse for senatorial purposes. I did, however, come across one that is a good deal more imaginative: "denounce."

Imagine how chastened Talmadge would feel if the Senate adopted a resolution that said: "May beets grow in your navel."

Let the Senate go on record a time or two with that type of malediction and you can bet all lawgivers will start walking a narrow line.

LETTERS

Every ticket book-holding student should be given a seat in Kyle Field

Editor:

During the last Student Senate meeting (Sept. 26), the seating problem for the U. of H. game was discussed. The problem is the anticipated seats, sold over a month ago, versus the actual number of seats ready for the game.

Originally the stadium was to be completed by the U. of H. game. After the usual construction set-backs, it was finally determined that, for the Houston game, the seating will be as follows:

1. Former Students — the entire west side.
2. High School Career day — the west side of and end zone in the horseshoe.
3. U. of H. — from the 50 yard line north to the middle of the horseshoe.
4. Aggies — 50 yard line south, bleachers, the second deck, and most of the third deck.

Due to weather and construction problems, there are less seats than anticipated. The solution dictated to the Student Senate is as follows:

1. Former Student — the entire west side.
2. High School Career day — standing room on the track with their seats being given to the faculty or Former Students.
3. U. of H. — unchanged.
4. Aggies — 50 yard line south, bleachers, the second deck, that part of

the third deck finished, standing room on the track, and G. Rollie White.

When I questioned this distribution of tickets I was quickly told that, this is how it is and there is nothing that can be done about it.

It may well be too late for the Houston game, but I hope this letter will prevent A&M students (namely freshman) from getting the shaft later. I do not know if we can recall the as yet unsold tickets from U. of H. If we can buy back the tickets before they are sold, then we can give tickets to

the pre-sold seats (i.e. ticket books) of Aggie freshman. In the event there are more unfreshman set-backs, and a ticket shortage, more consideration should be given to Aggie students.

To do this several options are open:

1. Finish the stadium.
2. Do not send tickets to our opponents until it is known for certain how many seats are available.
3. Regrettably reimburse some Former Students for their seats. (Former Students had their four years, and while they

bought a ticket, so did the freshman.)

4. Squeeze Army and fit everybody else. Maybe nothing can be done; maybe these solutions are unrealistic; maybe there will not be a shortage. Whatever the case I think it is only fair that every student with a ticket book be given a SEAT IN KYLE FIELD!

— Lee Maverick

Editor's note: This letter was accompanied by six other signatures.

by Doug Graham

THOTZ

