

VIEWPOINT

THE BATTALION
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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The comfort of fuzzy-wuzzies vs. elegance of fashion shoes

I was not meant to be a cross-country walker. I was one of those blessed with a love of being driven everywhere I go. Alas, I am at the wrong university.

I swear I have worn a symmetrical triangular path between Mosher Hall, the MSC and The Battalion office. My feet will never be the same.

They show the wear and tear. They revolt every morning when I slip out of my fuzzy-wuzzy slippers and into my fashionable shoes. The calluses are very seldom bothered anymore. They have found a permanent home with my feet.

Consequently, my feet are very ugly, not to mention sometimes painful.

Nothing disgusts me more than to look at a man's feet. Men's feet are always wonderfully soft. This is universally true because men wear

Offhand

By Venita McCellon

nice, natural blend socks, low heels and shoes with real toes in them.

Women, on the other hand, must, by convention, wear stinky nylon hose, three-inch heels that compress their toes into one-half-inch stubs and air-conditioned shoes in the dead of winter.

This, though, should be expected, because men invented high-heels and nylons.

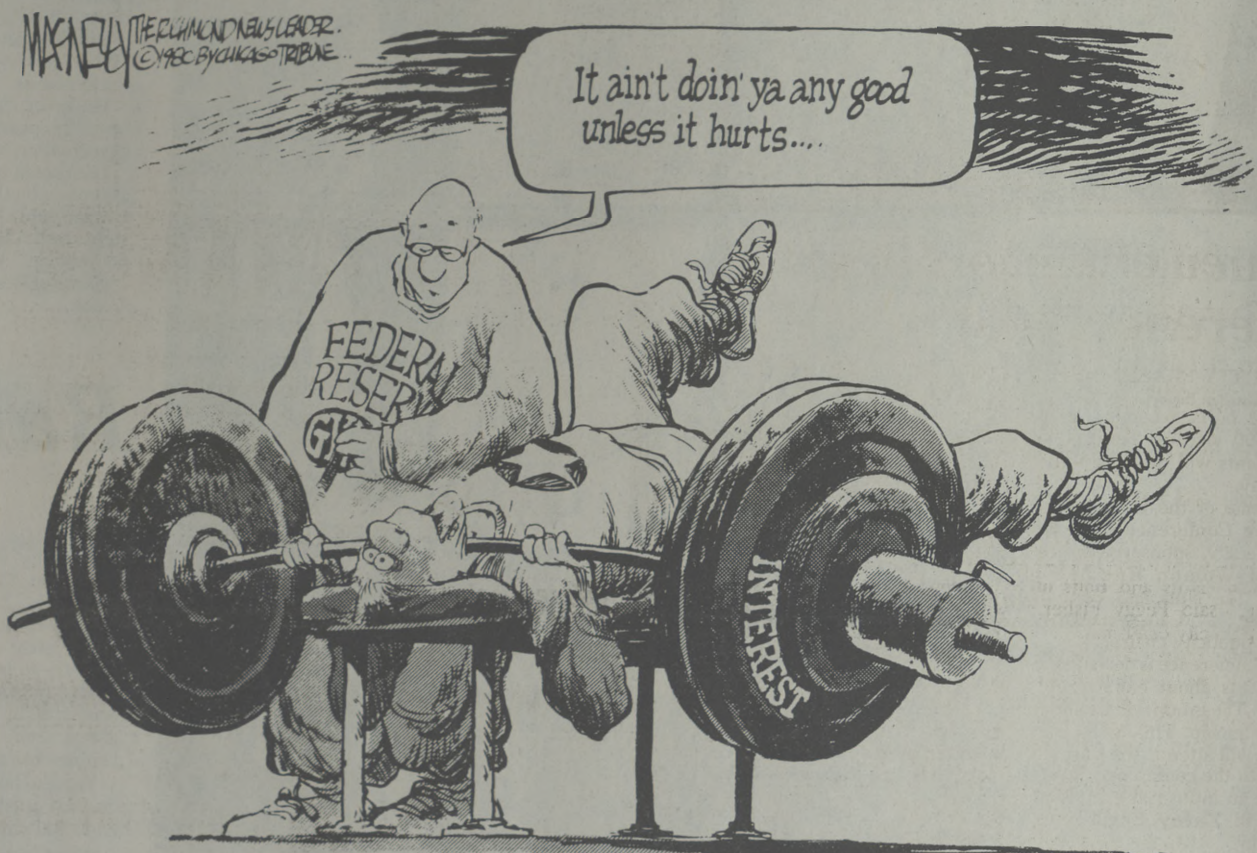
Don't deny it! No woman is masochistic enough to inflict the burden of high heels on her friends.

I've considered plastic surgery for my feet. But, I'm sure that when I visit the friendly doctor he'll promise to work wonders for my trompers with those beautiful orthopedic shoes.

Sorry to disappoint you, doc, but no way. I have 36 perfectly decent pairs of high heels in my closet dying to be worn. It's not chic to wear basic black and basic orthopedic.

So, bowing to the dictates of fashion, I will continue to limp painfully from Mosher Hall to the MSC to The Battalion office and back home.

I will soon be easy to spot on campus. I'll be the one in basic black and fuzzy-wuzzy slippers. At least I'll be comfortable.



Drastic overload is afflicting the senses

By DAVID S. BRODER

WASHINGTON — I don't know about anyone else, but my senses and emotional circuits are suffering from drastic overload. The scenes and sentiments of the last 10 days have made it impossible to focus one's judgment or perspective — which is what I get paid to do.

There may be a time when it is possible to say something sensible about the lessons of the 44 days of America's captivity by Iran, to assess the future of our relations with that country, or to analyze why this society and 52 of its citizens are held thrall for so long. There may also come a time when something pertinent can be written about the opening days of the Reagan administration. But I am not at that point now.

My head — like yours — is swimming in the vivid images of the hostages' release and homecoming, overlaid on the pageantry of the range of governments.

It has been a time in which the Super Bowl — the apotheosis of overpromoted sports spectacles — has been outdistanced by events in the real world, or at least the television rendition of those events. We have seen history unfolding through the camera lens in that special way — instant replays laid atop each other — that blurs the consciousness with a montage of dramatically intense scenes and almost obliterates understanding.

There's a problem in this kind of perception that is perhaps more fundamental for our form of government than we realize. As Garry Willis points out in his new book on the Federalist papers, the men who devised the American constitution were wise enough to see that the expansion of the Republic to continental dimensions might, by itself, serve to distort the user claims of selfish men and permit the national interest to prevail.

But no one has been wise enough as yet to define how the shrinkage of the whole would be the dimensions of a television screen can be made compatible with the workings of a representative government.

Because television brings each of us into such intimate contact with the figures, the forces and events of the world, there is a powerful impulse to translate our individual reactions

directly into the policy decisions of the government. But this impulse to participatory, plebiscitary democracy is fundamentally at odds with the concept of the representative Republic we are.

It is no accident that in the television age, all of the intermediary institutions created to distill mass attitudes into policy — the political parties, Congress, the presidency — have fallen into disrepair and disrepute. And it is certainly no accident that in the full flowering of this television era, the President of the United States is a benign television host and actor — a sort of Walter Cronkite with opinions.

The best television news show I know — CBS' "Sunday Morning" with Charles Kuralt — tries to deal with this quandary. The program's producers try to put the "events" the TV news cameras have recorded that week into perspective, by setting them in a framework of the arts and nature — leaving long moments of silence, in which you are invited to reflect on what you have seen.

But even in this deliberate effort to achieve perspective in a medium designed for immediacy, there is an inescapable paradox. Last Sunday, Richard Threlkeld went to Dubuque, Iowa, to view the hostage-inaugural week through the eyes of its people. The "establishing shot" for the sensitive segment showed the oath-taking being watched by townspeople on a row of television screens. Their reactions emerged in the interviews that followed.

The irony was that despite the serious effort to distill the human response, for the viewer this was just triple-level electronic gimmickry: a television picture of people watching a television picture of a real event. Once the nation — and world — are wired, it is almost impossible to unwind them.

Jeff Greenfield, the commentator on "Sunday Morning," asked the right question: How do you separate our emotions at the scenes of the hostages' return from our judgement as citizens about future American relations with Iran?

He did not offer an answer, and I don't have one either. But the challenge is there — as ubiquitous as television itself.

Fundamentalists opposing networks

By DAVID E. ANDERSON

United Press International

Religious groups, dismayed by what they see as a continuing increase of sex and violence on television, are getting ready to take on the commercial TV networks.

The most formidable of the coalitions, being put together to monitor and develop a response to what they find distasteful in the area of sexual programming, promises to be the Moral Majority headed by television evangelist Jerry Falwell. Another is the National Federation for Decency headed by Tupelo, Miss., Methodist minister Donald Wildmon.

Wildmon, operating out of his church and home and with a next-to-nothing budget, has been an annoying gadfly for network television executives for the last several years.

Falwell, who came to national attention last year as a leading spokesman for the new religious right, has used the pulpit of his Thomas Roads Baptist Church and Old Time Gospel Hour television program to flail immorality on television.

The alliance of the two groups is expected to be announced sometime in February at a press conference.

First on the agenda for the new coalition will be a massive monitoring and polling effort to determine the public's attitudes toward network programming.

The National Federation for Decency has already made some attempts at such monitor-

ing, but the new campaign will be much more sophisticated.

Last fall, for example, it released a study of programming that included such categories as "sex incidents per hour" by network, top users of sex in commercials, the top in sex-oriented programs, the least sponsors of sex on TV and the 10 most constructive and 10 least constructive programs.

Wildmon identified Revlon as the leading sponsor of sex and Volkswagen as the leading sponsor of profanity.

"It will be the biggest response ever to what the public sees on television," Moral Majority spokesman Cal Thomas told Broadcasting magazine.

Precisely what action against objectionable programming will be urged by the new coalition is not yet clear.

None of those involved will say, for example, whether it will support boycotts of sponsors of programs it finds objectionable.

Wildmon's National Federation has sponsored such boycotts in the past and Wildmon has been quoted as saying, "If I were an adver-

tiser, I'd look very carefully at my plans for television programming in the spring."

A separate monitoring project by the National Coalition on Television Violence has reported that despite public expressions of concern the amount of violence on television has not decreased.

"The most scandalous revelation of the monitoring project," said the Rev. Nelson Price of the United Methodist Church's Public Media Division, "is the amount of violence on Saturday morning children's programs."

He said that, "CBS children's programs are six times more than violent than its prime time shows; ABC is four times more violent; and NBC 2.5 times more violent."

"Clearly the commercial networks are more interested in gathering an audience for advertisers than in the welfare of children," Price said.

"It is our hope that individuals and groups will let stations, networks and advertisers know of their displeasure with the amount of violence on television," Price said.

Varped

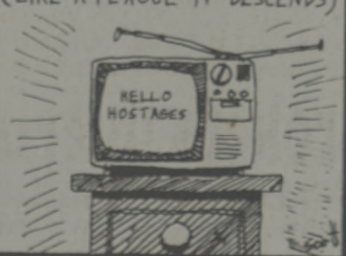
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FIRST, THE BOOKS, THEN THE TALK SHOWS, FOLLOWED BY "HOSTAGES: THE MOTION PICTURE" ...



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By Scott McCullar

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