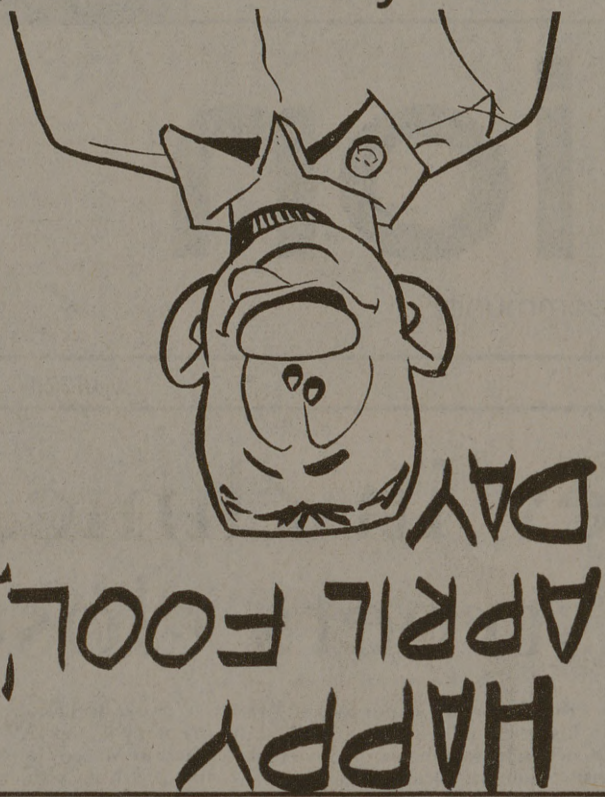


Slouch By Jim Earle



The Lighter Side: Get your daily bug supply

By Dick West

WASHINGTON — So far I have never seen tomato juice advertised as containing 100 percent of the recommended minimum daily adult requirement of drosophilia fly eggs.

Nor have I ever shopped at supermarkets that charged more for broccoli extra rich in aphids, thrips and mites.

Could it be the food industry has been in the slow lane with respect to promoting the nutritional benefits of buggy groceries?

That certainly is one message that may be read into an article on insect consumption in the April Omni magazine.

"Many insects are delicious and are higher in protein, calories and fat than equivalent amounts of beef," says the author, Edgar Raffensperger, a Cornell entomology professor.

So how come we never find such items as "beetle bread" being extolled by food editors, restaurant critics and all those gourmet cooks whose recipes are forever turning up in leading epicurean publications?

"Our aversion to certain foods is dictated by customs and habits," Raffensperger explains. And that about says it all.

The plain fact is that no national advertiser has ever launched a campaign to break down the anti-bug bias in our diet.

The demand is there just waiting to be tapped, I'm convinced. All that is needed is for someone to do for tomato fruit-worms what Frank Perdue has done for chicken parts. A spiel on this order:

"Try my genuine vitaminloaded fruit-worms the next time you shop for tomatoes. They have the same highprotein content as their cousin antropods, shrimp and lobster. Plus they are flavorful and charismatic."

It was, as I recall, also a Cornell scientist who performed some insect edibility tests for the Food and Drug Administration a few years back.

The burden of that study was that pesticides required to debug fruits and vegetables were more harmful than eating the bugs would be.

Raffensperger appears to take an even more sanguine view. He reports among other things that the protein and calorie content of flour and other processed foods could be doubled with insect additives, and without changing either taste or appearance.

You will, I'm sure, be pleased to know that most of us already are getting a sizeable quantity of bug fragments in our daily repasts. Federal allowances permit residues in many foodstuffs. Cocoa, for example, may contain up to 75 insect pieces per two-ounce serving.

If public relations consultants ever do latch onto the positive side of buggy victuals, they will strike the mother lode of hyperbole. Since virtually every plant known to man has its own special pests, the insect kingdom offers an almost infinite variety of potential taste thrills.

Right now, I could go for a side order of sauteed green peach aphids like mother used to make. But hold the spinach leaf miners.

the small society

by Brickman



'Gay' letter to editor is forgery

In Wednesday's paper, a letter appeared that was signed with the name Wayne Curtis of Bucknell Street. The fact that Curtis did not write the letter is bad enough. The content of the letter compounds the seriousness of the event.

The letter ran in the Letters to the Editor section with the headline "Understanding Needed." It described an incident in a class where a student had supposedly told a friend that he was a mem-

ber of the GSSO and the friend then stood up in class and made a scene. The letter asked for understanding on the part of "straight" students.

The real Wayne Curtis of Bucknell Street knew nothing about the letter until he saw it printed with his name under it.

All letters to the editor must be signed with name, address and phone number. The letter met these qualifications and an attempt was made to verify the author,

but the mistake was not caught before it appeared in print.

The purpose of the editorial page is to provide an open forum for students and community residents to express their views on current issues. When this privilege is abused, everyone's rights suffer, and in this case, one individual in particular has suffered the consequences.

The Battalion regrets the error.

Search for the Holy Grail of politics

By David S. Broder

WASHINGTON — For generations, politicians, pundits and poll-takers have been seeking their version of the Holy Grail — a surefire, guaranteed way to predict presidential elections well ahead of time. It may have been found by a most unlikely duo: an American historian and a Soviet geophysicist.

When Allan J. Lichtman of American University and Volodia Keilis-Borok of Moscow's Academy of Sciences met as visitors at Cal Tech last spring, they joked about the overlap in their seemingly dissimilar fields. Lichtman, a politician historian with a fondness for mathematical analysis, was trying to explain electoral upheavals and presidential landslides. Keilis-Borok was trying to refine earthquake analysis and prediction through a technique called "pattern recognition."

The joking quickly turned to a serious effort to define the historical conditions that lead to change of party control of the White House. By mathematical exercises far beyond my comprehension, the odd couple eliminated some plausible factors. When they had finished their computer runs, they were left with 13 key tests.

The first six questions that determine the winner of any presidential election are:

Did the party in power receive at least 51 percent (rounded to the nearest per-

centage) of the popular vote in the previous election?

Is the sitting President running for reelection?

Did he initiate major changes in national policy?

Did the party in power achieve a major success in foreign or military policy?

Is its candidate charismatic or a national hero?

Was the yearly mean per-capita rate of growth in real Gross National Product during the incumbent administration equal to or greater than 1 percent and equal to or greater than that of the previous eight years?

The more of those questions that are answered "no," the better the chances the White House will change hands.

The other seven questions are the reverse. The more "yes" answers, the better the odds of a presidential upheaval.

Was there a serious contest for the nomination of the incumbent party?

Was there major third-party or independent campaign activity during the election year?

Was there an election-year recession or depression?

Was there major social unrest in the nation during the incumbent administration?

Was it tainted by scandal?

Did it suffer a major setback in foreign

or military policy?

Is the challenging party candidate charismatic or a war hero?

Lichtman and Keilis-Borok applied their criteria to every election in the last 120 years and published their findings in what can safely be called a little-noticed article in the November, 1981, "Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences."

It might have remained their secret weapon for winning barroom election bets in Moscow and Washington. But Lichtman has gone public with a popularized version in the next issue of "Washingtonian Magazine." So you might as well be in on the game, too.

The secret is that when there are more than five "discrepant keys" or wrong answers from the viewpoint of the party in power, it loses the White House. When there are less than five, it wins. When there are exactly five — as there were in 1880 and 1912 — the result is unpredictable, depending on the break in the electoral vote.

Now that they have gone public, their theory will be examined skeptically by other scholars and tested by all the political junkies as a predictive tool for 1984. It may not match Rubik's Cube in popularity, but it's better fun than counting delegates. And it can't be less reliable than the polls.



Letters: Campaign isn't working

Editor:

This is an open letter to Mr. John Olin Teague:

You profess to take the side of the poor, the working people (advertisement, Battalion 3-30-82, page 6) and seem to want to leave the "rich" and the "fat-cats" out in the cold where they've been for the last 30 years. Yet you advertise and solicit donations in a student newspaper? We, the opulent felines mentioned, can't even afford that while going to school.

I think you know very little about your proposed constituency. That is why my vote remains with Mr. Gramm for as long as he cares to run.

Steve Stockman '82

Two-China policy unfair

Editor:

We are extremely regretful in with-

drawing our participation in all the activities in this International Week. We have reiterated our position in the organization meetings that there is only one China, that is, People's Republic of China as represented by the government in Beijing (Peking). Taiwan is only part of China. The Nationalist regime in Taiwan is not recognized as the legitimate government of China by the United Nations nor by the U.S. government. In spite of our memorandum, the administration of the International Student Association and the University openly distributed the Nationalist flag to a group of students from Taiwan and allowed them to participate as a country. This act strongly violates the Constitution of the United Nations and the U.S.-China diplomatic agreement. Under our strong protest, the administration has to retract the distributed flag, but still allows the display of the Nationalist flag under so-called "cultural items." Such two-China policy, whether a product of contemplation or negligence, cannot be tolerated by us. It will seriously hinder any future interaction between U.S. and China. We hope that such inci-

dence will not be repeated.

Wang, Zai-Zhong
President of the China Club

Thanks for the help

Editor:

I would like to thank the ladies in the Student Finance Center and the University Scheduling Office for their numerous invaluable contributions to our club in the past year. They have always been extremely cooperative and willing to go out of their way to help. These people are an asset to all student organizations.

Lynn Slater
Toyota Owners Association

The Battalion

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Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M University and Bryan-College Station. Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of

Texas A&M University administrators or faculty members, or of the Board of Regents.

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, show the address and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, and are not subject to the same length constraints as letters. Address all inquiries and correspondence to: Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843, or phone (713) 845-2611.

The Battalion is published daily during Texas A&M's fall and spring semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

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