

Slouch By Jim Earle



"You're right! That umbrella will protect you from being splashed on by cars."

Northrop has idea — advertise fighter jet

by Art Buchwald

The Northrop Corporation is now using newspapers and consumer magazines to advertise its new fighter plane, the "F-20 Tigershark." There was a four-color spread in Newsweek just last week.

From the ad it looks like one heck of a plane, but I'm not certain if they want me to buy one or just admire it.

According to the advertising copy the Tigershark is a new Mach 2-class tactical air defense fighter designed to deter or defeat the enemy. It can operate around the clock in all sorts of weather. It was financed by Northrop without government funding "in response to a U.S. government call for private development of a tactical fighter specially suited to fulfill U.S. mutual security policy objectives."

It so happens I'm in the market for a new 1983 tactical fighter, and the looks of the Tigershark really appealed to me.

But my wife announced last Christmas that I couldn't buy a new plane until we paid for the children's orthodontist work.

I agreed with her, but I was so impressed with the ad that I showed it to her.

"It's a beautiful aircraft," she admitted, "but I think we should make do with the old F-5 we have now until the economy improves."

"But the F-5 can't do half the things the Tigershark can," I protested. "I'll be the laughing stock of the neighborhood if I'm tooling around in an F-5 while everyone else is doing Mach 2 at 60,000 feet."

"I don't understand why every time you see a new fighter plane in a magazine, you have to buy it."

"I don't want to buy every fighter plane I see in a magazine. But the Tigershark appeals to me. You can put an air-to-ground missile under each wing, flip it over on its back in a dogfight and drive

off anything twice its size in the sky. If people like myself don't buy one we'll never get the economy on its feet."

"Where do I and the children sit?" she wanted to know.

"It's not a family airplane. It's a one-seater, aimed at the type of person who reads Playboy."

"I thought as much. All you want is a new toy for yourself now that you're tired of playing with your Apple computer."

"That's not fair. I can defend our home, and the homes of everyone in the neighborhood with the Tigershark. It says right here that it's the best deterrent that money can buy."

"Even if you wanted an F-20 how do you know Northrop would let you buy it?"

"They're advertising it in Newsweek. They're not going to waste money on a four-color spread if they're not prepared to sell you one."

"Maybe they're aiming the advertisements at Third World countries who can't afford a more expensive fighter plane."

"That's ridiculous. If they were doing that they would take space in Third World publications. This particular ad is directed at people like myself who can't afford a new Mercedes-Benz, but still want the speed and engineering that goes into one."

"How do you expect to pay for it?"

"I'm sure the Pentagon will finance it for me. After all, it's in their interest for me to buy an American fighter plane. The more they can sell, the cheaper Northrop can build them."

"Well, if you want to indulge yourself at the expense of the children's teeth, go ahead and buy one. What are you going to do with your F-5?"

"I'll give it to Joel. Then he won't be borrowing my Tigershark every time he wants to go on a mission."

Why — and the answer to it

"Why?" It's the shortest, most distressing, most confusing, most unanswered, yet most important question in the English language.

If handled properly, it can also be one heck of a lot fun. But before you go out "Why-ing?" all over the place, look out. There are procedures to follow and dangers involved.

There are two steps you must take if you're going to get past even the most rudimentary stages of "Why-ing?"

First, you must always suspect the easy answer. If you accept the first answer you arrive at, then you'll probably get it wrong. But even if it's right that's no excuse. Remember, the serious "Why-er?" doesn't really care about the answer — that's strictly for the beginner and dilettante. The "Why-er?" by definition, is mainly concerned with the questions.

Second, no matter what your mothers told you, "because" isn't an answer. I remember a conversation I had with my own mother soon after I started high school.

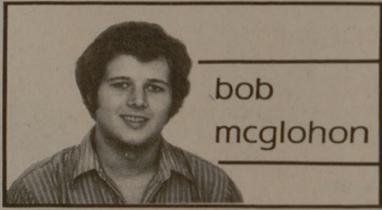
Mother: "But darlin', you have to do your homework."
Me: "Why?"

Mother: "So you can graduate and go to college."
Me: "Why?"

Mother: "Because you need to get a good job."
Me: "Why?"

Mother: "So you can earn money."
Me: "Why?"

Mother: "Well, for one thing, you need money to eat."



Me: "Why?"
Mother: "You have to eat to live."
Me: "Why?"
Mother: "Because."
Me: "Why?"
Mother: (Scream of outrage) "Do your homework or else!"
Me: "Why?"
The rest is too painful to recall.

"Why?" is an extremely useful and fun little toy. But watch out, it can be turned against you. A few years later:

Me: "Mom, can I borrow the car?"
Mother: (with sly smile) "Why?"
Me: "I want to go to a party."
Mother: (still smiling) "Why?"
Me: "Because it'll be fun."
Mother: (outrageous laughter) "Why?"
Me: "Aww, Mom."

Mothers and roommates have a well-known aversion to episodes like the ones above — at least when they're on the receiving end. That little three letter question can gain you a reputation as a smart-aleck and maybe even a bloody nose, so be careful. It's probably better to ques-

tion yourself, not others, and quietly.

Start out small.

Ask questions like "Why do I have to eat asparagus?" and "Why do I have to do every Saturday afternoon?"

Those are simple questions to start for the beginner.

More complicated ones are "Why do I think Ronnie is senile?" or "Why do I think Democrats run rabbits on the moon?"

Those will be harder to answer and done correctly. And they'll cause more soul searching.

The really big "Why?" probably be answered in my lifetime or in the fuzzy ones have been trying for millennia — with little or no success they're fun to play with and good for answering the little ones.

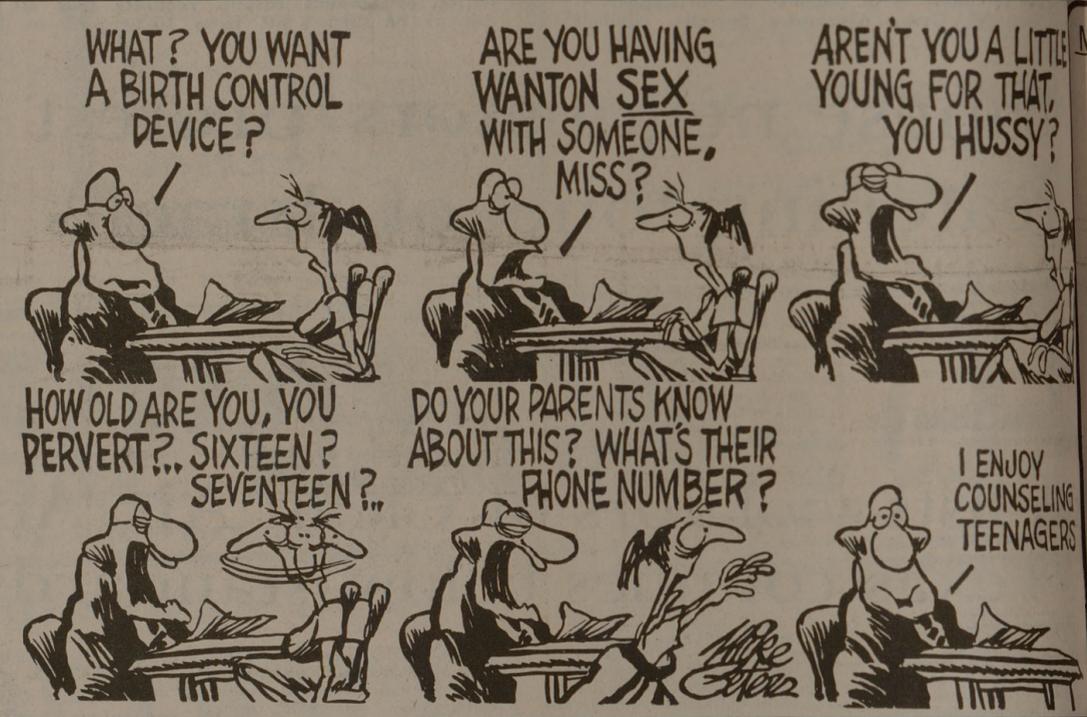
The trouble with the big "Why?" is that they're often too vague to answer. Like "Why am I here?"

Narrow it down. "Why am I in this stupid class, listening to this stupid professor talk about this stupid subject?" (Only y'all can ask that question.)

My classes exceedingly interest me, my professors, remember my name and picture are at the top of the page.

Don't get carried away though. "Why?" is like alcohol, it sneaks up on you. You might find yourself at the end of "Why-ers" Anonymous.

Then you're in trouble. I wonder why I wrote this "Why?"



Letters: Security problems continue

Editor: In regards to recent attacks on women around the commons area, the men of Aston Hall would like to make some comments on security. The campus police have greatly increased patrols in this area, and we are very aware of and pleased with this increase. We would also like to make note of two incidents in which this security was not up to safe standards.

On the night of Jan. 23, a policeman was seen having a casual conversation with pool players inside the commons. This officer was supposed to be on patrol around the girl's dorms. For an excess of 20 minutes, this lackadaisical security was noticed by Aston dorm council members during a meeting.

The other incident occurred on the night of Jan. 26. Our dorm was on a panty raid and we were yelling between Krueger and Mosher. It took the officer on patrol at least 10 minutes to arrive to investigate. He questioned our purpose, an action which points to the fact he did not know this was merely a harmless panty raid. Then why did it take 10 minutes of potentially life-threatening time to arrive?

We brought up these incidents for the police to recognize them and correct them. The campus police have been doing a commendable job and we appreciate it. The women in the commons area are our neighbors and friends and all we ask is for the best possible protection for them.

Aston Dorm Council

Editor's Note: This letter was accompanied by 23 signatures.

Moped driver's complaints

Editor: This is "Ellie May," live from atop her "mitsubishi" moped, and I would like to tell Mr. Eagle a thing or two about campus traffic and parking problems — he forgot to mention a third hazard concerning campus traffic — pedestrians.

"Ellie May," here, dislikes oh, so much, you thoughtless clodhoppers who delight in bounding off sidewalks — hurling your senseless bodies into the path of an oncoming vehicle traveling at 30 miles an hour — and you're believing it's going to stop for you. That's almost cute.

It would be nice if you pedestrian-types could be more considerate of us bicycle, motorcycle, moped and automobile drivers. There are crosswalks designed for you but it seems that walking an extra 15 feet to cross at the designated area is too much trouble. So, instead, you just step off the sidewalk anywhere you please, whenever the mood strikes you.

It has come to the point where there are less obstacles and traffic on the sidewalks than in the streets. I find it a good deal safer as well as less congested to ride my massively rugged scare-mobile around the buildings to get to classes on time because you pedestrians make it so difficult to use the road ways. A simple two-minute excursion by way of the street turns into a 15-minute ordeal if I

have to continually stop like Fred Flinstone (leaving tennis shoe rubber marks) to avoid hitting a jaywalker.

As a moped rider, I'd like to add the University doesn't seem to care whether to classify mopeds as bicycles or motorcycles and as a consequence we're ticketed for parking in bike racks and motorcycle slots.

Would someone with campus regulations please determine where the use of pubescent motorcycles are allowed in park. The only method I've found to avoid parking tickets is to scoot up sidewalks and park along buildings where police cars can't follow.

But to get back to Mr. Eagle — just question: What's the deal with those least mopeds make enough noise so you can hear us coming and can get out of the way.

Cathy Campbell

Thanks, Josh

Editor: I'd like to express my thanks to Campus Crusade for Christ for sponsoring Josh McDowell, on Thursday evening found his talk, "How to Know Your Love," both helpful and entertaining. I'm glad that Christian organizations are allowed to bring speakers here to campus — especially to speak on such relevant topics. Again, thanks Campus Crusade.

Frank Reister

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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.

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