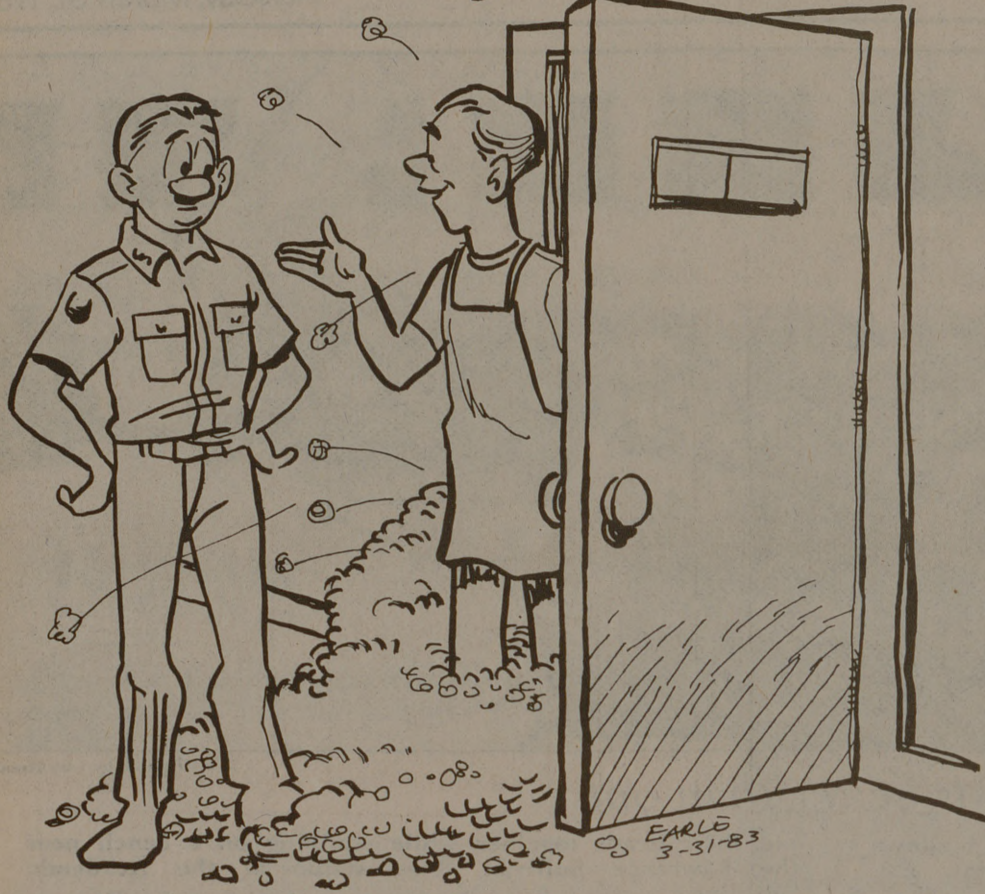


opinion

Slouch By Jim Earle



"I've just made a breakthrough in my popcorn experiment. The good part is, you get to share the credit since it's your room I'm working in."

Nuclear energy — the great debate

by Rube Williams

What use of it can justify its existence? It was introduced to this African jungle when a great lightning bolt pierced the sky and struck a large tree which burst immediately into flames. It was fire. It swiftly claimed the lives of animals that could not escape its path.

Krom, a "cave man" of unusual attention span, taken to observing things and actually deriving some conclusion, screamed and shouted although he was in no danger of the flames. He was thrilled, for even the greatest of predators, the feared she-lion, ran from the flames in panic. Krom came back the next day and the next to watch in awe as the flames painstakingly spread through the section of forest.

Luckily, this part of the forest was somewhat misplaced from the great mass of the jungle, for surely greater destruction could have ensued and might have had not the rains finally begun. As the rains rushed from the sky Krom remained crouched, pondering for the last time at the spectacle that lay before him — that which was once a dense green forest was now a towering shroud of blackness.

It came to pass that Krom possessed fire at will. He discovered that the sparks from the collision of certain rocks would produce flames when introduced to some dry grass and leaves. And furthermore, the fire once begun, could be sustained by adding more grass and leaves. Wood, he found, would burn longer.

But banned from the village would be Krom if the tribemaster ever suspected him of starting fire again. For several sined and some badly burned faces and legs were testimony that fire was dangerous and of no use. Krom explained that fire was only hazardous if the villagers

persisted in running through it and trying to eat it. Krom compared fire to the warmth of the sun. But the villagers protested vehemently, "No fire! No fire!"

Centuries later, fire was but an essential tool of man. And it came to pass that Einstein, a twentieth century man gifted with extraordinary intellect, taken to deciphering the physical laws of the Universe, developed the theorem $E=mc^2$ (energy equals mass times the speed of light squared). The theorem led to, in times of war, an atomic bomb which claimed the lives of many and left the world in awe.

Presently, engineers and scientists derive energy from the atom at will. The energy from the collision of certain atomic particles when introduced to water can be converted to steam to drive electric generators. And furthermore, the process once begun can be sustained by subtracting or adding a neutron absorbing material. Theoretically it would take at least a million pounds of chemical fuel (oil, coal, etc ...) to equal the energy derived from one pound of nuclear fuel — energy needed to light the enormous cities of this era.

But threatened and fined would be the nuclear engineers and utilities if the public ever suspected them of building a nuclear power plant. The engineers explained that nuclear fuel was a hazard only if people strolled through the containment building unprotected or if they somehow managed to eat uranium. Engineers showed how environmentally clean and how low of radiation emission nuclear plants are compared to chemical power plants, and they compared its energy generation process to that of the sun. But the people protested vehemently, "No nukes! No nukes!"

Rube Williams is a senior nuclear engineering major at Texas A&M.

Networking for business, fun has

by Maxwell Glen and Cody Shearer

Every now and then, we've contemplated throwing a party for 10 friends, stipulating that each guest bring another 10 people. Every time we've rejected the idea, fearful that any gathering of complete strangers would prove disastrous.

In New York City, however, someone has found a way to make it work. Every Wednesday night, about 1,500 complete strangers pay \$8 each to meet one another and exchange phone numbers at Manhattan's Studio 54. It's called "Business Networking," produced and directed by that notorious former Yip-pie, Jerry Rubin.

For the last two years, Rubin has been throwing his Wednesday evening get-togethers to provide, in his words, "a social environment in which to do business." After a brief stint as a Wall Street marketing director, Rubin now helps other young professionals promote themselves, make business contacts and find success. Networking "salons," he explains, are a "business be-in."

Indeed, a certain career-consciousness pervaded the club when we visited last week for Business Networking's second anniversary salon. Men and women, most under 40, sported business cards pinned to their suits (mostly gray flannel). Some actively worked the crowd, passing out promotional material; others

such as one man selling legal insurance, made their pitches from the dimly-lit sidelines.

After several hours, we learned that good networkers don't bother with conversation. They just introduce themselves and hastily arrange a meeting for the following week. "Make two lunch dates at every salon," Rubin's networking guide counsels.

Not surprisingly, the merger of fun and profit is an awkward one. Some networkers smile bravely but are too shy to speak; others strike up conversations as if they'd known you for years.

Like the sponsors of more memorable French salons, Rubin mixes the commonplace with the offbeat to create a unique evening. Every week, hourly demonstrations of "Yogarobics" vie with exhibits of computer-aided design. A tuxedoed Rubin marked the second anniversary with balloons, a six-foot birthday cake and a recitation of marriages spawned and business deals cut because of networking.

To be sure, Rubin's brainchild has some salient features. According to Valery Lasher, a financial planner who was making her fourth appearance, the salon offers businessmen a rare chance to meet people in other fields. (The need for an "old girls' network" was echoed repeatedly by other women.)

And for Arthur Hersch, a veteran of

25 salons, networking has uncovered lucrative clients for his printing. "I've got no time to canvass at work here you can keep talking all night," said.

Despite success stories, many men women likened the salon to a singles bar. "It's hilarious," said one Australian woman, who said she was positioned twice within the first hour. "This is pick-up city."

Added a caterer working for the time, "I feel as if I'm at a dance, collected a couple of cards that might lead somewhere, but I'm not sure (the salon's) value."

Unfortunately, after two years Rubin has had trouble maintaining what he calls the "quality" of his salons. Apparently while many fascinating people and once, not all return. Meanwhile, to 6,000 new invitations each week to "the most interesting people," as he does, is a project doomed to diminishing returns.

Yet if his guiding theory is correct that the 1980s is "the decade of achievement" — Rubin may soon have other cities. Chronic career orientated has led some younger Americans anything in the interest of promotion. Besides, the ingenious concept of a "business salon" sanctioning work with play.

And, most people will try any once.



Letters: Give Texas A&M credit

Editor:

I recently had an experience that I feel I should share with your readers. When I went home over spring break, I bought a car from a gentleman who is an accountant with Ernst and Whinney in Dallas. When I told him that I was a student at Texas A&M, he said that he had been very impressed with the consistently high quality of the accounting graduates they recruited from Texas A&M. He told me how the Aggies at Ernst and Whinney displayed an attitude and a level of maturity that was a cut above their average recruits.

At any rate, it is encouraging to know in these difficult economic times that a degree from Texas A&M can count for just a little more than a degree from somewhere else. It is probably safe to assume that grades of A and B are somewhat harder to come by here than at SMU. But before we bemoan any low grades we might receive, perhaps we should be cognizant of the probability that our high grades carry much more meaning in the professional world. For that, I think, our administrators deserve a sizeable measure of credit, as do we for successfully making our way through.

Dwain Handley '82

Greek loyalty

Editor:

I would like to congratulate Kirk Patterson, Dorm 5, on his letter concerning the loyalty of Greeks at Texas A&M, Mar 22. It was well said, well written; one of

the few objective letters we've seen in quite some time.

I feel a quote is appropriate: "... when school spirit and interest are subordinated to fraternal prejudice and selfishness, it becomes ... a detriment to the fraternity and to the school ... (and) we condemn, and pledge every effort to avoid it."

—Quote from my fraternity's Declaration of Principles.

I think that the founders of all fraternities and sororities truly felt this way. The Greek system cannot exist without a college home. I hold my TAMU and my fraternal experiences dear and deeply resent the accusation of destroying or dismantling anything for which Texas A&M stands.

Becoming close to a group is essential to human development. Fortunately Texas A&M maintains an atmosphere which fosters this. But it is not enough. The openness exemplified at A&M often seems kindred to that which psychologists have found on buses and airplanes: we would more quickly open up to strangers, those we'd never see again, than we would to these we're acquainted with. Texas A&M is like a sea of friendly strangers. This is why TAMU, like other universities, supports anything that bolsters camaraderie: intramurals, dorms, off-campus centers, honor societies, choirs, the Corps, etc. Fraternities and sororities are simply two others, and it is obvious by their size, some 2,000, that they are needed here, and therefore should not be scorned.

If I have convinced just one that we are beneficial to the student and therefore the University, I am happy. As for the rest, keep throwing stones, it just convinces me more.

Phillip Shiffrin
McInnis Hall

Cartoon quips

Editor:

This is in response to Tim Stephens' letter in the March 28 Battalion concerning Scott McCullar's cartoon about two cadets who were removed from Corps for the use of marijuana.

Mr. Stephens wrote that "the Corps does not condone the use of drugs; it will not tolerate them," but these two cadets may have unknowingly said something big.

Here at Texas A&M, it's often said that once is an accident and twice is a tradition.

C'mon guys, can't you take a joke?

Brian Gorski
Davis-Gary

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

Academic art

Editor:

Referring to the picture on the page of the Battalion, on March 22, I would love to see Michelangelo's "David" in front of the Academic Building, glorious work of "ART" would surely those colored paper plates, tied with bamboo, broken bicycles, ... etc. nauseam.

Don Barbieri

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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.

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 and 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.

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