

Take off, hoser— it's only an ad

Confusion has abounded lately over a cartoon which has been running in The Battalion. A letter to the editor in Wednesday's edition of the newspaper criticized "the lack of humor" in Battalion cartoons.

Go ahead and criticize "Warped" and "R.I." all you want. Those cartoons are regular features of the newspaper. But to set the record straight, the other cartoon mentioned in the letter — "A Take Off" — is an advertisement.

That cartoon advertisement — which began running last week — wasn't clearly labeled as an advertisement until this week, and confusion still exists about it.

The cartoon, which imitates Canadian comics Bob and Doug McKenzie, is part of an advertising campaign by the Business Student Council to promote its annual career fair/business week.

Running a cartoon for an ad is perfectly acceptable, even enjoyable at times. But a promotional flyer before the advertisement appeared added to the confusion. It said: "Bob and Doug Are Gonna Add Hoser Humor To The Batt." The cartoon itself is a teaser for the event, so only slowly has it become apparent that it isn't a regular cartoon.

Many people have read the flyer and the cartoon and mistakenly believed "A Take Off" was a new feature in The Battalion. It's not.

If you have a complaint about that cartoon, mail it to the Business Student Council. "A Take Off" is in no way related to editorial content of The Battalion. It is an advertisement.

The Battalion Editorial Board objects to the misleading implications of the flyer and to the cartoon's use last week without proper labeling.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Execution another form of murder

It is possible that a Florida man was executed this morning, before today's Battalion was delivered and you picked it up. He claims he is innocent. The courts say he isn't — and have sentenced him to death. Appeal after appeal has failed, and his execution — barring another last-minute stay — was carried out today.

It is ironic that events like these take place in relative obscurity, at a time when anti-abortion sentiment on the Texas A&M campus has reached a fever pitch. This is murder also — but nobody seems to care. Criminals deserve to die, right?

But what if the man or woman on death row is innocent? Who takes the blame for the execution then? Was it just a mistake, or the senseless destruction of a human being? Criminals or not, there's no doubt death row inmates are human.

It is impossible to determine right or wrong in a case such as this — The Battalion Editorial Board realizes that fact. But in a society where moral decisions need to be made every day, it is important for citizens to think rationally about what is or isn't morally right. If abortion is murder, what do you call executions?

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Leak prevention is impossible

The Reagan administration could well be the most paranoid group to inhabit the White House since the Nixon regime.

In his almost four years in office, President Reagan has made countless attempts to amend the Freedom of Information Act, which originally gave citizens the right to obtain almost any type of government records from executive branch offices.

The Reagan administration has continually advocated the expansion of the areas of exemption from free access recognized under the Freedom of Information Act, especially in the area of national defense. Under the President's sweeping definition of national security, almost all matters of national defense and foreign policy could be kept secret from the American people.

Reagan also proposed lengthening the time in which government agencies could reply to requests for information and requiring all citizens to pay fees for information received.

More recently, the White House has begun a zealous campaign to plug up internal information leaks. The latest strategy is a proposal from the assistant attorney general to fine government officials up to \$5,000 for each piece of classified information released to an "unauthorized" person.

When will government officials learn how unrealistic it is to expect to hide their administrative decisions from those who elected them? The American system of government outlined in the Constitution

is designed expressly to support a system of "leaks." Both houses of Congress and the American press were given the function of keeping an eye on the White House, to prevent the secrecy that is often the first step toward tyranny.

Members of Congress often receive information that would be beneficial to their districts if released to constituents. Should they be fined for doing their jobs



kathy
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just because a bureaucrat has inadvertently stamped the material "classified"? When reporters, in monitoring the activities of the executive branch, learn of abuses of power in the administration, should the person who helped them obtain information be penalized for exposing activities dangerous to the democratic process?

Without internal leaks, the corruption of the Nixon administration would not have been exposed.

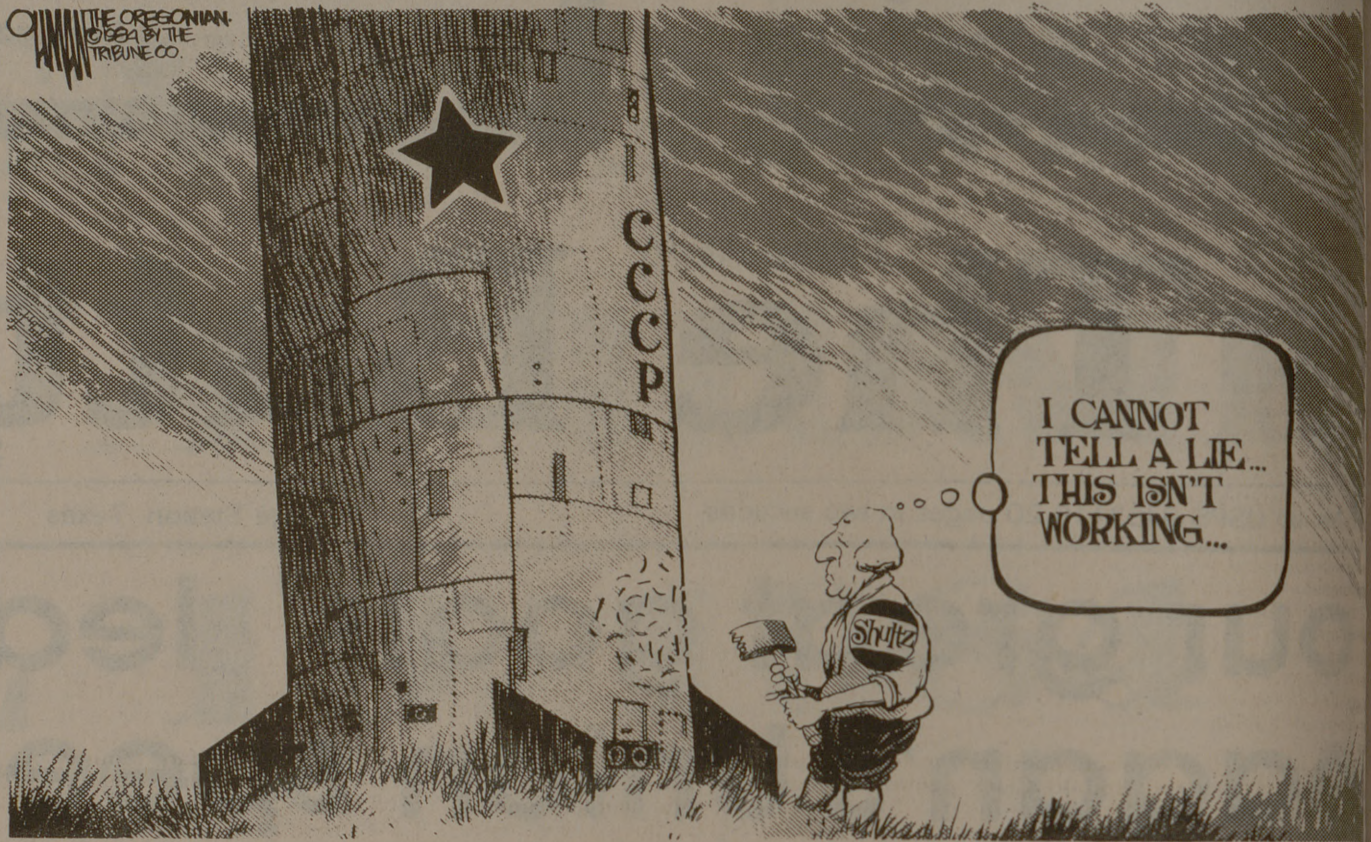
In addition, the Reagan administration, which persists in seeing a spy in every corner of the White House, a traitor in each dark hall of the Capitol building, and a crowd of non-patriots at every press conference, doesn't even consider one important aspect of security leaks: simple human error.

Last Friday, the FBI collected a 4-inch stack of government documents from a 13-year-old Pennsylvania school girl who brought them to class for a social studies project.

The papers were classified memos regarding the 1980 presidential debates. A maid had accidentally delivered the stack of documents to the hotel room where the girl's father was staying. She apparently mistook him for a presidential staff member.

Should she be fined \$5,000 a page for her carelessness? And what of the official who handed the documents to her? Should he be fined for being too lazy to deliver the documents himself?

Last fall a file cabinet filled with classified information was mistakenly delivered to one of the U.S. prisons. Who should be liable for that leak?



TV habits examined

Americans set another new record last year — watching more hours of television per day than ever before. Now that's something to be proud of.

The average household in America watched more than seven hours of television every day; seven hours and two minutes to be exact. These figures were released by A. C. Nielsen, and they reflect an all-time high in the history of television.

What the report didn't include is who is doing all of the watching and what exactly they are watching for over seven hours every day?

Somehow I don't think that people are watching seven hours and two minutes of news and educational television. In short, I don't think that people really watch what they watch.

Now I'm all for entertainment and I enjoy turning to the television for some of that entertainment, but if the average household is watching seven hours a day, that means many people are relying mainly on television for entertainment and forgetting that there is more out there.

And we wonder why Johnny can't read. And we wonder why parents and their children aren't communicating.

Whatever happened to children get-

ting library cards and checking out all of the Hardy Boys or Nancy Drew Mysteries — and enjoying them? How many times do people wait for the movie version of a book to come out rather than reading the book to begin with?

People need to start communicating with each other more, and about worth-



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ross

while things. How often do we talk about what was on television last night or what Erica did on "All My Children" yesterday? Probably too often.

I'm not really worried about college students and don't think that the figures released include many of them. After all, when do we have time to watch two hours of television a day, let alone seven?

It's the children I really wonder about. How many mothers are using the television as a babysitter?

We need to spend time talking to children and teaching them how to think and communicate with people. Parents should play a bigger role in the education of their children and not let it up to Mr. Rogers and his friends in their neighborhood.

I'm not saying that we should eliminate television snobs, either. Television snobs do exist. They are the ones who take great pride in saying, "Me, I don't watch television."

They are missing out on many things, too, because television does have some good things to offer. Television brings the world together, and exposes people to things that they may never be able to see. I'm so sure I'll ever go to Africa, or the depths of the Pacific ocean, but I have been exposed to them through television.

A balance needs to be struck by viewers. Television can be used for entertainment as well as education.

The problem with many things is good in themselves is that they are used in excess, and thus abused. Seven hours of television is an excess of it could be a good thing for all.

Letters: evolution vs. creation

Freedom of choice

Editor:

Last Friday a letter was printed in The Battalion addressing the measure taken by the Texas Board of Education which stated that state textbooks do not have to mention Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution.

The author of the letter attacked the action of the Board as a "spineless" attempt to appease fundamentalist Christians, arguing that fundamentalist Christians advocate the total exclusion of all teachings other than Mature Creationism.

However, in his view there was no question as to the validity of Darwin's theory. In fact, he was angered by the board's action which made it optional for textbook authors to mention the theory of evolution.

We as Christians feel that what the author has failed to recognize is that Darwin's theory is just that — a theory. For this reason we feel that it should be given no more preference than any other theory of human origin, including Creationism.

If the author is truly interested in education, how can he oppose the freedom of choice? True freedom of choice is fully dependent upon the inclusion of all possible alternatives presented objectively.

We believe that it is the omission of, or the preference given to, any one theory that will draw us one step closer to Orwell's vision of 1984.

Scott Parrott
Sean Royall
Class of '85

Separate doctrine, public education

Editor:

For some religions it is a matter of doctrine that the earth was created by God in seven literal 24-hour days. Therefore, teaching Darwinism in the schools would mean that the state was engaging in the teaching of religion, which would violate the separation of church and state.

I wouldn't want my children to be forced to learn something contradicting their religious teaching. Parents who do not believe in evolution have the right to

protect their minor children from being forced-fed the theory of evolution.

I do not believe that being anti-evolution is anti-scientific. If an individual learns mathematics, chemistry, physics, engineering, etc., I do not see how an individual would be handicapped by not knowing about Darwin's theory of evolution. If you believe a knowledge of the theory of evolution is of great benefit, you are free to share that theory with your own children.

When considering whether or not Darwin's theory of evolution is true, it is important to remember that it is only a theory and not supported by actual evidence. It seems to me that if there is any parallel between the present situation and George Orwell's "1984," it is that Darwin is attempting to rewrite the true history which has been given to us in the Bible.

Whether you believe Darwin's theory of evolution is up to you as an individual. What bothers me most is the way that some people are living their lives. It seems that the part of the Bible dealing with evolution is not the only part some people do not live as though they really believe it is true.

Dan Eggers
Computer Science

'True science'

Editor:

This letter is in response to some disturbing but common correlations made by Mr. Rex Alan Hanger in the January issue of The Battalion. He associates evolution with "true science," but nothing could be further from the truth. Not only is evolution forever destined to remain an untestable, unprovable hypothesis but it is surrounded by the most unsupportive, rigid, and close-minded thought of our century.

True science is composed of critical and questioning thought integrated with an open mind. The zealous and fanatical defense given evolution when a true Creationism appears reveals a justifiable insecurity.

Two of the major problems are: 1) The absence of the essential transitional forms among the major plant and animal kinds, and 2) the sudden advent of 50,000 different species of organisms in the earliest known fossil strata, instead of the one or two expected by evolutionists. Even the highly touted "early ancestor" of man are either gross exaggerations of primate fossils or outright frauds.

David B...

Slouch by Jim Earle



"The perfect schedule! No Friday classes; no Monday classes; and no late classes! How long will it take me to graduate if I only take seven hours per semester?"

The Battalion

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