

Required physicals too late for Goodrich

Texas A&M University announced that physical examinations will be required for all students before entering the Corps of Cadets.

It's a travesty that it took a death to cause the University to rethink this policy considering the amount of physical and mental conditioning Cadets undertake as part of their daily regimen — even without the type of tradition inspired 'crap out' that lead to Cadet Bruce Goodrich's death. It's even more of a travesty to hear Colonel Burton, the administrative leader of the Cadets, tell the Faculty Senate that he was surprised to learn that incoming Cadets were not required to take a physical examination before they entered the Corps. If Burton doesn't know the procedures followed by the Corps, who does?

But what's next; the procedures of the past aren't as important as what will occur. Before undergoing any strenuous exercise, people should be aware of their physical limitations. A physical examination does just that.

But the examinations to be required of the incoming Cadets must not be allowed to fall into a check-your-blood-pressure, listen-to-your-heart, turn-your-head-and-cough joke. No, the physicals should include advanced medical techniques including heart and respiratory stress-testing.

Anything less would be a blot on the memory of Cadet Bruce Goodrich.

The Battalion Editorial Board

The Battalion

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In memoriam

Bill Robinson, 1962-1984, Editor

The Battalion Editorial Board

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Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the Editorial Board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

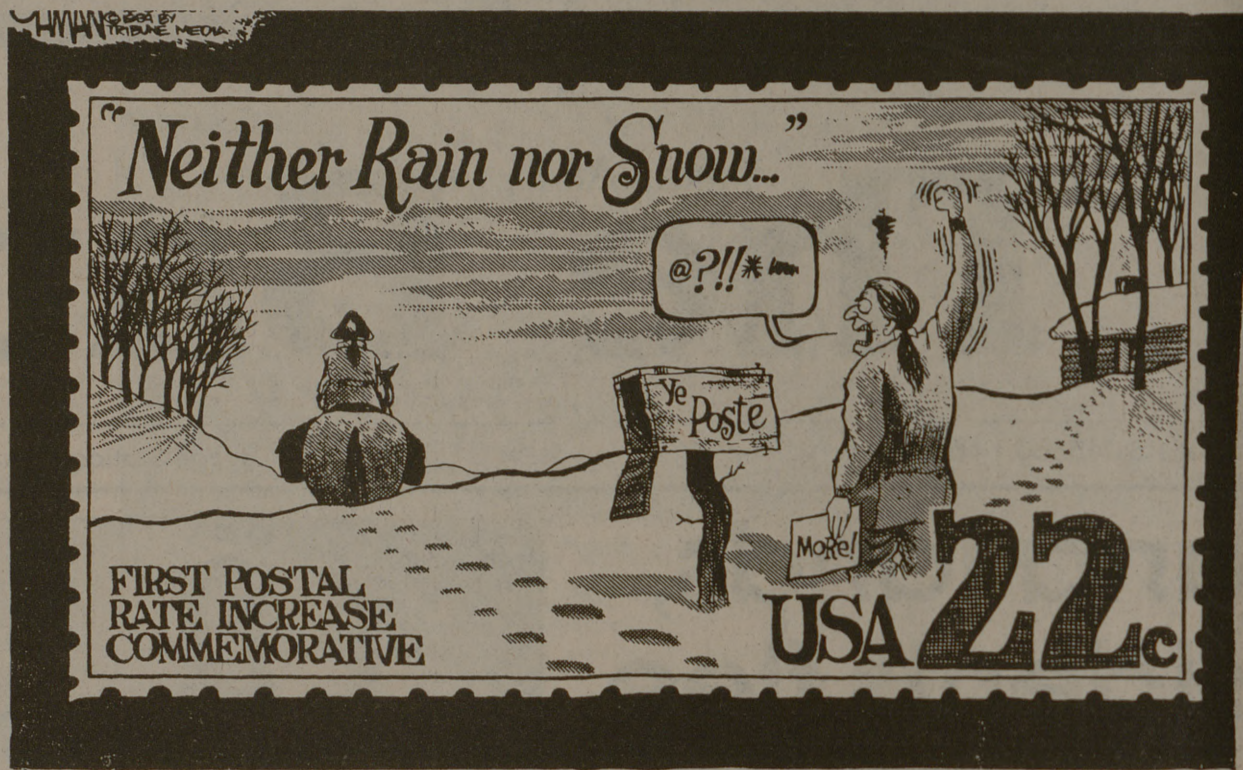
The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

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Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. 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 be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

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Crossing Texas highways

Dead skunks on the road

TEXAS SPUR 359 — It was mid-evening. The sun's rays glared through the passenger's window and into my eyes. A chicken pecked nonchalantly alongside the road.

Just to be safe — though I'm not one of those people who have an "I break for animals" sticker on the bumper of my pickup — I took my foot off the accelerator.

Before the truck had a chance to slow, the chicken made his move.

With a clink he hit the truck's front grill, and with a thud the fowl hit the ground. In a moment my rear view mirror showed the animal on the side of the road, a heap of white fluffy feathers.

I tried to deny the reality of this execution by auto. Soon though, to maintain my mental health, I knew I would have to acknowledge my deed.

I had killed; I felt remorse.

I felt pity for the poor creature whose life ended that day on Texas 359.

What? An avowed fowl eater feeling remorseful for the accidental vehicular homicide of two wings, two legs, a breast and a bunch of chicken innards?

For almost a minute I became a dedicated vegetarian. Uh huh, no more meat for this guy. No way, I won't be a vile flesh-eater anymore.

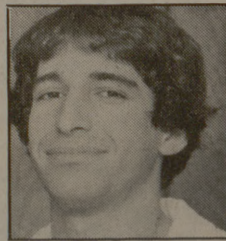
Then the rationalization began.

God put chicken on earth to feed man. If we felt guilty for killing living things to eat, people would have nothing to eat. What if carrots cried whenever you pulled them from Mother Earth?

It was just an accident officer. Really, he just ran out in front of me; I tried to slow down. It just happened so fast.

"Innocent," my conscience ruled.

As I drove Texas' highways I always wondered what



Donn Friedman

vile creatures hit the poor beings that littered the shoulders.

Oh lord, whose puppy is that splattered on the side of the road?

The little black fur-covered body, rolled up with rigor mortis, dried out at 105 degrees. Oh my, it's really not rotting flesh; it's just a Goodyear.

Driving on just about any two-lane highway in this state you see them — dead tires and dead animals.

Goodyears, shredded past the point of retread by the friction between their skin and the road, slither along the shoulder. Armadillos, their steel shells cracked, look like plugged watermelons left out in the field to rot. Raccoons, unmasked by the steel steam-rollers, become indistinguishable from skunks after the 112th pick-up passes over their carcass — except for the smell.

You can tell when the rumpled, rotting flesh on the road is from a playful Pepe Le Pew. You can smell it when you pass over it; you can smell it ten miles down the road when the odor of the natural refinery lingers in the air conditioner's vents.

The good old dead skunk. He's a fixture on Texas highways more historic than the concrete and the asphalt.

There are more than skunks, and raccoons and dead armadillos out there. How about deer, or opossum or even havelina; their numbers certainly rank high on the list of victims.

Remember for every victim there's a guilty party.

It really doesn't make me proud that I've joined the group of people who turn those once fluffy animals into the decaying flesh we see on the road.

The saddest thing though, about that chicken I hit he was just trying to get to the other side.

Donn Friedman is a weekly columnist for The Battalion. His column will appear on Wednesdays.

LETTERS

Corps: an archaic institution at A&M

EDITOR:

Monday's commentary on the Daily Texan's editorial has prompted me to write to you. The Editorial Board's analysis of the Daily Texan's article is symptomatic of The Battalion's major weakness: its inability to take a truly critical look at issues concerning the Corps of Cadets. This Editorial Board and its reporters should be provoking thought and analysis and not echoing the "official version" from University authorities. The official version of a story may not always be the most reliable, especially when its source has something to protect, in this case, a time-honored institution's reputation.

The Daily Texan has suggested abolishment if reform is not possible. Your commentary implies they suggest abolishing the Corps as the initial solution. The incidents reported by the Daily Texan would not have required an on the scene reporter or spy. Many of our fellow graduate students were saying the same things the morning the incident was first reported. The Battalion might learn a lot from talking to students. They often know more about what is going on than University officials will ever admit to. In particular, many graduate students come from outside, free of Aggie sentiments and biases, and are able to look at the Corps very critically. We, and other graduate students we know, see the Corps of Cadets as an archaic institution whose con-

trol is long overdue. Unfortunately, many University officials are former Corps members so will honest reform ever come and can their "official version" be considered reliable?

Christopher J. Bannochie
Javier Camba III

Editorial Board writes irresponsibly

EDITOR:

The editorial put forth on Sept. 10th by The Battalion Editorial Board concerning Cadet Goodrich's death is, in my opinion, one of the more irresponsible articles ever printed in our school paper. According to the logic of the author(s), since hazing "also occurs in fraternities, sororities, and other fraternal organizations," the Corps is not to blame for the loss of a human life. The Battalion's Board is justifying the death by saying, in effect, "Everyone else is doing it — why pick on me?" They point out that since a death occurred at a U.T. fraternity (in an incident probably totally unrelated to hazing) it is all right if a death occurs here at A&M.

The incrimination has to start somewhere if the problem of hazing is to be dealt with. If the Battalion Editorial Board is so concerned with hazing, they should lead the public outcry against this tragedy instead of offering excuses.

Dean M. Jen
Junior, Petroleum Engineering

Exceptional only need apply

United Press International

DAVID BRODER

Columnist for The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Democracy is a most peculiar form of government. It depends for its vitality on an election process in which exceptional people voluntarily subject themselves, their careers and their reputations to the whim of the voters, most of whom are their inferiors in knowledge, energy, ambition and eloquence. So it is this year.

Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro are, by any reasonable reckoning, four of the most successful people in America. In every case, it is a success earned by dedication, drive and ability. Yet in two months' time, after being subjected to competitive pressures and public and press scrutiny most of us will never experience and cannot really imagine, two of these four talented and successful people will be sent into retirement with the label of losers.

The system of democracy demands that sort of ritual sacrifice. As voters in this republic, we have come to accept the competition of the talented as an entitlement. Only when an occasional contestant says, as Ferraro did last week, that she or he is having second thoughts about being served up as the entree at this dinner of democracy, do we look at the process from a different point of view.

Before we all get caught up in the finger-pointing and judgment-passing that constitute a campaign, we might pause for just a moment to note what extraordinary people these are.

Ronald Reagan was 53 years old — financially secure enough to retire from a

successful 30-year career in broadcasting, movies and television — when he made the speech for Barry Goldwater that launched him on this second profession — politics.

Since then, he has run successfully in three major elections, has served for eight years as governor of California and for almost four years as President of the United States. In both Sacramento and Washington, he brought about basic changes of policy direction that altered the lives of millions. He has survived a host of political challenges and one assassination attempt. Now at 73, he is putting it all on the line in a bid for re-election he could easily have sidestepped, had he wished.

George Bush was born to wealth and family position, an American aristocrat. He could easily have followed the path from Yale to Wall Street, with a guarantee of success, as success in America is usually measured.

Instead, he chose a different trail, from Navy aviator to oil wildcatter to politician. By taking that route, he invited — and experienced — defeat, first in a Senate race and then in the quest for the presidential nomination. But he also managed to serve his party and country in a variety of positions as broad and challenging as any man in public life.

Walter Mondale has the reputation of being a cautious, almost colorless politician — a pale shadow of his mentor, the late Hubert H. Humphrey. But that image is contradicted by a career in which Mondale has constantly chosen to test himself in ever-tougher competition and for ever-higher stakes. The law student became a party organizer. The young attorney vied with others for ap-

pointment as state attorney general. Once elected to the post, the attorney general set his sights on a U.S. Senate seat and won it — by appointment. Re-elected to the Senate, he went after the vice presidential nomination that older and more experienced colleagues coveted. The defeated former Vice President tackled seven rivals for the presidential nomination of his party.

Now, as the nominee, he is challenging the popular and telegenic incumbent President to a series of television debates. All of these chapters in the Mondale biography speak of talent and determination on a large scale.

And what about Geraldine Ferraro? This daughter of an immigrant storekeeper, left fatherless at eight, went through college on a scholarship, taught school and studied law at night, became a wife and mother of three, returned to work as a prosecutor, was elected to Congress, and now is the first woman vice presidential candidate of a major political party.

Recognize them for what they are: exceptional individuals. Recognize that in two months, by the collective will of millions of us who have not pushed ourselves so hard or challenged ourselves so often, two of them will also be labeled as losers.

Feel free to criticize them. They are fair game. But remember, too, that democracy and elections with real choices depend on the willingness of the talented, the tenacious, the energetic, the ambitious men and women to become candidates.

The stakes for them — and the pressures — over the next two months are beyond our imagining. But not beyond our saluting.