

Sending roses can be insulting

A few weeks back, vice presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro was catching some heat from journalists at one of her press conferences. Time Magazine reported that columnist George Will was asking especially pointed questions about what Ferraro's financial records would show when they were released.



Kathy Wiesepape

Ferraro finally lost her temper, telling him that her returns would show that her family paid its fair share of taxes.

"And George Will, tomorrow afternoon you're going to call me up and apologize for your column of today," she said.

The records showed payment of 40 percent in taxes. But instead of phoning Ferraro with an apology, Will sent her a dozen pink roses and note that said, "Has anyone told you that you are cute when you're mad?"

Condescending? No doubt about it.

I enjoy getting flowers every once in a while. But as a woman, I felt Will's gesture was almost a personal insult.

There are times when a woman doesn't want to be cute. A highly educated professional wants to be intelligent, efficient, successful, competent. And if you have to describe appearance, stunning or even beautiful are okay. But not cute.

Cute is for Buffy and Missy,

high school cheerleaders and college preppies. And so are pink roses.

It's a question of context. If my boyfriend — or a total stranger, for that matter — showed up at my door with a dozen pink roses, I'd be thrilled. But if one of my colleagues owed me an apology, and instead offered me a bouquet along with a condescending note, I'd be extremely offended.

Would Will have offered flowers to Walter Mondale? Of course not. Such a gesture has no place in a professional relationship, especially when it is used to take the emphasis off the issues and instead place it on the candidate's sex.

The reason I'm sensitive to an incident like this is that I'm planning on a career in law, previously a male-dominated profession. Knowing that women as highly qualified as Ferraro still must put up with male colleagues who patronize them simply because of their sex is not a comforting thought.

I have visions of myself in a courtroom, wrapping up a case with a brilliant summation that has the jury in tears. The jurors retire to deliberate, and the judge calls the counsel to the bench.

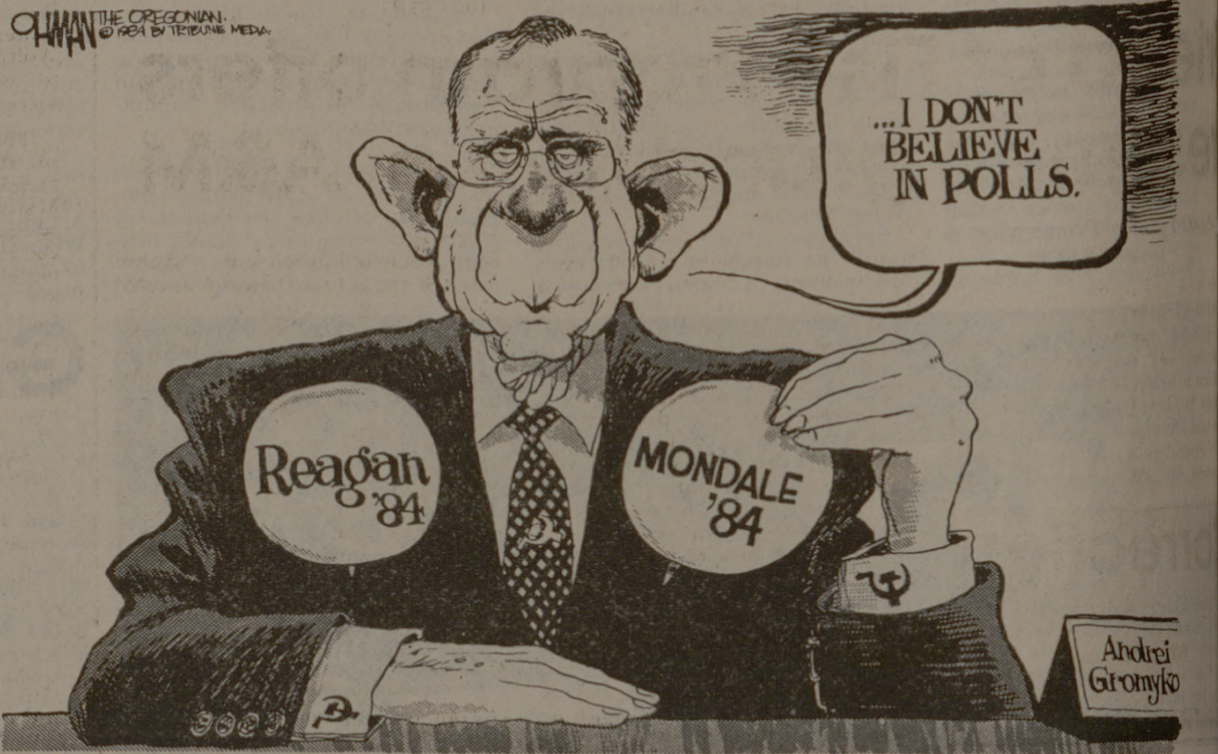
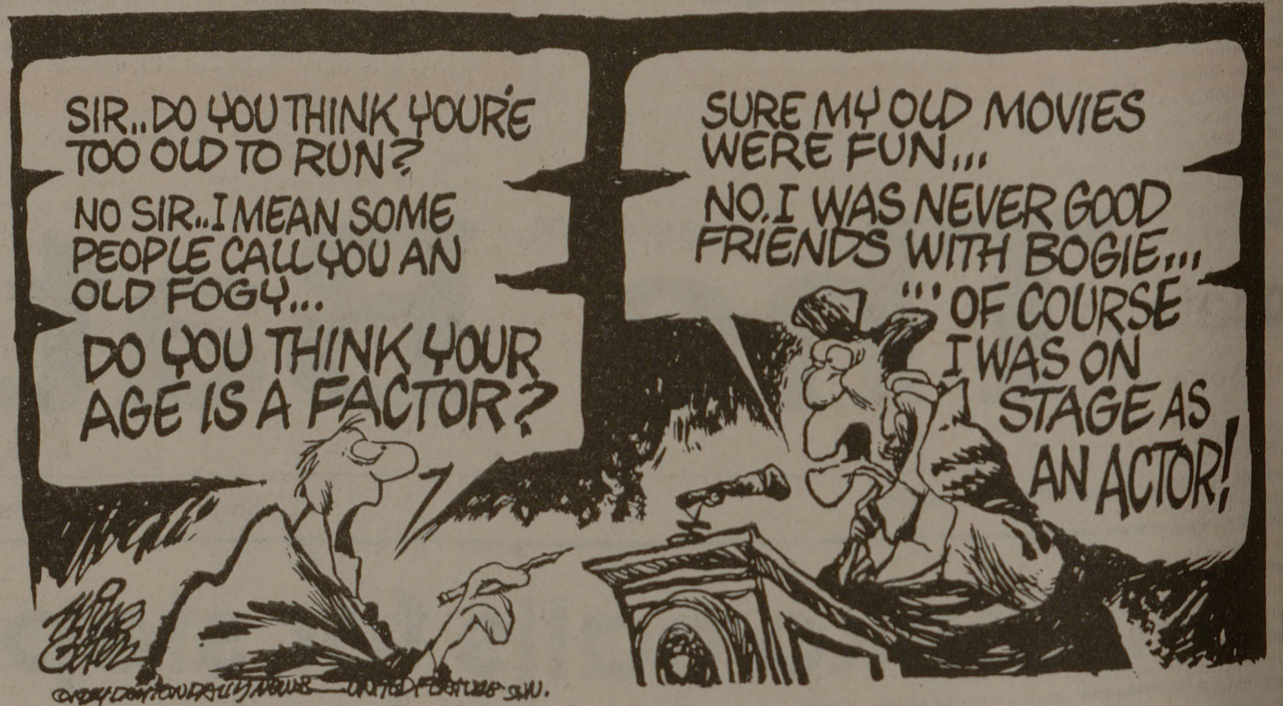
"You know, Wiesepape," he says with a grin, "You're cute when you're mad."

I think I would be tempted to slug him.

On the other hand, Ferraro's reply to Will was appropriate.

"Vice presidents aren't cute," she said.

Kathy Wiesepape is a weekly Battalion columnist.



LETTERS:

Volleyball team: thanks for support

EDITOR:

We would like to thank everyone who supported our effort against t.u. last Wednesday night.

With the support of all the Yell Leaders, the Dunn Hall "Bleacher Bums", and other dorm groups, we had a crowd of 3,250 — the largest in Texas A&M history for a women's athletic event.

We would also like to thank the Battalion Editorial Board and Staff and members of the other local media for their consistent coverage of our progress.

Hopefully, we have initiated a new trend of support for women's athletics in Aggieland.

Gig'em!
Head Coach Terry Condon and the Texas A&M Women's Volleyball Team

Girls, girls, girls: 'meat market' appeal

EDITOR:

The classified section of the Thursday, Oct. 11 issue of The Battalion ran an advertisement for Peppertree Apartments, in which the complex declared it has an abundance of "GIRLS! GIRLS! GIRLS!" — apparently trying to attract new residents.

I must say I'm a little ruffled, and I don't think I'm alone!

Of course, it is a nice change to see an appeal to heterosexuals after the recent deluge of publicity regarding the GSS (although, in light of that, one has to wonder whom the complex is trying to attract with the proclamation, Guys, too!).

Assuming most apartment dwellers in the area are linked to the University, one also assumes they're here for an education, not to go-go dance.

Just what is for rent — the apartments or the inhabitants?

I realize the Battalion's classified section does not reflect the ideology of the editorial staff, and even that the paper has little control over the contents of its ads, but I still found the advertisement somewhat offensive and degrading.

I'm sure the ad was only trying to appeal to the good, clean, healthy desire

that college students display for members of the opposite sex, but someone should have thought twice before preparing an ad that reflects the "meat market" attitudes and lack of respect that Aggie chivalry has never condoned.

**Christine Stephenson
Class of '87
accompanied by 15 signatures**

Thanks to Alders

EDITOR:

Thanks goes out to the extensive employer of our English language: David Alders.

I would like to extend my appreciation to you for broadening my vocabulary. Really!

Before reading your article in Reader's Forum, I had always let those lengthy unmeaningful (to me, anyway) vocabloges go unresearched. But now, each time I hear some massive term spoken I remember it and attempt to discover its numerous meanings.

I believe that those persons who ridicule your vast knowledge of words and their usage are only ridiculing themselves and their lack of knowledge.

Let me ask you, the reader, this: How many times have you had an English paper returned to you with red ink decorating the margins and pointing out the usage of words too bulky and unneeded.

To that person who has never run into this problem, I say throw out the first stone. But better yet, why don't you use your energies in sauntering to the MSC bookstore to invest, I repeat, invest in a Thesaurus and in a copy of Webster's best.

We are in college and we are adults. Our conversations should reflect that fact.

Thanks again, David, for causing me to realize my weaknesses in the use of our language, and for encouraging others, as well as myself, to discover the vast opportunities available to us in

communicating... via the English language.

Veraciously,

**Miles Bradshaw
Class of '88**

Black Cadets not unusual

EDITOR:

Dallas Morris' article in the Oct. 17 Battalion concerning the black executive officer of the Fifth Battalion offended me as a former cadet, as an Aggie and as a journalist.

Merely by being written and published, the story implies that it's unusual for a black to succeed in Texas A&M's Corps. That's not the case in the Corps I knew, and I suspect it's not the case now. Examples abound: Bill Jones '81, First Brigade commander; Sandra Francis '80, Company W-1 commander; Phil Jones '80, Third Group scholastic officer; Eric Banks '81, Squadron 15 executive officer; Odis Ray Blueitt '82, Company B-2 executive officer; Darryl Fitzgerald '81, bugle rank.

In fact, Kenneth Allison '85 is commander of Squadron 7 this year.

The situation would be different if the Corps had a long tradition of discriminating against blacks. Maybe at one time it did; but I haven't heard any such suggestions in the last eight years.

By implying or encouraging readers to infer that cases such as Thomas Farmer's are unusual, you present a picture that's distorted at best, wrong at worst.

By the way, by definition, a senior cadet is an officer in the Corps.

**Dillard Stone, '80
Deputy Corps Commander 1979-80**

Thanks for help with voter drive

EDITOR:

On behalf of Student Government, I would like to thank Ron Hegyesi and the members of Sigma Chi fraternity for their vigorous participation in our recent voter registration drive. Without

any concern for recognition, the Sigma Chi members worked with enthusiasm and diligence in providing a valuable student service. It came as no surprise when we learned that Sigma Chi had registered well over 1,000 new voters, an effort for which they should be very proud. Thanks again for a job well done.

**Brett Shine
V.P. External Affairs**

'Girls' want to move backwards

EDITOR:

This letter is directed to the three "girls" who oppose women in the band. There are two points that I would like to make.

First, the comments made in your letter sound quite similar to those made when women were first allowed to join the Corps. I have yet to see any breakdown of tradition since then; why should any occur now? We still have bonfire, midnight yell, and kissing when the team scores, although I find it hard to believe that anyone could call these "sacred traditions" while neglecting to mention Silver Taps or Muster. Maybe women do not belong in the band, but the reasons that you have given to support that conclusion are groundless.

Second, what is wrong with women working in traditionally male fields? If you feel that doing so will cause bitterness between the sexes, then why are you majoring in Industrial Engineering and Journalism? That sounds a little hypocritical to me. Maybe you should change your majors to education, or drop out of school and become waitresses or secretaries, three traditionally female fields. A lot of tension and lack of respect could be relieved if we'd all realize that no one should be denied the right to have any career they choose because of their sex or their race and religion for that matter. There is nothing wrong with being an engineer, housewife, school teacher or doctor, as long as that is what you choose for yourself and not that which tradition dictates.

**Georgette Nicolaides
Class of '86**

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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.

Letters Policy
Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit for style and length but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and include the address and telephone number of the writer.

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