

Opinion

'Plastics' may not be a bad idea after all

Mr. Braddock: "Ben, what are you doing?"

Ben: "Well, I would say that I'm just drifting here in the pool."

Mr. Braddock: "Why?"

Ben: "It's very comfortable just to drift here."

Mr. Braddock: "Have you thought about graduate school?"

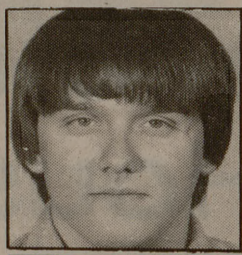
Ben: "No."

Mr. Braddock: "Would you mind telling me then, what those four years of college were for? What was the point of all that hard work?"

Ben: "You got me."

Those of you who have seen Mike Nichols' classic 1967 film, "The Graduate," probably remember that scene. For some of us that scene holds a special significance.

For four and a half years, including summer school, I've been attending this wonderful University. I've gone through five semesters of football games of varying quality, four semesters of spring fever, four summer semesters of sweat, 146 hours of classes passed, 13



Karl Pallmeyer

hours of classes flunked, three Q-drops, hundreds of tests, dozens of papers, plenty of projects, half a million parking tickets, billions of books, a bunch of albums, a lot of movies, tons of concerts, hundreds of hangovers, rounds of road trips, scores of parties, a couple of dates, six semesters of dorm life, four semesters of apartment life, one semester of duplex life, two semesters of house life, nine roommates, one cat and a big percentage of my father's wealth.

My college career has contained some of the best of times and some of the worst of times. It has had its ups and downs. There has been good and bad. You can add whatever cliché you want here.

Graduation is considered to be a great achievement. I couldn't have made it without the help of several people who have been teachers or friends or both. I want to take this opportunity to thank some of these people.

First of all, I would never have been here if it weren't for my parents. They have given me almost everything I've needed to get through school. My family has been supportive of everything I've done and never pressured me to do anything I didn't want to do.

I probably would not have been able to make the adjustment from the small-

time life of Meridian to life in the big university environment of Texas A&M without Coach G. (a.k.a. Gilbert Gutierrez).

Coach G. was a science teacher and coach at Meridian High School when I went there. He came to A&M the same year as I to work on a Ph.D.

I wouldn't have made it through my freshman year if it weren't for Coach G. inspiring me to go on.

During my first year in the dorm, I met a group of guys who introduced me to social life at college. The unofficial leader of the group was Josh Johnson. I learned a lot from Josh, Brian Daves, Mark Rose, Dick O'Leary, Tim Howard, Frank Reyna and all the other guys who lived in the dorm that year. In my three years in the dorm I met a lot of other great guys including Kent Hutson, Ben Barnett, Kevin Mosby, Larry Huff, Brian Nethery, Brad Sheffield, Mike Lotz and others too numerous to mention.

I've been pretty lucky with roommates. I'm not the easiest person to live with, but I need to thank Frank Reyna, Josh Johnson, Lee Ingram, Kent Hutson, Tim Howard, Paul Sun, Brian Daves, Mark Rose and Brad Sheffield for putting up with me as long as they did.

I have made a lot of close friends through clubs and organizations I have participated in. I would like to thank those members of the Meridian Home-town Club, Aston Dorm Council, Student Art Film Society, SWAMP, Students Against Apartheid, KANM, Society of Professional Journalists and anything else I've been involved in. I also would like to thank the staff of the short-lived Video Aggeland. I wish I would have had the opportunity to work with them. Super big thanks to the entire staff of *The Battalion*, some of the closest friends I've ever had.

There are lots of other friends I have made through various sources who I also would like to thank. There is one special person who has recently made my life brighter and deserves several words of thanks.

Most of my professors have been extremely helpful, both inside and outside of class. I would like to think all of them, but there are two, Dr. Terry Anderson and Dr. Larry Hickman, who I consider to be good friends as well as good teachers.

I know I've neglected to mention some people. It's not that I have forgotten about them, it's just that if I listed everyone it would fill this entire paper. I haven't been avoiding anybody, I just

haven't had the time to hang out with everyone as much as I would like.

For the first time in 22 years, the step is up to me. My life has been living a set pattern until now. Now it's turn to make a decision.

I could take Mr. McGuire's advice and go into plastics. I could go into the "real world" and join the race of the nine-to-five scene. I could go to grad school and collect another degree. I could become an alcoholic and stand on street corners begging money to buy another bottle of Turkey.

There are many options I could pursue, but I have decided to take the wimpy way out. I'm going to start at least one more semester, take a class, write for *The Battalion* and looking for a real job in the real world. Sorry to disappoint you.

Karl Pallmeyer is a graduating journalism major and a columnist for *The Battalion*.

Getting hitched is a bad proposal

For the fourth time this semester, I found myself having to google and ogle over someone's third finger, left hand.

Margaret Artz
Guest Columnist

"Oh, Suzie-Q, it's beautiful! I'm so excited for you! Johnboy's such a great guy! You're so lucky!"

As the crowd of female well-wishers grew, I let others take over clucking duties. This is one of life's situations that calls for tact, diplomacy and the ability to hold back what I really want to say — are you crazy? You're too darn young to get MMM . . . MMM . . . You're too young to get hitched!

It's that traumatic stage of life when friends start dropping like flies — straight down the aisle to the land of joint bank accounts, TV Guide, and legal sex. No longer will their budgets allow nights on the town or decent beer — and, worse yet, they'll be happy that way.

But the singles of the world know better. Marital bliss won't be in my game plan for quite some time. Maybe it's a form of post-pubescent rebellion, but I look forward to being an "old maid" for a few years. Building a career, furnishing my own place in my own taste, paying my own way and being responsible for my life are my goals right now.

Trading these years of independence for the hope of marital stability would be throwing away my chance to take charge of my life. Obviously, not everyone thinks the way I do.

"We just couldn't wait any longer," said a girlfriend of mine who, I was surprised to learn, had been married a year. A mild-mannered student by day, she lives in married student housing and actually cooks things that don't come frozen.

"When you meet the right person, you know it," she said with a big smile.

I find comfort in that thought. Someday, I'll be walking down the street and I'll see him. Everything will come together. In his eyes I'll see a three-bedroom, two-bath house surrounded by a white picket fence, with a golden retriever in the yard and two BMWs in the garage. Mutual funds. Night classes. Baby-boomer heaven. But is it for me?

No way. At least not for a while. I'm perfectly happy having a good time with my buddies, planning for the future and enjoying the present. When I finally do take the plunge, I don't want to have any "what-ifs."

At 22, I'm still a kid. Graduation and everything that comes with it (unemployment, moving back in with Mom and Dad) is here. I don't know what I want to do or where I want to live. I've got some vague ideas, of course, but no life plan. Making a permanent commitment at this point in my life would probably up the ratings of Divorce Court a few years down the road.

As one of the lucky ones, who's parents have stayed together for almost 30 years, I can't imagine getting divorced. It always was something I read about, but I never really had a close encounter with anyone who has been through it until this summer. Mom came to Reality 101, you sheltered child.

I carpooled with two recent divorcees and one lady who never wanted to marry. Five days a week, an hour and a half a day, trapped in the car with these people. Listening. Learning.

I tried to ignore their bitter diatribes to write them off as frustrated middle-aged women — excepting the norm. But I knew I was only kidding myself. I remember trying to lighten a conversation one day by talking about how all my high-school girlfriends were getting married and how happy they cited I was for them.

"Don't worry, they'll all be divorced again in five years," one of the divorcees said. She made me mad. But she made a valid point. Almost 50 percent of all marriages today end in divorce. Kids are involved, they usually get Mom. From what I've seen on TV, it's a single parent's bed of roses. Divorce is not for the faint of heart.

Yet I'm still happy to see people who get married. I hope for them. I hope for them. I hope for them. I admire anyone who is so sure about an aspect of his or her life. This stage of the game is hard. I've had trouble deciding what to do in the morning, and these people are together enough to make a decision that will affect them the rest of their lives. At least they think they do.

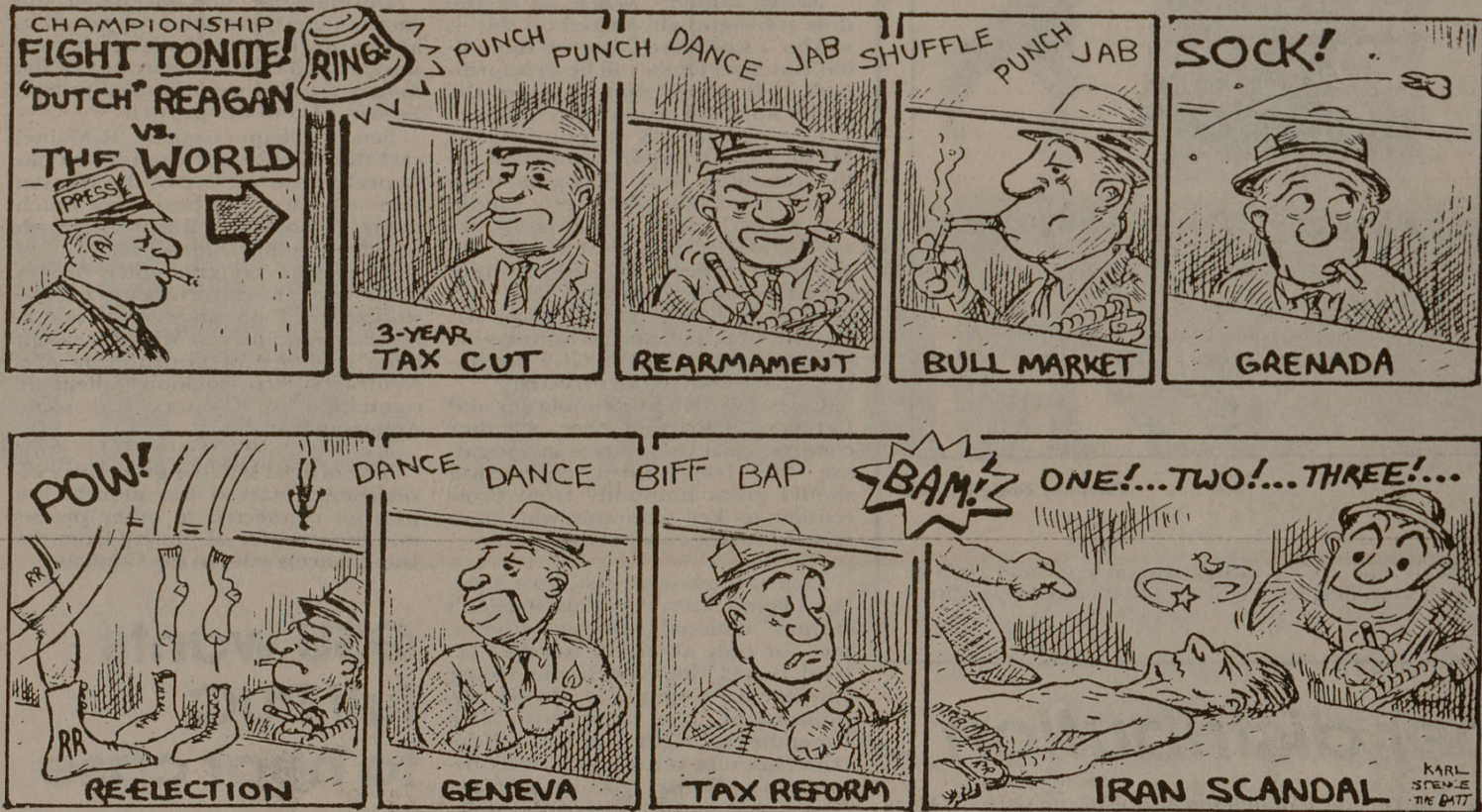
I've been dating a guy for two years now. We go to games together, study together, depend on each other. We're best friends. But marriage is not in the picture. Relationship is not an "if-then" situation (if we're married). People are constantly asking me if we're making any plans. We've been dating so long. Are we dating?

"Doesn't that bother you?" my friend asks as the glare from her required engagement ring temporarily blinded me. I calmly and politely answered, "No way." It's amazing that in this day and age, some people think that all women want marriage.

My best friend from high school thinks the same way I do. She's single anyone right now, so she's in the lowdown on the singles scene. "It's scary," she told me recently, "soon as you find a fun guy, you're mentioning the 'M-word.'" "Gals," she said.

For me, the future is wide open. I'll take a job offer anywhere in the world without having to consult my present spouse. And I will continue to enjoy life one day at a time. At least for a few more years.

Margaret Artz is a senior journalism major.



Comedian's despair is not a humorous predicament

Don't delay, send good, clean jokes immediately

I have a major problem and perhaps some of you out there in Readerland can help me.



Lewis Grizzard

It's this: Each of the past two years, I have recorded an album of what I consider to be funny material. Enough were sold, the producer tells me, to warrant a third album.

My problem is I'm having quite a difficult time finding 45 more minutes of clean-to-semi-clean stories.

People tell me a lot of jokes. Most of them begin by saying, "Here is something you can use on your next album," and then they proceed to tell me a joke that would embarrass Richard Pryor.

The only good clean joke I've heard recently was about a guy who fell in love with a beautiful girl and begged her to go out with him.

"Be serious," the girl replied. "You're fat, you're ugly and your wardrobe is atrocious."

So the guy goes on a diet and loses 80 pounds. He has a face lift and a hair transplant and he goes to one of those tanning salons and he buys himself an entirely new wardrobe.

He goes back to the girl and asks, "Now what do you think?"

She is amazed. "What a hunk," she says to him, and agrees to a date.

He arrives at her door as the limo awaits. She emerges, radiant, her eyes full of the promise of a never-to-be-forgotten evening. The man has never been happier in his life.

As they walk to the limo, lightning strikes the man. In his dying moments, he looks to the sky and asks, "Why now, God? Why now on the happiest day of my life?"

God looks down and says, "Sorry, Sam, I didn't recognize you."

There must be thousands of stories like that, but they rarely come my way.

If the truth were known, I probably would use dirty material, but I get the feeling the country is tiring of Richard Pryor grabbing his privates and of the arrogant sleazebagness of Eddie Murphy.

Also, I can't write or say a lot of dirty words as long as my mother's alive.

There is a place for clean humor. Bill Cosby is a riot, and he tells about cooking breakfast for his kids. Johnny Carson is funny, and he has to deal with the NBC censors.

I think it is more difficult to be clean and funny than dirty and funny. Dirty funny can rely on shock. Clean funny better have a punch line or it's in big trouble.

Here's my plan:

I hereby announce The First (and probably only) Lewis Grizzard Joke Contest, open to anybody who can write a letter.

The idea is that if you have a joke you wouldn't mind telling in front of your mother, write it down and mail it to me.

If I use it on the next album, I'll see to it you get a free album, mention on the album cover, and perhaps even some of my jams and jellies.

Decision of the judge — me — will be final. In other words, if your joke isn't selected, I don't want to hear a lot of whining.

Mail your joke (or jokes) to Lewis Grizzard Clean Joke Contest, 66540 Powers Ferry Road, Suite 325, Atlanta, Ga 30309.

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The Battalion

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