

# Opinion

## The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

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### Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M and Bryan-College Station.

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 Journalism.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods.  
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## Farmers Write!

Although we strive to achieve an overall editorial balance for our readers, we are not always successful. Some people consider *The Battalion* to be too conservative and others think us too liberal. That's why we run as many letters from readers as space permits.

Many times, however, a letter isn't long enough to develop and discuss a topic fully, and a longer column is necessary.

In the past, *The Battalion* has run guest columns without a great deal of regularity. This is due partly to lack of regular submissions from our readers and partly to lack of organization.

This semester, we're going to try something a little different in hopes of encouraging more readers to write. Every Wednesday, beginning Jan. 28, *The Battalion* will run a guest column under the heading *Farmers Write!* It will be a regular feature of the paper as long as we have appropriate material to fill it.

In essence, we're setting aside part of our paper just for you. Your response will dictate whether *Farmers Write!* becomes a permanent part of *The Battalion* or not.

So, if you want to respond to an article or a column in *The Battalion*, a letter to the editor probably will suffice. But if you're interested in publicly expressing your opinion about an issue, or a side of an issue that *The Battalion* has not dealt with fully, *Farmers Write!* is for you.

Aside from restricting topics to those that don't severely offend good taste, *The Battalion* will reserve the right only to edit for style, grammar and length (about 750 words).

The topic will be yours, the writing will be yours and the decision to make *Farmers Write!* a success will be yours, too.

## Food for thought

One day in 1963, a young Italian named Carlo went to see the beautiful Maria to ask for her hand in marriage. Even though they loved each other passionately, Maria's father, Ezio, rejected, Carlo walked through the Tuscan countryside, oblivious to the chiaroscuro beauty around him. Overcome with grief, he sank to his knees in tears. It was then, looking down, that he saw a green leaf. In this way basil was discovered.



Richard Cohen

I have invented the sad tale of Carlo and Maria because it is the only way I can account for the sudden appearance of foods, spices and herbs that I had never heard of not so many years ago. Basil is one and so is artichoke and avocado. Even though I do not remember which one is which, I do remember not knowing them at all when I was young. No mother ever placed on any plate either an avocado or an artichoke. Nor did the word arugula (discovered in 1979) pass anyone's lips. If it did, we thought it was a childhood disease. ("Keep quiet, your brother has arugula.")

I now eat many things that were not invented or discovered before 1964. From the time I was born until seven and half years ago, I ate only seven foods. They were steak, lamb chops, pot roast, roast beef, hamburger, chicken and fish. This was all my mother served and she always served them the same way because, as she once explained, "certain things go with certain things." What went with fish was spaghetti. We had fish twice a week. We had chicken on Fridays, I think, and roast beef on Sundays. I knew the day of the week by looking at my plate.

Wine was never served with ordinary meals. Adults were entitled to drink water. Children had to have milk. But no one in my entire neighborhood, and that included at least one college graduate, ever had wine at dinner or even, I'm sure, had a bottle in the house. I know that wine has been around a long time. White wine, however, was invented in 1975.

Until 1976, there was no such thing as pasta. There was only spaghetti or macaroni and they were American foods or else the latter would not have been mentioned in "Yankee Doodle Dandy" (stuck a feather in his cap and called it fettuccini?). Since then, Italians have been busy inventing all kinds of pastas — gnocchi, for instance, which may not

be a pasta at all. Neither is risotto (1980), which is a sort of rice. I am sure the Italians have other pastas ready to go but, like the Japanese with electronic products, will wait until the market for the old pastas is saturated before introducing them. I am waiting for digital risotto.

Once there were only a few cheeses — American, Swiss, cottage, cream, Cheddar, Velveeta and farmer's, which was sometimes called pot cheese and was restricted by law to old women who had no teeth. Then, in 1983, goat cheese was invented and feta cheese the next year, and then, in 1984, someone decided to put these cheeses on everything. Soon (1988), there will be a Saab with goat cheese, and the model will be called the Radicchio. This will happen.

In 1979, ham became prosciutto. In 1980, a nice pullet became a free-range chicken. In 1981, ginger was invented and put into everything that did not already have cheese on it, including creme brulee, which was invented in 1983. In 1982, Crisco became olive oil, and a year later, mysteriously, it became a virgin and then, a year after that, an extra-special virgin. Ice cream became sorbet, and chocolate became chocolate-chocolate, and Oreo, which was once a cookie, became an ice-cream flavor. I can't wait until they do the same with Lorna Doones.

Bread is now croissants. Pizza, which was once itself a new food, has been miniaturized and has, everywhere in the whole world, replaced shrimp cocktail. That happened in 1985. In 1980, coffee became espresso, and then in 1984 it became decaffeinated, and tea, which was always Lipton or Red Rose, became herbalized and drunk by the same people who keep cats and, in their youth, read "The Prophet" and insisted on pain of sexual rejection, that I do the same.

One day in 1973, a Chinese peasant named Wang decided to kill his wife. He loaded her dinner with incredibly hot spices and oils taken from Chernobyl and served it to her with a smile. She took a bite, hesitated, grimaced and said the food tasted so bad that Americans would probably love it. Wang, smiling because his wife would soon die, patted her on the back and said, "I'll name it for you."

Her name was Szechuan.

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## Management 211: The movie

When Mr. Rogers' neighborhood first aired on TV way back when, not many people realized just how far ahead of its time the show really was — like Star Trek even.



Mike Sullivan

Good Mr. Rogers realized early on that television has a great capacity for communicating ideas. Even today, Mr. Rogers teaches us how to pronounce strange words, tells us about things we've never heard and even demonstrates how to tie shoes on TV.

Of course, if it were possible, Mr. Rogers would certainly opt to come visit each and every one of us and explain his lessons in person. But he has so many little students in his audience that the only way to reach every one of them is through TV.

And now our very own Texas A&M is faced with the same problem as Mr. Rogers.

Knowing that there is no substitute for direct interaction between teacher and student, the College of Business Administration has been forced, because of audience size, to take its lessons to the tube.

The Department of Management brings you, "Management 211: The movie."

Actually, it's more of a series, and beginning today, the department will start airing its exciting new afternoon program on cable channel 31. It's a truly beautiful day in this neighborhood.

Live classes will no longer be held for Management 211, and for those students who don't have cable TV, the program will be shown on a TV in a Blocker Building classroom.

But get there early because, although there are more than 1,000 students enrolled in the class, there are only 70 seats and four showings to accommodate the unfortunates who either can't afford cable, don't care to subscribe to it or can't make it home from campus in time to tune in.

Sure, there are a few drawbacks to the new system, but give it a chance. This system is being used successfully by a lot of leading universities — world universities. Think of the possibilities:

Tiresome hand-raising in class will become obsolete. Since there won't be a live professor lecturing to you, you won't be able to ask questions or get more complete explanations during class; thus, no more tiresome hand-raising.

All you conscientious students can put your minds at ease, though. If you should have questions about the lectures, you can call a toll-free number, and the department says it will try to have someone available to answer them — providing the line isn't busy, of course. And think of the money this step sideways — if not backward — in quality education will save A&M. The same tapes can be played over and over again each semester, and the University can avoid hiring — and perhaps even fire — some of its faculty and staff. An excellent maneuver, considering Texas' lack of commitment to higher education.

At the same time, the department won't have to put any restrictions on the number of students who enroll in the class. A&M will continue to rake in more and more tuition dollars, but they won't have anyone but McCaw Cablevision to pay.

Depending on how quickly this thing catches on, A&M might even work its way into the cable TV business and gain control of yet another lucrative Bryan-College Station market.

If the University really charts its course carefully in the next few years, it could begin requiring future freshmen to buy personal computers from its Micro Center, purchase a bus pass to ride its buses to campus where students can eat University food and buy video textbook tapes at the MSC video book store.

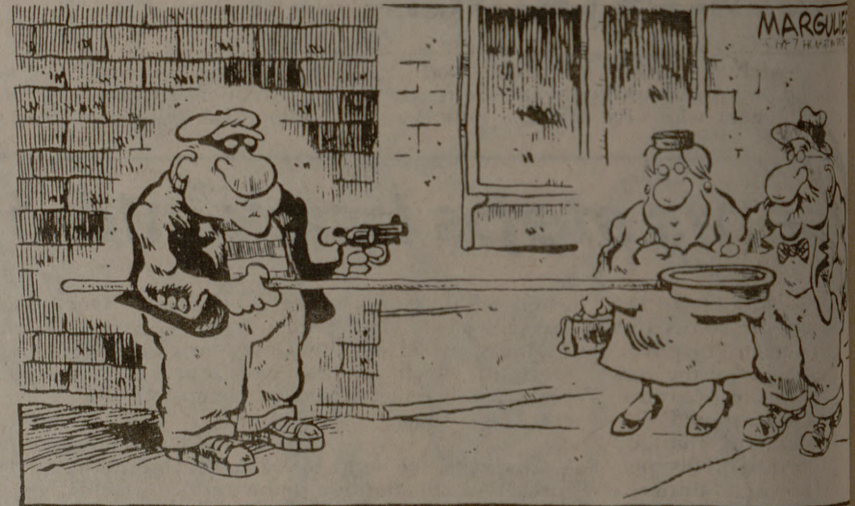
If this is successful, students of the future may be able to buy a subscription to Texas A&MTV — for the price of a four-year college education, of course — and get their degrees in the comfort of their own living rooms. A&M will be on the educational cutting edge. Can you say "cutting edge?" A&M's Oral Roberts brand of education might even

become syndicated. God help us.

And all the freed-up classroom TV teachers create could be used into student housing. More money A&M! Students who could afford luxur rooms — at a premium — would be furnished with a TV and video recorder, while the rest of the student body would be required to borrow from A&M's appliance outlet. Video recorders would be optional. If you want to miss class, that's their business.

As A&M and other universities on the video bandwagon, Mr. Rogers destined to go down in history as the originator of a landmark educational movement. You might even be remembered as the Elvis of education.

Mike Sullivan is a senior journalism major and the Opinion Page editor of *The Battalion*.



"These Oral Roberts appeals are really starting to chap me."

## Mail Call

### Club those golfers

EDITOR:

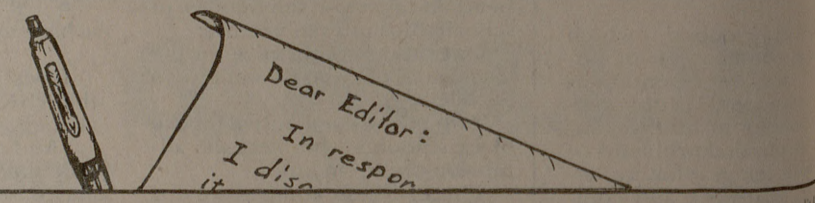
I am writing on behalf of the people who use the polo field. It seems to me that the golfers of Texas A&M are illiterate. This must be true because for three years there have been signs around the polo field that say, "POLO FIELD. NO GOLF OR VEHICLES PLEASE."

Even so, there are golfers out there hitting little white, yellow and orange balls on the polo field every day. These golfers have the nerve to tell the people who might be on the polo field to move so they can hit their golf balls. For some reason, the golfers think the polo field is just an extension of the driving range for their use if the driving range is crowded.

To me, the words "POLO FIELD. NO GOLF" mean that golf balls are never to come in contact with the area designated as the polo field. It's a bad feeling when you're out on the polo field and begin to get bombarded by uncontrollable projectiles moving at 150 mph plus, and even worse when one behind the golf club thinks he's in the right.

I am not the only one who feels that there should be no golfing on the polo field. The polo team — and the people who use it for model airplane flying — feels this way. If the polo team did not care about the golfers using their field, they would not have put up the signs. I feel it's time to start enforcing the no golfing rule. The campus police should watch out for golfers breaking this rule and give them warnings or fines. I hope something is done soon.

Jim Colling



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 must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer.