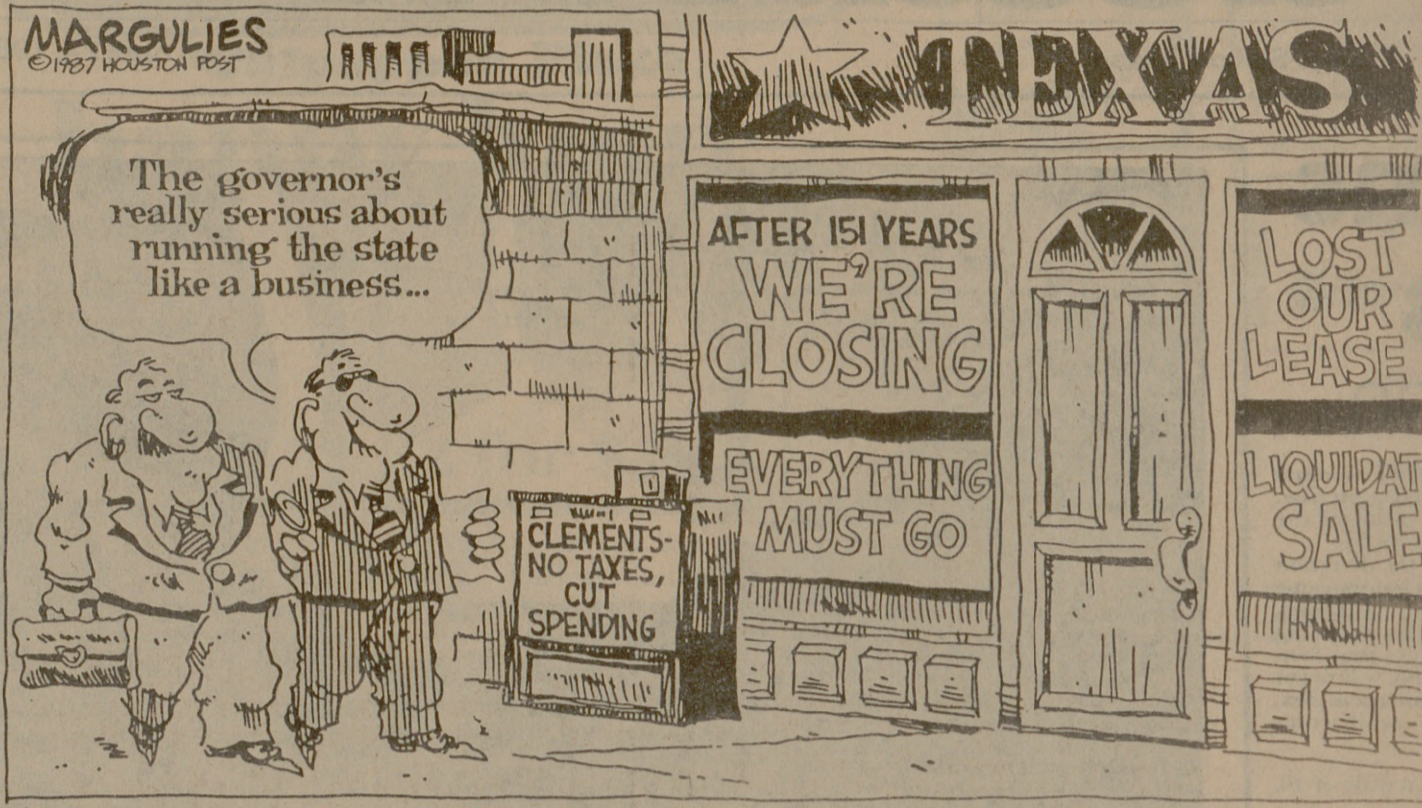


Opinion



What won't they advertise on TV?

TV is a normal part of American life and TV advertising is often the annoyance that goes with it. TV is the way advertisers reach millions of viewers in an attempt to convince us we need their product. More often than not, we probably don't. But it seems TV commercials have the power to convince us that our current deodorant isn't working and neither is our mouthwash. Even worse though is that some commercials try to convince us we're undesirable or unlovable.



Jo Streit

Let's be honest, how many of us would be distraught if they removed about feminine hygiene from the waves? Probably not one, except for companies advertising these products. It's hard to believe that anyone could find these ads informative and fun.

Remember back in high school when you invited that special someone to your house to watch TV? Most of us experienced long moments of dull silence, moments that dragged by as we tried to think of something to say. Funny, how all our inhibitions vanished as soon as an ad for feminine hygiene flashed on the screen. It suddenly came easy to talk about anything and everything, without stopping for a breath until those dreaded 30 seconds were over.

Naturally, these commercials leave us the chance to redeem ourselves by running out and buying their product. A great many of today's TV commercials fall into this category. Unfortunately, these ads are not the most annoying ones. Embarrassing commercials win the prize for the most annoying, humiliating and easily the most hated ads on

I don't know exactly how guys about these ads, besides uncomfortable but most women hate them. Not only these ads talk about something extremely personal and private, but do it in the most stupid of ways. For example, the commercial about the sister who is going away to college, telling her younger sister goodbye. "Now Pooh Bear has agreed to look after you and Oh! I left you some maxi pads you'll really need, these maxi pads can't tell you how many times I wished that the little sister would be the box back in her sister's face and 'You keep the maxi pads. I'll take the stereo."

Unfortunately, there's no relief in sight. Starting May 4, we'll all have the viewing pleasure of watching women model lingerie. Good news: Vanna White if "Wheel of Fortune" ever takes a dive in the ratings.

Naturally, the ad makers describe commercials for bras and other lingerie as tasteful, unoffensive and even the right name compared with network regular commercials. This may be true. After all, a lot of commercials feature bikini-clad models in ads for everything from beer to chewing gum. Ad makers also emphasize that they're not doing cheesecake, but instead simply showing a product.

Before, bras had to be seen on mannequins and headless bodies. When models were used, they wore generic over brightly colored, heavily toned, leotards. Advertisers say these ads made the bras look more like

I can live with all these commercials despite the fact that some of them are embarrassing and often ridiculous. What I do object to is that the ads still find advertisements for condoms unacceptable. Granted, I have seen public service announcements encouraging the use of condoms to prevent the spread of AIDS, but if we follow the arguments made by the lingerie ads that they are simply showing a product then that argument should also apply to true for ads about condoms. In a panic, I'm not advocating the use of models.

Two students in my broadcast class produced a four-part series on condom advertising and they made up a commercial we might see in the future.

Imagine you're watching TV and a woman appears on your screen. She says, "Hi, I'm not a real prostitute, I play one on TV, and four out of five prostitutes recommend this brand."

I hope we won't ever see something like this. However, if past ads are a predictor of future ads, we're in for a

Whatever the ads for condoms look like, I think promoting them to prevent AIDS is worth the potential embarrassment. After all, we live in a human condition including everything from private ones. We can all suffer from an embarrassing ad, even about condoms, especially if it will save a life.

Jo Streit is a senior journalism student and a columnist for The Battalion.

No longer taking it all for granted

I learned the hard way that heart attacks don't always happen to the old man down the street.

Anne Dejoie
Guest Columnist

Five years ago my dad, only 42 at the time, had two attacks, complete with a quadruple bypass and warnings from the doctors to change his habits.

As time went on, the whole thing became a part of the past, easily recalled everytime I saw the elongated scar on Dad's leg (where the vein was borrowed for the bypass) or heard the menacing wail of an ambulance siren.

Life at the Dejoie home returned to normal — as close as it could get anyway.

Mom broke her ankle; Roy Jr. worked on his master's degree; Lisa, only 17 years old, still tried to get her curfew extended; and I could see the end of my college days lurking a few months away.

However Dad, seemingly healthy, decided to have another heart attack.

This attack was more serious than the first two, and Dad added muscle damage, pneumonia and several days of irregular heartbeats to the already complicated situation.

Mom phoned me at school to tell me that Dad was in the hospital again.

At that point, nothing in the world was more important to me than being with my family.

Driving to the hospital, all I could think about was what if . . . ?

What if he needs another bypass operation?

What if the doctors keep him in the hospital too long?

What if Dad won't be around to watch his grandchildren grow up?

What if he dies?

This last question, crouching in the back of my mind since Mom's call that afternoon, sprang forward like a jack-in-the-box that had been waiting for the top to open.

I couldn't wash the horrible thought away despite the tears running down my face.

Every stop light was red and every car on the road drove at what seemed like ten miles per hour, but I finally arrived at the hospital.

I had only been at the hospital five minutes when Dad's doctor came by with a report.

"It doesn't look good," the doctor said.

"I won't lie to you. He could die."

There was that word again.

I kept pushing it back and it kept springing up again.

I found myself thinking of the times Dad and I had spent together and wondered if there would be more.

I remembered weekends at the duck pond near our home when I was very young.

Later as I grew into a teenager, Dad and I spent afternoons at the stables, or Sundays in the French Quarter in New Orleans, or summers painting the house — sharing a cold beer to keep the fumes out of our lungs (Dad's favorite excuse).

We laughed and talked and shared stories, and our friendship grew stronger.

That wasn't just my dad in intensive care, it was one of the best friends I ever had.

I looked over at Mom. She always looked young enough to be my sister instead of my mom.

But now she seemed to have aged 10 years in 10 minutes.

Her husband was in the next room — possibly dying — but as always, she remained in control and provided support for my brother, my sister and me.

Watching her, I knew Dad would be proud of her for taking charge, and I hoped that I would be like her when I became a mother.

And all the what ifs sprang up again.

After minutes that seemed like months, I was allowed into Dad's room.

The man I saw lying on the bed wasn't my dad — it couldn't have been.

My dad was always strong and vibrant — except for those Sunday naps on the sofa. He was the one I leaned on and turned to for help.

The man I saw lying on the hospital bed with tubes and needles coming from every penetrable part of his body couldn't have been Dad. This man, appearing to fight for every breath he could maneuver, looked weak and scared.

Yet something in his eyes comforted me and made me realize that the doctors were in for a surprise.

As Dad forced a smile to convince me that he wasn't in pain, I saw the determination in his eyes — a look that told me he wasn't going to give up easily and that he was going to make it through this ordeal — alive.

I went home and prayed.

We all seem to take breathing, heartbeats and tomorrows for granted until they're gone or someone we love is dying.

We fail to say I love you as often as we should, assuming that there will be time for sentiments tomorrow.

And we avoid the discussion of death unless it pertains to the man down the street or someone we've read about in the paper.

One month and three bypasses later, Dad came home with more warnings from the doctors. My family was luckier than many.

Despite wishful thinking, I know that my family is not immune to serious injury, or death, and I no longer take good health for granted.

I try to make the most of every day, relishing the good things and accepting or changing the bad.

Every night, I fall asleep wondering what would have happened if . . .

And every morning, I thank God that I still have a father.

Anne Dejoie is a senior journalism major.

Mail Call

With all due respect . . .

EDITOR:

I would like to apologize to Bryan Kelly concerning my last letter to *The Battalion* (April 21). I now realize I was overly harsh and critical toward his mild and unoffensive letter. I do not regret the points made in my letter, only my harshness toward Kelly. I am sure Kelly is honest and sincere in his opinion. An honest and sincere opinion always deserves some respect.

I would also like to point out the views presented in my letter are my own. It would be unfair to stereotype the other club members with my views. I hope I have soothed any hard feelings, and any criticisms concerning my over-zealousness toward Bryan are deserved.

John R. Spessard

We must know to defend

EDITOR:

Last week, we received a two-part eyewitness report by Cong Thanh in *The Battalion* concerning the communist conquest of Vietnam. Thank you, Thanh, for making the effort to share your painful memories with us. We ought to contemplate your words.

Thanh's story reveals the communist ideology in action. It is for a reason that many have declared the pen to be mightier than the sword. Ideas govern men's actions, and it is through the medium of the pen they are expressed. The communists declare that an irreconcilable class conflict exists, and that the proletariat must seize power to suppress the bourgeoisie. In Vietnam, these ideas have been executed.

As a history major presently studying the Russian Revolution in depth, I have been extensively reading communist theory. I thus was attracted to the Communist Party of America's table in the Memorial Student Center for several hours April 14 when the party's representatives, along with representatives of other political groups, came to share their ideas with us.

Many students stopped to listen and argue. Far too many, after finding out that the communist viewpoint was being expounded, dismissed it as "a load of b.s." and walked away. Others engaged in emotional diatribes showing themselves to be far from rationality or true knowledge of the subject. One student attempted to quote Marx, but upon being challenged, admitted that he had never read Marx. Few seemed to understand the real issues.

Communism is not "a load of b.s." You may not agree with it, but it is an idea that powerfully inspires many around the world. It is not a harmless, abstract notion but has real, discernable consequences. The idea of liberty has had consequences which we enjoy today, but how many of us understand that idea so as to be able to defend it? How many of us have read our Constitution and Declaration of Independence and understand the significance of the ideas contained therein? How many of us realize how scarce liberty such as we enjoy has been throughout history? For example, in Russia's long history, the years in which she has had a free press can be numbered on the fingers of two hands.

In athletics, it is imperative that the players thoroughly know the plays. It is also useful to study films of the opposition to know how to order an effective defense. Dare we think it is any different in the realm of ideas? If we wish to preserve our liberty, we must not only essay to understand the ideas behind it thoroughly but also to know opposing ideas and to observe their consequences. We cannot defend what we do not know and are hard-pressed to defend against that of which we are ignorant.

Does the workers' paradise of Thanh's homeland enchant us? Just as our valuable material possessions cannot protect themselves against theft, so too liberty cannot defend or propagate itself. Each generation must take steps to secure the blessings of liberty to themselves and their posterity. If what I saw in the MSC is any indication, we are failing to do this. However, each of us must discharge this responsibility lest we, too, find ourselves one day digging our own graves.

Brian Arthur Frederick '87

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 classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

The Battalion

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