

# Opinion

## No, her boyfriend didn't dump her — it's just spring

I like spring just as much as anybody else. The warm, sunny days, the mild nights, the blooming flowers, the growing grass, and the leaf-covered trees are a welcome sight after the dull months of winter.



Paula Vogrin

But for me, and millions of people like me, the mere mention of the word spring summons images of sneezing fits, runny noses, scratchy throats, and itchy, watering eyes. You see, I have hay fever. I don't know how I got it. In my family of six, I am the only one afflicted.

Every spring, for about two weeks, I feel miserable, look miserable and am miserable to be around. I am a walking advertisement for Allergy Relief Medicine. I could be the star of any antihistamine commercial. My eyes have that red, watery, glazed look, my nose runs like a faucet (as my mother would say), and my breathing has a raspy, wheezing quality, all perfect qualifications for an allergy medicine spokesperson.

Pollen is the culprit responsible for my annual suffering. How can something so small, so invisible to the human eye, cause so much trouble? Plenty of those little pollen particles will fit on the head of a pin — with a substantial amount of elbow room left over.

Pollen is measured in *hundreds* per square inch, for gosh sake. Just think how many pollen particles inhabit the three square inches of air in front of your nose!

I'm an outside person. I like to jog, ride my bicycle or just sit outside, especially on warm, sunny days. But for two weeks in spring, I'm a pollen magnet. I can't even leave my apartment without a box of Kleenex, and the box is rather bulky when you're trying to ride a bike. What am I supposed to do with the used tissues outdoors? Since I 'Don't Mess With Texas' there isn't any place for me to put them.

Jogging isn't quite so bad. My feet have company because my nose runs, too.

As a hay fever sufferer, my social life is considerably impaired for two solid weeks every spring. Backyard barbecues and cook-outs are fun for everybody but me. No matter where the barbecue or cook-out is, the plants capable of producing eight million pollen particles per square inch will surround the area for miles. I stand around alone with my box of Kleenex and wish I could smell the steak and hamburgers broiling. Nobody wants to talk to the girl who sneezes and blows her nose continuously. It might be contagious.

Then there are the times when I get invited to the lake. I pack food, towels, beer and my trusty box of Kleenex, wondering all the while how I'm going to hold the ski rope and blow my nose at the same time.

After walking across a pollen-infested campus, even sitting in class can be a major ordeal. I have to blow my nose every five minutes or so, and I imagine the people sitting around me are thoroughly grossed out. When I'm sniffing and rubbing my red, watering eyes, I can read the minds of everyone around me, and two major thoughts surface every time.

1. "Her boyfriend dumped her." Far and away the most popular thought among people when they see a teary-eyed female, but wrong in my case. My classmates must think I got dumped a lot during those two weeks in spring.

2. "She failed a test." Wrong, also. I avoid F's like the plague. I've only failed two tests in my college career and both were a long time ago in Chemistry 101, the class that convinced me to change my major from zoology to journalism.

Nobody ever thinks I might be suffer-

ing from hay fever. One guy came close when he asked me if I had taken anything for that nasty cold, but no one has ever hit the nail on the head and realized it's hay fever.

Of course, I take any hay fever/allergy medicine I can get my hands on, but these don't always do the trick. Believe me, I've tried every antihistamine ever invented.

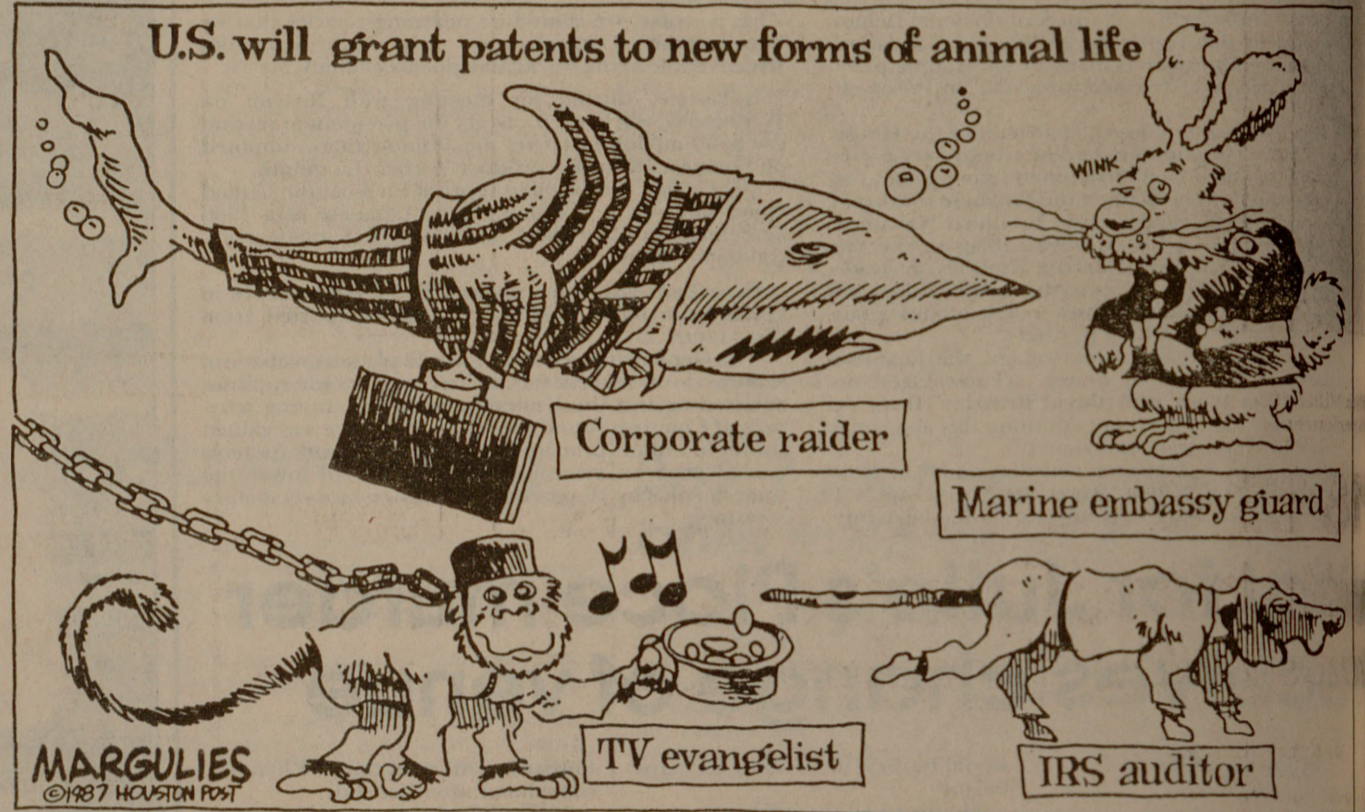
I can tell you which ones cause drowsiness, upset stomachs and double vision and which ones don't. A certain brand will work for a day or two sometimes,

then the hay fever germs figure out what's going on and become immune to it. I just can't win.

So, all of you people not afflicted with hay fever have mercy on those of us who do. We may be unrecognizable at the height of the affliction, but we're not contagious, and after a few weeks we'll be our old selves again.

Achoo!

Paula Vogrin is a senior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion.



## Right attitude — but wrong body

"So, how do you look with your legs shaved?" he asked me.

I could only imagine.

"Well, I don't really know, but I might be able to talk my girlfriend into loaning me a pair of pantyhose," I said.

He laughed, and I realized I was a victim.

Not a victim of cruel humor directed at a desperate job applicant, but a victim of tradition — toss in a pinch of discrimination if you must. But I can't blame him.

I was calling about an opening his company had for a receptionist. No, I don't have a full head of blonde hair — my hairline is receding (slightly) — and my voice isn't high and happy — I have trouble hitting a high C.

But I can answer a phone and take a message right along with the best of them. And if there's one thing journalism school has taught me, it's how to type.

"I admire your attitude," he told me, "but, unfortunately, some things are dictated by tradition, and this job is one of them."

He gave me some good advice about launching my career, I thanked him for his time and there it was. After three years at a school where tradition is said to be the unifying hub of the student body, I was stabbed in the back by it out in the cold, real world. Some might call it poetic justice, considering a few of my ideas about the Corps of Cadets.

But I call it a shame. And why is it a shame that a 22-year-old male college graduate can't nail down a job as a secretary?

First of all, I could do that job. But most of all, I could really handle the job it might lead to. I'd make a great account executive, but, as anyone trying to find a job in the world of advertising

knows, I might sooner be hired to feed the whales at Sea World. (I don't know anything about big fish.)

But I haven't been defeated. No, I continue to mail out my cover letters and résumés. I listen to all the bad news — horror stories people tell about getting canned by an agency they had been with since they were mere tots. I listen attentively to the advice my professors give me, bless their hearts.

And I continue to hear about the lucky young lady who just happened to be the receptionist at the ACME Ad Agency when they landed a big account. They made her an account executive, hired another female receptionist and the cycle churned on. It makes me bite my nails — that's OK for men.

Sure, there are other ways to get an account executive position. "Be at the right place at the right time" is a favorite cliché. It's not my favorite saying, but that doesn't matter. I'm never there.

Maybe I'm never at the right place because I'm wasting my time trying to convince someone that my phone voice won't scare off new business. Really, my Mom says I have a nice voice.

But whatever the case, I'm for breaking tradition. And what better place to start than at an ad agency — the very heart of change in America and even the world? Please don't give me the argument about whether advertising changes the world or merely reflects a changing world. I've heard it all before and it has nothing to do with the receptionist.

I'm talking about setting trends here.

I'm ready to be a trendsetter, a martyr for the cause of men who want to get their feet in the front door of the ad business any way they can.

I'm pumped, I'm ready, and I'm serious. So if there are any ad men listening out there who need a receptionist, give me a call. If I'm not home, talk to my roommate. He can take a message, too.

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



Mike Sullivan

### Time to think about change

EDITOR:

With finals approaching, I realized that I have just about finished my first year here at Texas A&M. I can't help but remember some of *The Battalion's* columns that sparked such great responses from the student body. I am talking about Karl Pallmeyer's column dealing with civilians walking on Kyle Field and Mike Sullivan's column about abolishing the Corps of Cadets in order to become a "world university." I love A&M and all of the traditions — I just hope students become more involved with what goes on around campus. Now that our enrollment is growing rapidly, I hope students voice more opinions on what happens.

Just this past semester, I have encountered some problems that worry me when I look into A&M's future. Some of my professors are having a hard time finding a classroom to accommodate us for study sessions. What will happen when the enrollment increases? (39,000 students projected for Fall 1987.)

Will we be holding class out on Kyle Field? I wish this was my only worry, but I just found out that the library will be cutting back the number of journals we receive by 10 percent. Their solution to the problem is to drive us down to the University of Texas. Now please! That is the last place I want to go. Rather than worry about A&M becoming a "world university," I wish someone would worry about how we are going to adjust to our increasing enrollment. If there are any former students out there wanting to make a donation to A&M, please make it out for new classrooms or to the library. Let's make as few trips to the University of Texas as possible and let all of the future Aggies enjoy this great campus.

Julie Brieden '90

### Different strokes

EDITOR:

Thank you for printing Albert Babin's letter. Never have I seen more open-mindedness and conviction put into print. If everyone at Texas A&M, and indeed everywhere, could accept alternatives in religion and ways of life even though they don't possess these beliefs themselves, then God's will is already nine-tenths of the way done.

There is so much derision in the world for things that we don't know or don't understand — political beliefs, religious convictions, sexual lifestyles — that simply to recognize them without scoffing or cracking a tasteless joke would be a giant step forward for mankind.

In short, there's a reason why humans have different chromosomes that goes beyond evolution. Let's try to appreciate this fact, while at the same time glorifying in who we are ourselves!

Chris Anderson '89

### Mail Call

#### Successful drive

EDITOR:

On behalf of the sisters of Omega Phi Alpha, I would like to thank all the Aggies who donated clothes at McDonald's. The items collected at the four McDonald's locations filled at least 100 leaf bags. Your support is truly overwhelming and very much appreciated.

The clothes collected have been taken to Twin City Mission Inc. where they will be distributed to those in need.

You have proved that Aggie spirit runs deep, not only on campus but also in the community. This project could not have been a success without you.

Jan Becker  
Vice president of the clothing drive for Omega Phi Alpha service sorority

#### Hot time on campus

EDITOR:

Last November, the hot water in our Haas Hall room stopped working, so we had to take 50-degree showers every day. The resident adviser and head resident both reported the problem to the maintenance office, but it was not fixed until February.

Last Tuesday, our air conditioner broke, and now we can only get heat. Modular dorms have very small windows, so we get very little air circulation. Once again, the R.A. and H.R. have reported the problem, but we are still sweating in our 90-degree room.

Another girl on our hall recognized the maintenance man who had repaired her air conditioner last fall and told him about ours being broken. He was amazed because the maintenance office had not informed him, and he personally promised to fix it the next day.

This laxness on the part of the maintenance office is utterly ridiculous. We have read about funding cuts and understaffed. But we find it hard to believe that it really took them three and a half months to find the time to fix our hot water, when it only took them 30 minutes to actually repair it. If the maintenance office intends to wait another three and a half months before they decide to send someone to fix our air conditioner, then they also had better plan to refund part of our housing fees. Modular dorms are not cheap, and college students are not rich. Why should we pay full price when we've spent most of the year without a full room?

Karen Owens '89

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff serves 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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