

# Opinion

## The trials of having dating parents

I got a phone call from my mother the other night. She lives in Milwaukee. I was concerned because she never calls me during the week, only on weekends. The last time she called me during the week was to tell me that my grandmother died. Mom was having trouble getting around to why she called, and I grew more apprehensive by the minute. I thought about Grandpa. Then she said it. "I'm getting married . . . to your father!"

**Kevin Thomas**  
Guest Columnist

My parents split up in 1979. I guess it was an average divorce, nothing to write the broken home about. But when your parents break up, they start doing something really weird — they start dating again.

I was in the process of moving from Phoenix when it happened, and I was going to go home before spending the summer in New Mexico. I called to say that I should arrive on such-and-such day, and everything seemed OK. Three days later I arrived to find that Mom had moved out and was living with her boyfriend, Stanley.

I left for New Mexico. Eventually, Dad moved out of the house and Mom and Stanley moved in. My brother was suddenly in an awkward situation. He still lived at home, and I don't think he enjoyed introducing them to his friends. "Gee, Larry, I'd like you to meet my Mom and, uh . . . Stanley." Parents go through different phases when they're dating. Stanley was a jerk and she (finally) kicked him out.

Have your parents ever told you that they wonder what kind of a jerk you're going to bring home next?

Her next phase was finding another guy. The world knew she was available, and she started getting strange phone calls. She changed phone numbers two or three times. It got frustrating to call home and find that the number had been changed to an unlisted number.

The phone brings back haunting

memories of my dating career. It seemed that every girl I knew had "call waiting," where they can put you on hold. She'll ask you if you can hold, and click, she's on another line checking out the new boy. Yep, I'm her one and only.

I felt like I was at an auction. "We have a bid from the red-headed young man, dinner-anna-movie, dinner-anna-movie, HO! The man from down the block bids dinner-anna-movie-anna-Porsche! What is yer bid there?" I say something about giving my undying affection. She accepts the ride in the Porsche.

Then there was Dad. I think he was getting serious with a girl there for a while. She wanted to meet my brother and me. You know it's serious when you bring your date home to meet the family.

She was very nice and very beautiful, for her age. ("For her age" is such a terrible thing to say.) I forgot what her name was. Let me tell you, it's a great experience when your parents brings their date home to meet you. They're nervous and want to make a good impression. You can tell the worst jokes in the world and they'll still laugh. You can go up to them and whisper, "HEY! Is my Dad a great kisser or what?" "Well, um, er . . .", then you turn to your brother and say "Nudge, nudge, wink, wink, say no more!"

Dad's girlfriend was unusual in one respect. She had a pacemaker that made a noticeable clicking noise. Several years later I saw on TV that that brand of pacemaker was being discontinued because it didn't work. I have this picture in my mind of what's-her-name being rushed to surgery while clutching her warranty card and receipt.

I later moved to Houston, and Dad came for a week once on a business trip. He mentioned something about meeting a girl there who seemed "interested" in him. I worked second shift, and didn't get home 'til around midnight. Dad was never there. I'd go to bed, somewhat concerned. He'd finally come creeping in during the wee hours. I wanted to jump up and shout, "Where were you? Who were you with? Where did you go? Don't you know that I've been worried about you?" I used to get yelled at for coming home after dark.

It was nice that we could spend some time together.

Mom finally settled down with a steady boyfriend, Don. He's the kind of guy you'd want to bring home to your kids. Don was a manager for General Electric, was making a good living and even had some education. Everytime I could go home (about twice a year), Don was always calling on my Mom. When they thought I was asleep, they'd play "Twister" together in a chair. Don was a guy you could trust with your mom.

Have your parents always trusted you alone with your date?

I was home two months ago, and she was still seeing Don, and it was still the usual Friday business. (It kind of gives you hope for when you reach their age.) I knew my parents would meet and talk once in a while because they were still friends, but it took me by surprise that they were getting married again because Don seemed to be doing pretty good there for a while. I asked Mom about that. She just said that when she told him, he didn't take it too well. Not that she was leading him on, mind you; she really loved him. Mom could never break bad news until the last minute.

My parents' escapades didn't bother me too much. I had already moved out on my own, so it was their business. They used to fight all the time, and it seemed for the best. But during this period their behavior was somewhat peculiar. All their boyfriends and girlfriends acted the same way. I can't really describe it, but it somehow reminded me of high school. It was sort of like Gidget meets Moondoggie, only with grey hair.

Have your parents ever told you that you'll understand better when you grow up?

It does put you in some unusual situations, and I was now in another predicament. What do you say to your mother when she calls to tell you that she's going to marry your father? I didn't have the time to write to Dear Abby. Well, I congratulated the happy bride and let it go at that.

I wonder if Dear Abby has any advice for the newlyweds?

**Kevin Thomas is a computer science major and cartoonist for The Battalion.**

## Mail Call

### Saudi Arabia, Iran should talk

EDITOR:

Last weekend, between my twelve-hour study periods, I managed to sit down and watch the evening news. I was delighted to see everyone's best buddy Ayatollah Khomeini and his merry band of followers (kind of like mousekateers with rabies) yelling "Death to America." Naturally being the good ol' Ag that I am, this made me rather uncomfortable, and I carefully listened to find out what Aya had stuck his foot in this time and why the U.S.A. was taking the rap.

The deaths in Mecca were sad and disturbing, but to blame the U.S.A. proves that Mr. Khomeini is way out in left field (as usual.)

Then Tuesday, during another rare break from my studies, I was reading *The Battalion* when I saw a letter to the editor from Mohsen Farzad, titled "Saudies responsible for massacre." Either Farzad knows something that nobody else does or . . . let's just say it's my opinion that Farzad comes from farther east than the Bronx. I would like to inform Mr. Farzad that he is wrong. An Associated Press article out of Washington said "The disturbance in Mecca was instigated by Iranian patriarch Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini who broadcast daily messages for the pilgrims to demonstrate . . ." I hope it helps clear things up.

For many years I've known that the world extends farther than my backyard, and for most of those years, I've heard about Iran's neighborly temperament, and the love she has for her fellow man. I cannot speak for everyone, but I am tired of it. Something needs to be done, maybe have a party like Times Square has on New Year's Eve or a big covered-dish dinner and countries whose name begins with A through E bring salads and F through K a hot meat, etc. After dinner, we get the Iranian Shiites and Sunnis together and help them settle their differences in a Christian manner. Let's stop all this eye for an eye warfare once and for all. Besides, if you ask me the Iranian Shiites have one too many "Ts" anyway.

Chris Clements '90

### Another angry victim

EDITOR:

I am shocked. Perhaps I am naive for believing that it would never happen to me, but it did. I pride myself on being as honest and trustworthy as possible and usually expect the same from others. The reason that I am so enraged that I went to the Commons for breakfast and left my books in a locker. I tried to insert a quarter so I could lock it but it did not work and I blew it. When I returned, my Economics book was missing — I mean stolen.

The part that hurts the most is not the \$30 it cost to replace it but the percentage who did it. It is hard to believe that at A&M, a person has to steal a few extra dollars. I want this person to know that I would gladly give him the money as long as I got my book back. This Bible of mine contains numerous notes and important information essential to my studies. Although this person obviously does not care, I want fellow Ags to keep an eye out for this type of person. Stealing is one thing I will not tolerate. I hope I never have the opportunity to catch this type of person. It is also sad that a person has to be this angry in order to send in rhetoric to the newspaper.

Peter Alan Fry '89

### Ignorance not relegated to just Texans

EDITOR:

Having been raised in Washington, I greatly appreciated Clark Miller's column on Wednesday. I, too, am not a Yankee, even though my ancestors (Pennsylvania Deutsch) were from north of the Mason-Dixon line.

I wonder if Mr. Miller is aware of the ironical history behind Washington state's name. When the bill was introduced to divide Oregon Territory (1852), the northern section was called Columbia Territory. In fact the entire region, including British Columbia, had been variously called Columbia or Oregon. In legislative debate, however, the new territory's name was changed to Washington to honor "The Father of Our Country" (Origin of Washington Geographic Names, E.S. Meany, U. Wash. Press, 1923, pp. 338) and, as I have heard, to avoid confusion with the District of Columbia.

Incidentally, Washington is not so wet as my acquaintances seem to think. In Seattle, it rains about as much as it does here. True, the drizzle is spread out more evenly, but the area is also much greener. And when it gets hot, it stays fairly dry. The eastern half of the state is almost as dry as west Texas. On the other hand, many in Washington think only of the weather in west Texas, so I guess ignorance is traded fairly.

Daren B.H. Cline  
assistant professor of statistics

### Aggies should be less judgmental

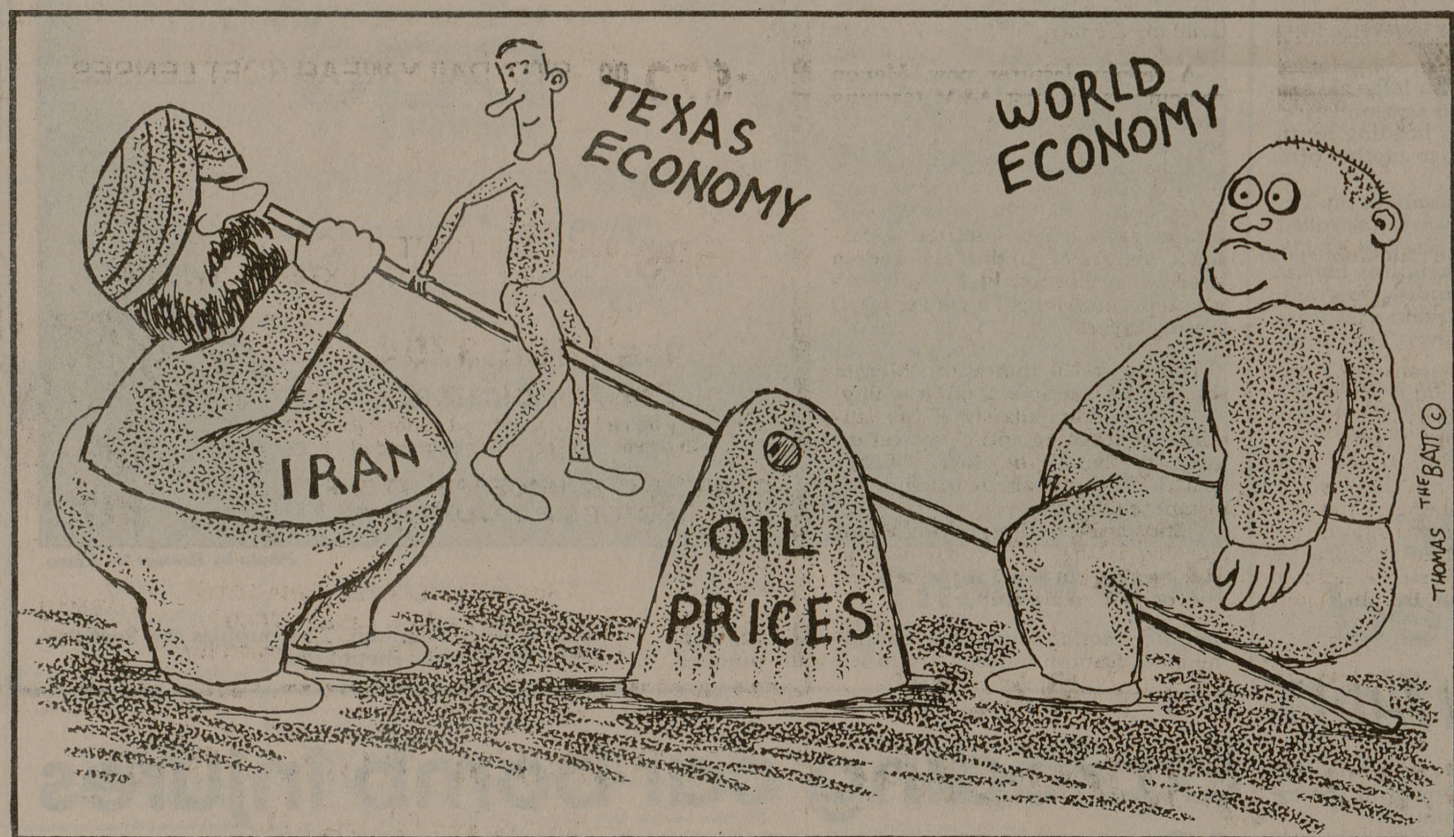
EDITOR:

Regarding Mary King's apology to Mr. Michael Gardner, does she realize that she has defined an overwhelming majority of Texas A&M students as two-percenters, including herself? I ask you honestly, Mary, have you ever told a lie? Undoubtedly, your answer is yes or perhaps a qualified "no" with some sincere rationalization. I found the generalizations in your two-percent definition rather surprising, considering that you have graduated from " . . . an exemplary high school (one of the top 10 in the nation)."

Mary, A&M consists of a diverse student body and faculty. What is perceived as a "knock to A&M" by one student may indeed be viewed as an improvement to others. My point being that criticism should be discussed, not condensed. I commend Michael Gardner for his committee work and dedication, and I commend Mary for her school spirit and value of tradition. However, let's be more open-minded and a little less judgmental.

Karl G. Schuler  
graduate student

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.



## Gunfights at the Asphalt Corral

You have been wondering why people in Los Angeles have started riding around on freeways shooting at one another.



**Lewis Grizzard**

It really should be no puzzle. For one thing, there are more crazy people in Los Angeles than anywhere else in the country.

For another, you know how people are out West. For years they rode around on horses and shot at buffalo. When the buffalo were all gone, they started riding around on horses shooting at Indians.

When the Indians were all shot up, they started riding around on horses shooting at each other. Automotive gunplay was bound to happen sooner or later.

All over the rest of the country people get mad at other people while driving on the freeway, but the rest of us are able to vent our anger without the use of firearms.

We curse other drivers, we use

the universal digital expression of displeasure and we occasionally go so far as to pull over to the side of the road and get into a fist fight.

But we rarely get involved in Gunfights at the Asphalt Corral. That, however, may not last.

You know where most of the trends start in this country, don't you?

California, of course. These are the people who gave us eating raw fish and electing Ronald Reagan to public office.

Who is to say freeway shootouts won't be the next bit of looniness to make its way east from LA LA Land.

In the event that should happen, you will want to know how to keep yourself from eating lead while driving over to your mother's house for dinner.

The best way to do that is to learn to avoid those drivers who might be out for an evening's shoot.

These include:

- Anybody driving a four-wheel vehicle that is jacked up over those huge tires that look like they came off a 747.

You have to be a little strange to drive anything like that in the first

place, and you have to wonder if the reason somebody purchased such a vehicle was because it's easier to hit a target when you've got the high ground.

- Anybody driving a vehicle with any of the following bumper stickers: When guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns. I'll give up my gun when they pry my cold dead finger off the trigger. Or, Confirm Judge Bork.

- Anybody with one of those silly yellow signs in their back window that says, "Baby on Board." Gun nuts get very close to their guns. Baby could be an AK-47.

- Anybody driving while wearing a camouflage outfit, a tattoo on any part of the anatomy that says "Born to Kill" or underwear that is too tight.

If we're lucky, of course, somebody will ride into L.A. in a silver Porsche and shoot it out with these crazies and clean up Dodge before any of this spreads.

This person would need to be brave, bold, innovative and know where to lay his hands on some heavyweight firepower.

Ollie North for marshal.

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