

# Opinion

## The Battalion

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## 100% Cotton

They weren't supposed to be there, but they were. They weren't supposed to win it, but they did. In convincing fashion, too.

The Texas A&M football team proved once again it deserves national respect with a sound 35-10 thrashing of national powerhouse Notre Dame in the Cotton Bowl in Dallas on New Year's Day.

The young Aggies ignored the hype surrounding the Irish and their Heisman Trophy winner Tim Brown while managing to put them away with uncanny ease.

If last Friday's win is any indication, A&M should reach even greater heights next season, and the Aggies' conquest of the Irish should serve warning to the Southwest Conference and the rest of the nation that the best is yet to come.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

## The Second Coming: Only in Independence

INDEPENDENCE, MO. — Before visiting this town on the outskirts of the metropolis of Kansas City, all I knew about it was it's give-'em-hell Harry Truman's home town.



Lewis Grizzard

The Truman home and library and museum all are located here and I wish we had a man of Harry's strength and character running for president today. At least we can dream.

But I learned something else about Independence that will take a little explaining.

There are at least two religious sects here (there may be even more; you know how religious groups can bolt and run off on their own) who believe that Independence, Mo., is where the return of Jesus Christ to Earth will take place.

Let me repeat that: They think Independence is where Christ is going to land when he descends from the heavens.

One group is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). The Mormons. The other is the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (RLDS), and please don't ask me to explain that. It's more confusing than a PTL bankruptcy hearing.

A local reporter attempted to explain what the LDS and RLDS think is going to happen one of these days:

"Their founder and prophet Joseph Smith, Jr. determined Independence as the City of Zion and this is where Christ is supposed to return according to their beliefs.

"I think they even have a garden picked out as the exact location of the Second Coming."

The LDS Center and the RLDS World Headquarters Auditorium are located next door to one another.

The LDS building includes a huge mural depicting Christ descending from the clouds. I seem to remember he was wearing wings.

The RLDS World Headquarters Auditorium, which seats 6,000, has a huge, lighted dome on its top so if anybody did want to land in Independence he would have a large target.

I'm by no means making fun of these people's beliefs. I have no idea who's right, so I try to learn a little about it all.

My basic instinct as a newspaperman, I suppose, also keyed my interest here.

I went over to the RLDS auditorium and a nice lady named Stephanie Kelly showed me around.

During my tour, I thought to myself, what if the big event occurs today? I'll be on the scene and might even scoop Jimmy Swaggart. A Pulitzer, I am certain, would follow.

I took some preparatory notes:  
— There is ample parking across the street from the RLDS auditorium in case a major news story broke nearby.

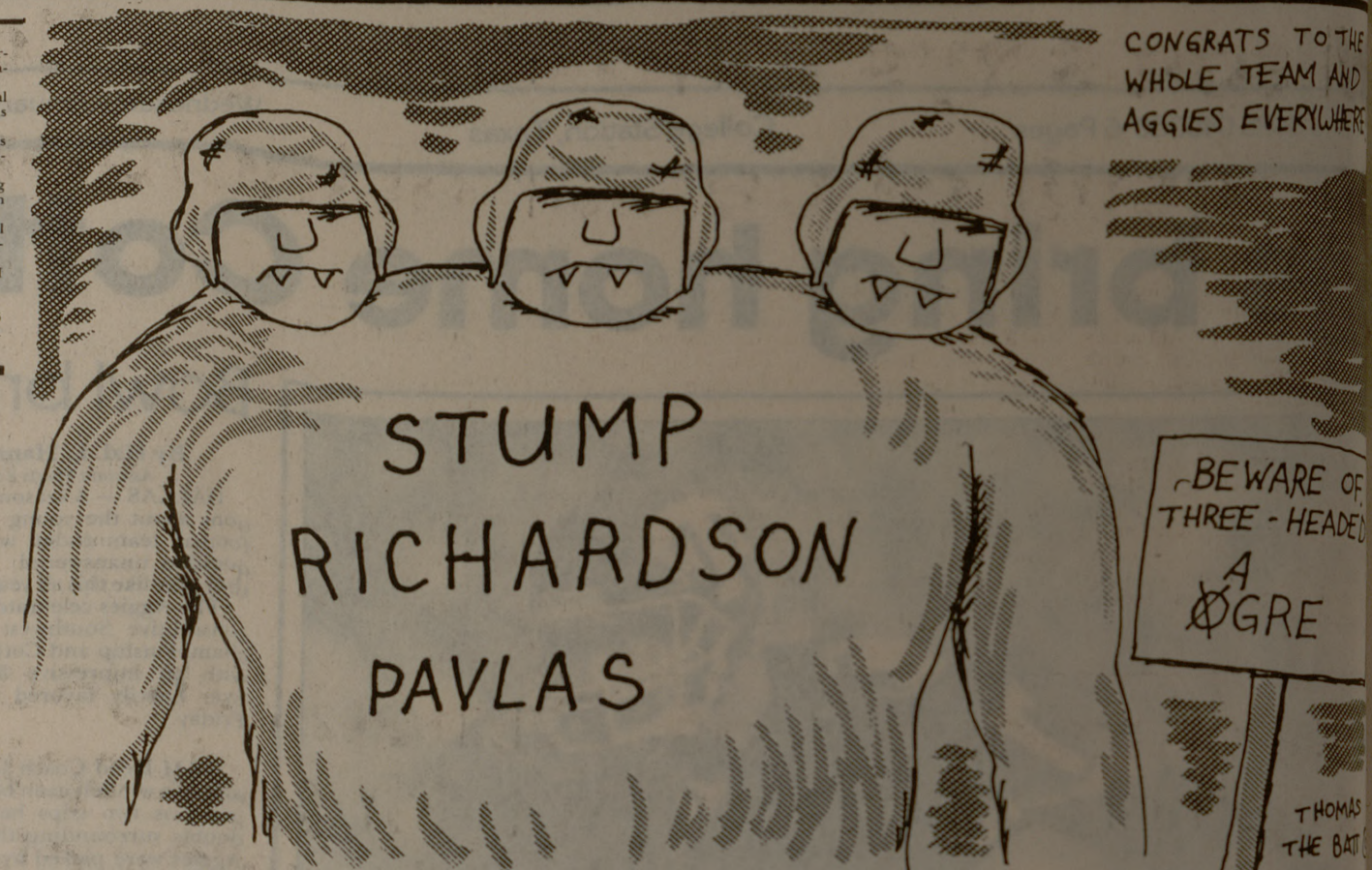
— The auditorium itself would be an ideal spot for the judging. Quick on the left, dead on the right, and fooling around on your spouse does count.

— In case Gabriel also plays the organ, the biggest one I've ever seen is in the auditorium.

I hung around Independence as long as I could in case something might happen. Nothing did, so I left to catch a plane to Cleveland.

Bad timing has been the story of my life.

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## Where have all the old video games gone?

During the Christmas holidays, I took my little sister, Elizabeth, to a movie in Houston. I'm supposedly going to receive a bachelor's degree from this institution of higher learning in five months, and I usually consider cartoons slightly below me. But after a brain-killing semester of work, studying and research papers, an afternoon of accompanying a 9-year-old to a screening of "Pinocchio and the Emperor of the Night" sounded pretty entertaining.



Amy Couvillon

After shelling out much too much for tickets, buying the obligatory popcorn and red licorice and figuring out which of the 14 theaters our movie was in, we still had time to hang around the lobby and play video games.

Yes, video games. I haven't played a good video game since I was in junior high school and we all used to hang out at shopping malls. I was all excited, ready to eat ghosts, jump barrels, deflect asteroids and pump air into those little "Dig-Dug" monsters.

But, as I was soon to find out, video

games have changed quite a bit since my hang-out-at-the-mall generation. There were nine video games in the theater lobby and not a Pac-Man among them. Not a Donkey-Kong, Dig-Dug or Centipede in sight. They were all shoot-'em-up, cut-'em-up, nuke 'em games with names I had never heard before. I never knew video games could be so violent.

Starting up the lineup was Contra, where the player is a camouflaged soldier running through the jungle, mowing down his opponents. Apparently, points are scored when the player shoots and kills each man encountered on the screen. Guerrilla War (also set in a jungle) and Time Soldiers were similarly replete with guns and blood. In Sky Shark, the player operates a bullet-spewing helicopter that enters a war zone, Rambo-like, to rescue prisoners of war.

For those into medieval violence, there were Rastan and Gauntlet, which feature bloody arrows, swords and axes. For just a quarter you can slash, chop and mutilate people to your heart's content.

In Double Dragon and Ikari Warriors, the player is a street fighter in a big-city gang situation. Buttons on the

Double Dragon game are labeled "Jump," "Punch" and "Kick." When player beats his electronic opponent into submission, the fighter figure shown carrying off a girl over his shoulder like a prize. Real classy, guys.

Operation Wolf, one of the most popular games, has a toy machine mounted on the front of it that the player holds instead of a joystick. Apparently, the object of this one is to shoot down the people on the screen who are aiming guns at you — but they shoot you down, that is.

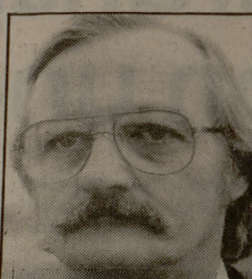
Is this where game technology is going these days, where vicarious violence and bloodshed are the preferred form of entertainment? It's not really known. It's supposed to be harmless like paint pellet guns and water pistol.

Still, something about this "kill" mentality bothers me, especially with these kind of games are the only ones available. Personally, I don't get a thrill out of pulling a plastic trigger and watching a character on a video screen writhe and scream in an agonizing death. Especially when I'm about to watch Pinocchio.

Amy Couvillon is a senior journalism major, city editor and columnist at The Battalion.

## A month-by-month view of 1988

I am about to tell you what will happen next year. So if you want next year to be a surprise, better stop reading now. Here is the year that will be, by the month:



Donald Kaul

**JANUARY** — President Reagan delivers his State of the Union address and makes only one mistake; he calls Nancy "Jane". . . . Vice President George Bush lays to rest his wimp image by punching out Pierre (Pete) DuPont during a televised debate after a heated exchange on Social Security. . . . Gary Hart appears at the Democratic debate wearing a paper bag on his head. Analysts agree he is the easy winner, if a little hard to understand. . . . The stock market drops 100 points on news that the dollar is falling.

**FEBRUARY** — Gary Hart is the surprise winner of the Iowa caucuses with 11 percent of the vote. All other candidates get 10 percent, including unannounced candidates Mario Cuomo, Sam Nunn and Paul Simon the singer. All Democratic candidates show up for the New Hampshire debates wearing bags on their heads, causing moderator Edwin Newman to burst into tears. . . . Pierre (Pete) DuPont challenges George Bush to duel in New Hampshire debate and is wrestled to ground by Bush's secret service men. . . . Congress votes \$50 million in humanitarian aid to Contras, who immediately attack retirement village in Nicaragua. They are beaten back. . . . Gov. Mike Dukakis is surprise loser in New Hampshire primary with

64 percent of vote. Edwin Newman is winner.

**MARCH** — Stock market gains 120 points on news of falling dollar. . . . On "Super Tuesday" each Democratic candidate, including Mario Cuomo, Sam Nunn and Paul Simon the singer, wins a state. . . . President Reagan holds his first news conference in five months. He is wearing pajamas.

**APRIL** — Iran attacks a Kuwaiti ship flying an American flag. The United States responds by sinking a Greek ship flying an Iranian flag. Greece protests to the U.N., which condemns Israel. . . . George Steinbrenner fires New York Yankee manager Billy Martin after opening-day loss, says he will manage the team itself.

**MAY** — Sen. Robert Dole takes lead in Republican presidential race after George Bush rabbit-punches Pierre (Pete) DuPont during a joint appearance and draws charges that he is too macho.

**JUNE** — Sandra Day O'Connor announces she is "a man trapped in a woman's body" and will no longer make the coffee at sessions of the Supreme Court. . . . The dollar falls on news of a rising stock market. . . . Joe Biden becomes the first Biden in a thousand generations to quit politics and take a job in a coal mine.

**JULY** — President Reagan goes to Russia for a summit meeting and trades away Alaska for a bag of brightly colored beans. . . . The Democrats pick a nominee: Paul Simon the singer. . . . Congress votes \$100 million in humanitarian aid to Contras, who immediately attack Honduras. They are beaten back.

**AUGUST** — Jessica Hahn reveals she

was once lured to a motel room by Mormon Tabernacle Choir and forced to perform a cappella. . . . Minnesota Twins win game on the road for the time, take over first place in American League West. . . . Republican National Convention, deadlocked between George Bush, Robert Dole, Jack Keefe and Pat Robertson, chooses a compromise candidate: Mario Cuomo.

**SEPTEMBER** — President Reagan names Robert Bork to the Supreme Court. When told he tried that one angrily turns over his bowl. . . . Sylvester Stallone announces he will rest "Gone with the Wind," taking the place of Vivian Leigh. He will call the film "Rocky V, World 0."

**OCTOBER** — The dollar falls on news of a falling stock market. . . . George Steinbrenner fires Billy Martin and hires Billy Martin on the day of the season. . . . The Minnesota Twins become first team to win back World Series mainly with yelling.

**NOVEMBER** — Iran attacks an American ship flying an American flag borrowed from Kuwait. The United States responds by borrowing an American flag from Saudi Arabia, hoisting an Iranian flag over it, then sinking it, causing U.N. to sanction Israel. . . . Pierre (Pete) DuPont is elected president of the United States in a write-in vote, exiles George Bush.

**DECEMBER** — In his final press conference, President Reagan blesses White House press corps and makes members cardinals. . . . Mario Cuomo denies he was ever a candidate for presidency. . . . The dollar falls on news that the stock market has tumbled. . . . The Contras attack Congress. They are beaten back.

Happy New Year.  
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## Mail Call

### Street pinball

EDITOR:

As a bicyclist I have a few things to say to Bob Wiatt and the local motorists. Is there some intrinsic trait in automobile drivers that makes them inconsiderate and homicidal? When I ride my bicycle I obey the traffic laws and am considerate of others, pedestrian or otherwise. Foolishly, I expect the same of others. I've lost count of the number of times people have almost hit me at the intersection near the MSC, have entered or exited parking lots by cutting directly in front of me, and have floored their accelerators to beat me to an intersection 50 feet away. Whether these actions are illegal or inconsiderate is not the point. The point is that they are damned dangerous! In any collision with an automobile I'm not going to enjoy the better half of the results.

What action is being taken by Sergeant Bob and the University's finest to keep me from becoming a participant in a street pinball game? Nothing. Twice I've nearly been hit by motorists ignoring my right-of-way while police officers were standing less than 30 feet away. What did they do? Nothing.

I really hate to inconvenience Bob and the motorists by requesting that they respectively enforce and obey traffic laws when there are so many more important things to do. But survival is a prerequisite for graduation.

Steven K. Baum  
grad student

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.