

Opinion

The Battalion

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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.

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Final compromise

In an unusual but very welcome show of cooperation, faculty and student representatives met Friday to discuss scheduling of senior finals.

Unfortunately, the students were the ones doing most of the compromising.

Both sides agree that the current schedule is completely unworkable, allowing professors to present material on Thursday and test students over it in Friday finals. But in the alternatives presented by Faculty Senate representatives, the students always lose — graduating after school closes, graduating without diplomas, or "graduating" without knowing if they actually passed their classes. One proposal, which would schedule upper-division finals before those for lower-division classes, would be nothing but a logistical nightmare.

But the faculty has steadfastly refused to consider two sets of finals, maintaining they shouldn't have to write two finals. This is patently ridiculous: Professors must give makeup tests to students who have University excused absences and last semester had to give separate finals to students whose religious beliefs prevented them from taking finals on Saturday. The policy for senior finals should be no different.

Faculty members have argued they don't have time to give finals during dead week, while other students are still in class. It's a good argument, one that points out that A&M is long overdue for a truly "dead" dead week. One compromise proposal, greeted with some enthusiasm, would cancel dead week classes to make way for senior finals. The lost-class days would be moved to the beginning of the semester schedule.

Because implementing that plan this semester is impossible, the representatives went back to their senates with the plan for weighting the finals schedule so upper-division finals would be held earlier. But though making dead week dead may not be possible this semester, the plan should be considered seriously. It may be the one solution everyone can live — and learn — with.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Mail Call

12 meters isn't 12 meters

EDITOR:

I was happy to see Dennis Connor and the crew of Stars and Stripes mentioned in last Tuesday's list of the top ten sports headlines of 1987. However, there were a couple of goofs in the article. First, if folks think that 12 meter yachts are 12 meters long, they didn't watch enough of the ESPN coverage.

In reality, the designation has to do with a curious formula which takes items such as draft, length, freeboard and sail area into account. If the result of the formula for a boat equals 12 meters, then it is a 12 meter yacht.

Second, since Mr. Hammons wants to see that credit is given where it is due, it should be noted that Australia, not New Zealand, defeated the U.S. in 1983. In fact, last year was New Zealand's first attempt at America's Cup competition. Best of luck to Dennis and the Sail America group in their efforts to defend in the next year or so!

Richard Barnett '85

No parking?

EDITOR:

Regarding the article by Kimberly House in last Wednesday's Battalion that announced the building of the new dorms, we were both pleased and concerned. We believe that these dorms will provide much-needed housing on campus; however, in reading the article we were alerted to a certain disturbing possibility for both present and future southside residents: NO PARKING!

The article stated that three dorms were to be "south of the Commons and east of Underwood hall." Apparently, construction of these dorms will eliminate the Underwood parking lot. Additionally, much of the "Commons red lot" would seem to be consumed by the new dorms. Presently, southside parking is adequate; yet, with an additional 962 students and fewer spaces, the future looks grim. What are the plans for alleviating this pressing problem? Build a parking garage similar to the one near Blocker? Pave the "Fightin' Texas Aggie Band" drill field? "Slice" three holes from the golf course? Deny underclassmen the privilege of parking on campus?

As concerned southside residents, we would like to know how we will be affected in the semesters to come by these plans. Any information pertaining to these plans and the potential parking problem would be greatly appreciated.

Carl Collins '88
Jim Hayes '88
Jeff Reedy '89

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.



It is an extremely silly thing for candidates wives to debate

The year of the presidential debate has finally gotten out of hand.

This does not mean that I hate presidential debates. On the contrary, I like watching all five million candidates debate on important things like the character issue and the character issue. It's edifying.

But now, in addition to the candidates, other debaters have entered the limelight. First we had the candidates; now we have their wives.

That's right. It seems as though the candidates' wives will debate on "Firing Line" Feb. 27.

The candidates' wives? Things have certainly gotten out of hand. Someone out there has gone debate crazy, loopy at the prospect of bringing the nation together to watch the prospective first ladies slug it out.

Oh, boy.

I'm not saying that the president's wife is unimportant. Heck, look at Nancy Reagan, master of the clandestine whisper. Without her, would we have such a strong, knowledgeable leader as we do now? It's doubtful.

But having the candidates' wives debate? Just what will they debate about? According to the producer of "Firing Line," it will be about "political things they're involved in day and night."

I really don't know what that means.

And since I don't know what it means, this debate with the candidates' wives will probably catch on. It'll probably be a big hit, rival the "Cosby Show"



Mark Nair

and make loads of money. My ignorance usually makes things happen that way.

I can see it now. It is a presidential election year in the future. Eight women are running for president. No men are candidates. William F. Buckley, the antediluvian conservative, moderates the "Husbands Only" debate. The producer estimates the show's audience to be around 58 billion viewers. Nobody knows who the actual candidates are.

Bill Buckley: Let's talk about political things that you are involved in day and night.

Husbands (together): OK!

Bill: No. 1, what do you think about the election process?

Husband No. 1: I think it stinks, but you should all vote for my wife anyway.

Husband No. 2: You should vote for my wife, not his wife. My wife would be a better president than his wife.

Husband No. 1: You stink.

Husband No. 2: Oh, yeah?

(They engage in a delicately choreographed fistfight. The audience cheers.)

Bill: No. 3, what are your objectives as First Man?

Husband No. 3 (standing and hitching his pants): Well, I'll tell you. I'm going to show her who wears the pants in this White House, that's what I'll tell you.

Husband No. 4: My wife wears pants sometimes. You should vote for her, America.

Husband No. 6: Vote for my wife.

Husband No. 5: Vote for my wife, not his wife.

Husbands No. 4, No. 5, and No. 6 scuffle.

Bill Buckley falls asleep.

Husband No. 7: My china would liven up the White House.

Husband No. 8: I hear they're pretty big wide-screen TV there.

Bill Buckley snores. His cohort, Robert Strauss, shakes his head.

Robert: Issues, gentlemen. What do you think about the East, Central Asia, the war in Cambodia?

A long pause. Husbands No. 8 look at each other. They snore.

Husband No. 7: Issues?

Husband No. 8: Issues?

A longer pause.

Husband No. 7: My china would liven up the White House.

Husband No. 8: I hear they're pretty big wide screen TV there.

Bill Buckley snores. Husband wins the fistfight. The audience loudly. Two weeks later Husband 2's wife wins the election.

Of course, the current debate between the candidates' wives is still tentative. Or, at least, the wives have given tentative acceptances. But Bush has declined the offer, her tant saying that she isn't "running first lady."

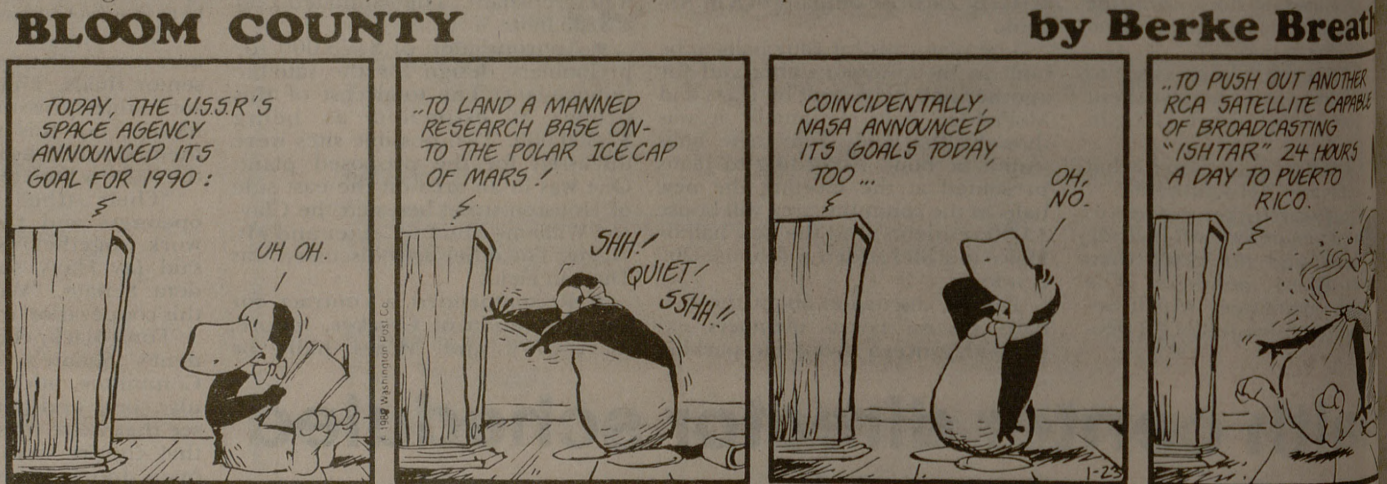
It is an extremely silly thing for candidates' spouses to debate. As Bush said, they aren't running for lady. We should be hopeful that the tentative meeting of the candidates will stay tentative. Then maybe we will give the other debate that night one between Democratic candidates Atlanta, more attention.

Then again, it would be nice if Tipper Gore deck whoever shows Gary Hart's wife.

That is, if things get out of hand.

Mark Nair is a senior political major and opinion page editor for the Battalion.

by Berke Breathed



BLOOM COUNTY by Berke Breathed

