

Opinion

Unsound testing

U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop's proposal to give an AIDS test to every student of a major American university is statistically unsound, and it would be virtually impossible to carry out.

Koop said last week that testing a university population of about 25,000 would provide "a pretty good idea" of the prevalence of AIDS in the college-age group in an urban setting. This is not true.

First, getting 25,000 students to do anything is difficult at best. Trying to get each of them to submit to an AIDS test is ludicrous.

Any testing must be both voluntary and confidential to respect the privacy of the students. Obviously, getting any kind of meaningful data under these conditions would be impossible, because students who know or suspect they are infected with the virus are likely to avoid the mass testing.

Secondly and more importantly, what useful information could come out of testing the population of one American university — even if by some miracle every student were to be tested? The prevalence of the AIDS virus logically would vary from region to region. Data gained from the screening of a Midwestern private college, for example, could not be generalized to apply to the University of California at Los Angeles.

The surgeon general is sincerely committed to learning about the deadly disease and finding ways to slow its spread, and he deserves praise for his diligence. And the effect of AIDS on the college-age group is an important factor that deserves study. But mass testing of a "typical" American university is not the solution.

Take a bow

We at *The Battalion* feel that it is time to introduce the characters in our newest comic strip, B Street. Jon Caldara, the strip's creator, describes the cast as follows:

Basil Steed, would be star thespian and major stud-wanna-be with an inflated ego that is as shaky as his acting. Orwell Wild, the first truly Republican playwright, instrumental in the early avant garde "actors off welfare" movement. Luther Lipschitz, the weird and wimpy sufferer of multiple personalities. Astra Stardust, the woman of today and the only stable factor in an uncontrollable situation. Badger Williams, the underlying driving force and not-so-straight straight man of the strip. And finally, Macbeth, the cynical and devious hamster and mascot of the theater.

Welcome to B Street.

— The Battalion Editorial Board

Mail Call

Let's treat people like cattle

EDITOR:

My goodness, Brian Frederick, you're right. Honor is dead in the 20th century. Let's all go back to the good old days before "honor's demise." We can bring back that honorable tradition of slavery. Gosh, don't you just wish we could treat people like cattle again? Let's ignore individual happiness and put everyone into the wonderful, honorable, strict sex roles of yesteryear. We can try to make everyone the same, just like they did back then, and have an honorable witch hunt to hang those who are different.

Frederick, you said, "Honor is any particular virtue or virtues that we value highly." Liberation and civil rights have made our society more honorable than our past. Our society is getting better in spite of people like you.

Jill E. Webb '88

Float like a butterfly

EDITOR:

Who would have expected it? A free, unscheduled heavyweight boxing match telecast by CBS to be seen by millions. I guess we shouldn't have been surprised after seeing Rather's attempt to strike Bush with a low blow during the pregame hype.

Once the fight officially began, Rather started swinging, going after Bush with an endless barrage of body shots. He attempted to get an early knockout with two rights to the head — but they missed.

Unfazed, Bush continued to dance around the ring, conserving his energy.

Until the 10th and final round.

As the 10th started, Rather tried to box Bush into the corner. Before Rather knew what was happening, Bush unleashed an unbelievably powerful right cross, solidly catching Rather on the jaw. Rather staggered, swayed, then hit the canvas.

It was over! It was beautiful!

Chris Samsury '90

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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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Journalism.

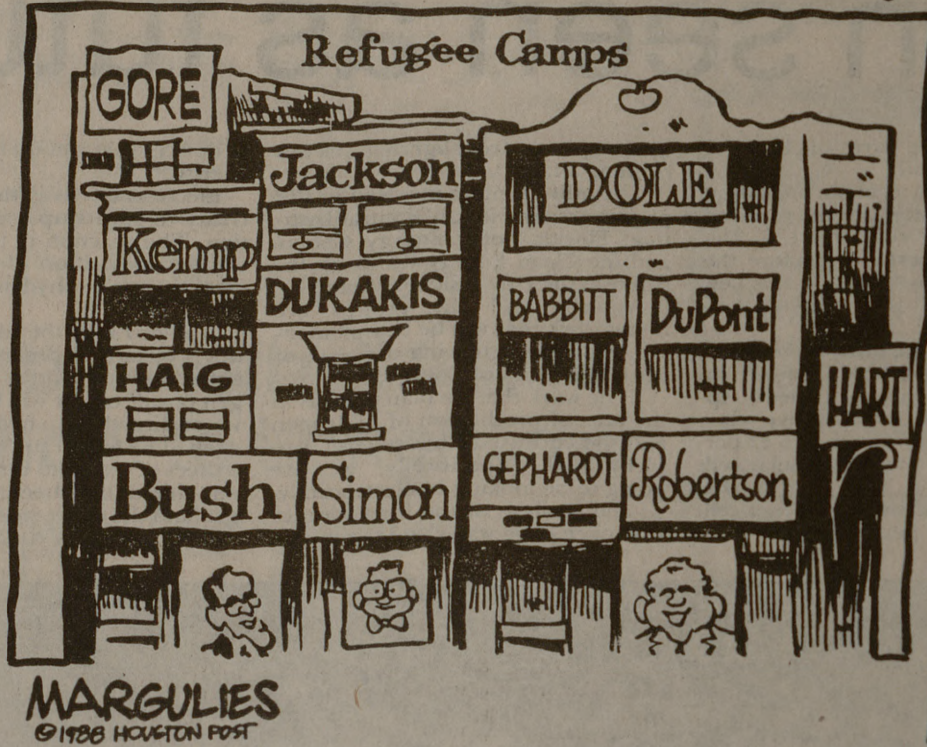
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Current Events Glossary



Occupying Forces:



Holy Land:

IOWA

How to augment your vocabulary with the improved liberal arts quiz

Nowadays, many people approach me and ask, "Golly, Mark, after spending considerable time in deep thought and meditation, I have come to the obvious conclusion that I must defect to that lucrative and fun-filled field of liberal arts. Your column last semester inspired me to enter the discipline. I realize the liberal arts revolution is now upon us. How can I help the glorious fight?"



Mark Nair

Usually I am too stunned to answer. My predictions of the liberal arts revolution were true; but I am still trying to cope with these secret meetings arranged by renegade engineers, chemists, business majors and others who shall remain unmentioned. What am I to tell these enlightened people?

After serious cerebration and deliberation, cogitation and speculation, I have decided that instead of telling these tergiversators the specific things to do, instead I will inspire them. In the spirit of the Liberal Arts Revolution, I submit to all those wishing to defect or thinking about defecting my new and improved liberal arts quiz: How To Increase Your Vocabulary And Feel Good About It In A Few Easy Steps.

The following is a series of words, each followed by a few sample sentences. Your job, should you decide to accept it, is to answer which sentence shows the correct usage of the word. I am sure that after you take this new and improved liberal arts quiz, you will be motivated to surrender all inhibitions of joining the liberal arts revolution. Live long and augment.

• Aesthetic

a. Boy, hahdee, don't you go get that

battroy all over your hands 'cause it shore is ascetic.

b. The painting makes a wonderful, wonderful ascetic statement.

c. That monk, he sure is ascetic, living up there with all them sheep.

• Aesthetic

a. He ain't no Catholic, he's aesthetic.

b. I find it difficult to breathe when I run because I have aesthetic.

c. Spray paint on a building creates a nifty aesthetic statement.

• Incongruous

a. Senator Bill often goes to Washington to meet incongruous.

b. Senator Bob never goes to Washington to meet incongruous. He does not even know where the Congruous building is.

c. Senator Biff has very incongruous tattoos on his face and buttocks.

• Tepid

a. Super-agent Gregg Spacey is very bold and daring. One could call him very tepid.

b. It was Tiny Tepid who sang "Tip-toe through the Tulips."

c. What's that fly doing in my soup?

Swimming in the tepid liquid, you goofball.

• Serendipity

a. A spoonful of serendipity helps the medicine go down.

b. Can you believe those ditzzy sorority girls? They are so... so... so serendipity.

c. Mad scientist Igor Whatchacallit relied on serendipity for his success.

• Innocuous

a. I must go to the health center and get my innocuous so this rampant disease will not strike me down in my prime.

b. I can't believe you insulted me!

You are the most innocuous person I know.

c. What an innocuous little nuclear missile. HA!

• Gibbous

a. I know all about primates. For example, that little animal over there is gibbous monkey.

b. Gibbous you poor, your weak, your huddled masses yearning to be free.

c. Ah, my dear, the romantic gibbous moon gives such a... a neat marish sheen to your face.

• Vacillate

a. Excuse me, do you have any vacillate-pickles in stock?

b. It was difficult for Herbie to shimmy up the flag pole and hang out his laundry because it was greased down with vacillate.

c. Did he know about Iran. Did he Didn't he? I wish he'd stop vacillating and be a real candidate.

• Schnozzle

a. Hey, hand me that schnozzle. I've gotta water the grass.

b. Hey, come on over and see my new puppy. It's a schnozzle.

c. Hey, hand me a tissue. I've gotta blow my schnozzle.

• Epitome

a. That book is huge. I suppose you could call it an epitome.

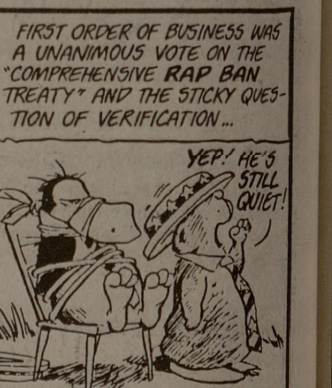
b. My ancestors are buried over there in that epitome.

c. This column is the epitome of stupidity.

Thus concludes the I Want To Be In The Liberal Arts Revolution Part II. And remember, kids, there are no answers, only more questions (famous philosophical saying).

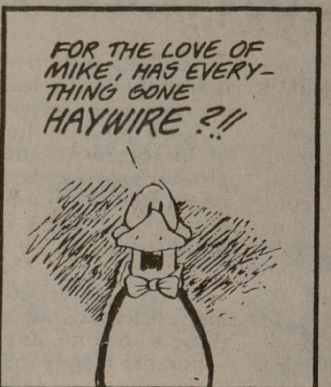
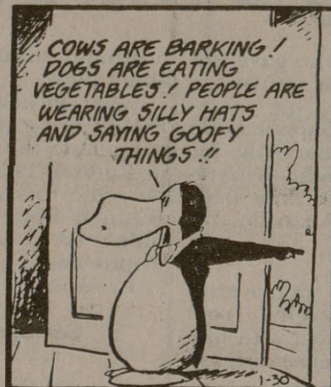
Mark Nair is a senior political science major and opinion page editor for *The Battalion*.

BLOOM COUNTY



by Berke Breathed

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