

Opinion

Men should resist feminist amazon intimidation

In recent years, the women's movement has deviated from addressing injustices to perpetrating injustice against men. Armed with the vicious word "chauvinist," these modern amazons hunt down any man who dares oppose them, even in the most trivial matters. Recently their misplaced zeal led them to criticize Judge Kennedy's nomination to the Supreme Court merely because he had belonged to two male-only clubs.



Brian Frederick

That such idiocy is taken seriously is evidenced by the politicians who fall all over themselves to accommodate feminist demands. These demands threaten our freedom of association, but men seem so intimidated by the amazons that they now surrender their rights without a fight. But if no one will resist these need-

less incursions, we will lose valuable institutions to the detriment of all.

Take the case of the Boy Scouts of America. On Feb. 11, the executive board voted unanimously to admit women as leaders, reversing a 70-year policy of requiring male leaders in order to provide role models for the scouts.

Supposedly, the board was not forced to make this change. As one board member said, "The board just felt it was time to change the policy." It was time "to recognize the valuable leadership women can provide." No doubt women will provide boys with invaluable examples of how to become men.

Yet for the last several years, Boy Scouts has been involved in a lawsuit with Catherine Pollard of Milford, Conn., who wants to become a scoutmaster. The Connecticut Supreme Court rejected her suit last July on the ground that a private organization can set its own requirements for its leaders. Pollard had been preparing another suit when the policy change was made. We

are to believe that her suit had no effect on the board's decision, just as picketers had no effect on the decision of a certain convenience store to remove certain magazines from its shelves.

Though all normal men enjoy and need the companionship of women, there are many relational benefits found only in male company. Just ask the boys at Deerfield Academy in Deerfield, Mass.

The Deerfield Academy is the last of New England's big all-male prep schools. On Jan. 31, the school board voted to admit girls in 1989, capitulating to demographic shifts and popular notions on the equality of the sexes.

You would think that the boys would be delighted to see girls admitted. After all, high school boys think constantly about girls, and we know that boys can't adapt socially without continuous female company.

The boys, however, were less than delighted. As the principal announced the

decision, many boys walked out in protest, singing the school song and chanting "Better dead than coed." During the ten months in which the proposed change had been under discussion, the boys had repeatedly spoken out against it, but to no avail.

Feminists would probably characterize these boys as vicious chauvinists. Webster's defines a chauvinist as "a person unreasonably devoted to his own sex and contemptuous of the opposite sex." From the dictionary definition, it is clear that feminists misuse this term at least three-quarters of the time. But is it an appropriate label for the boys at Deerfield?

According to the girls at nearby private girls' schools who come to Deerfield for school parties, Deerfield is "one of the funnest places to visit." They lament that when girls are admitted to Deerfield, the girls' schools will probably no longer be invited. These do not sound like the remarks of girls abused by male chauvinism.

Maybe the boys have good reasons

for opposing the new policy that nothing to do with chauvinism. They have discovered the value of friendship, a camaraderie that best riches in the absence of women. They are able to show enthusiasm without worrying about looking foolish in the eyes of girls, whom they feel would be a distraction to their studies. As one put it, "You get a lot more done with girls."

It would be unfair to blame them for the changes at Deerfield and the Boy Scouts. Yet they may be blamed for prejudicing our society against beneficial male institutions making it nearly impossible for them to survive. Free associations of members of the same sex can and should be an enriching part of our lives. Feminists, labeling them all chauvinistic, would deprive us of them, thus robbing us of experiences and imperiling our freedom of association.

Brian Frederick is a senior history major and a columnist for The Battalion.

Debate or game show?

You have to admit, it was a good idea.

Take a slew of presidential candidates from both parties, gather them together and let them debate over two evenings. Add a 500-campus audience linked by satellite to watch the whole thing, invite student leaders and student media representatives from across the United States to participate, and you've got a success.

At least, that's the way it was supposed to work. What really happened was another story.

As part of *The Battalion's* effort to cover the debates, I went with two of my colleagues to the Southern Methodist University campus to watch the proceedings Thursday and Friday nights.

Instead of being ushered into McFarlin Auditorium, where the candidates were to debate and where we thought we were going to have the opportunity to question them, we found ourselves seated in another room with about six small TV monitors. Three or four television cameras swept the room, and two chairs were set on a platform for the College Satellite Network Election '88 hosts, Bob Ray Sanders and Cathy Cronkite.

As we glanced around incredulously, one of the program's crew members held up a sign that read, "APPLAUD," and proceeded to tell the audience members, mostly students, to clap their hands whenever the sign was raised. She also instructed the audience that faster clapping would make more noise, something the show's managers wanted.

One of my colleagues compared this event to something that would occur on a "cheesy game show."

We decided to see how it would turn out, despite our misgivings. (Besides, we were trapped. We had to wait until after the debates were over to catch the buses back to the hotel.)

Unfortunately, waiting to see if it would get any better didn't do any good. The program seemed to be poorly organized, and neither Sanders nor Cronkite appeared to know what was going on or what was coming up next.

A typical dialogue was:
"OK, now we'll go to a commercial," one host would say.

The host would glance around the room for a couple of seconds. Then, apparently hearing something from his ear microphone, he'd say, "What? We're not going to a commercial? I thought we were going to a commercial. OK, then, let's take a question from the floor."

Even better were the attempts to communicate with students telephoning questions to the program from around the nation. These conversations generally followed this pattern:

"OK, we have a caller from Arizona.

Go ahead, Arizona."

Seconds of silence.

"Caller from Arizona? What's your question?"

"Caller? Caller? Caller?"

Both hosts made attempts at being entertaining and keeping the program moving, but they couldn't get anything together, and neither looked professional as they tried.

The debates themselves were more amusing than informative — the candidates bickered back and forth, but rarely offered insight into their campaign strategies.

The Democrats took the stage Thursday night. Among them, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, as usual, showed his great oratorical style. Whether he has any substance to back it up remains a question.

Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis seemed to sidestep, showing only glimpses of meaning behind his well-chosen, well-employed words. Rep. Richard Gephardt of Missouri was emphatic, especially in defense of his economic plan, but the details of that plan somehow never came up.

Tennessee Sen. Albert Gore Jr. was argumentative. Anything and everything was targeted, possibly because he felt he had to show a tough Texan image to win approval from the South. Colorado Sen. Gary Hart was smiling and unflappable — somewhat surprising considering his poor showing in the New Hampshire primary, after he said he would let the people decide whether he should run. And Illinois Sen. Paul Simon of bow-tie fame was a no-show.

About the only thing the candidates could agree on was that leadership in the White House was lacking. All the candidates made some comment about President Ronald Reagan.

"Gratuitous Reagan bashing" was the term one friend used to describe it.

But the Republican debates on Friday were no better. Watching this time at home instead of in the studio audience, we saw only two show up — Vice President George Bush and Rep. Jack Kemp of New York.

Kansas Sen. Robert Dole and television evangelist Pat Robertson pulled out of the debate — Dole calling it a rally for Bush's supporters, Robertson to hold a rally of his own.

That made it more a two-man talk than a debate. And the foes looked more like tiger cubs as they faced off — one with a few teeth, one without — than candidates for president of the United States.

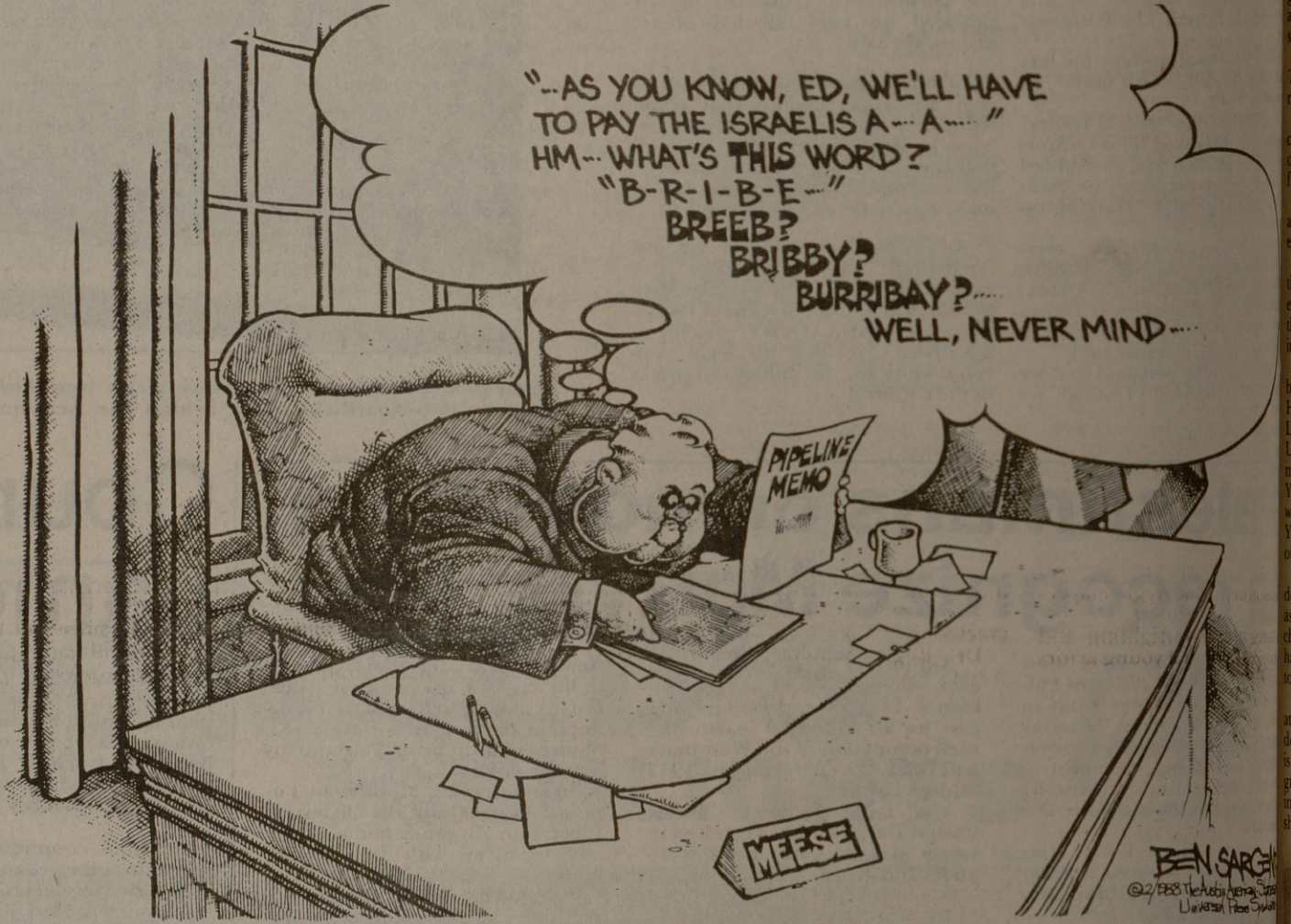
In fact, nearly everyone connected with the program seemed to regard it as a show, rather than a serious attempt at informing the public.

And that's a shame.

It was a good idea. It just didn't work.

Robbyn L. Lister is a senior journalism major, news editor and assistant city editor for The Battalion.

Robbyn Lister
Guest Columnist



Mail Call

I'm sorry already!

I am writing in response to the recent hysteria that has erupted over my article "Poverty: A Culture Shock." I have infuriated and horrified many of you. I hope, after making some points, you will understand my position.

If you read the article carefully, you noticed it was a spring break experience. That is, spring break 1987. It was an OBSERVATION — NOT RESEARCH — class assignment. I could have easily written on the positive characteristics of the Valley. But, those were not the instructions. I wrote with one audience — my professor — in mind and never planned to submit the article for publication.

Right before the *At Ease* deadline, I got a call from a staff member. Short on material, he asked if *At Ease* could print my article. As a journalism major, I have written numerous articles and had no recollection of the content. He needed an answer right away and read the article until I remembered which article it was. Still without recollection of the content, I trusted the staff's judgement and said "yes."

As *The Battalion* editor said, "Had I seen it before publication, it would not have appeared." Well had I seen it, it would not have appeared either! It was ridiculous for anyone to think the article could stand without editing.

The article did not accurately reflect my views of the Valley. I was referring to Mexicans who were raised in Mexico and WAS IN NO WAY alluding to Americans of Mexican descent.

My travel companion has also endured undeserved criticism. When the subject of pregnancy came up on the trip, she was describing a culture that cherishes children. When a young Mexican girl gets pregnant, the baby is accepted and welcome into the home. Abortion and adop-

tion are rarely alternatives.

In conclusion, I apologize to all who were offended. I realize the article was unfit for publication. It was never my intent to hurt anyone, and I hope we all can stop over reacting.

Jill Galarneau '88

College is just too hard

EDITOR:

Shaun M. Morrison raises a few interesting questions in his letter of Feb. 16. Should seniors really be burdened with finals, for can a test in one's last semester really assess their accomplishments in college? For that matter, do tests accurately reflect a student's abilities and learning? Moreover, is this valid when one considers that nearly 500,000 students, all with different abilities and backgrounds, must be evaluated on the basis of their answers on a particular set of questions? What a burden it must seem — college is just too hard.

And what about all those nasty members of the Faculty Senate who actually want to have improved curriculum and greater respect for faculty rank? Views like that just smack of communism, heresy, and downright un-Americanism, don't they? Gosh, with all these mean, nasty, ugly things here it's a wonder the students put up with it all. What do they want? An education?

Thomas K. Tsotsis
graduate student

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editor 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 author's name, address and telephone number of the writer.

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(USPS 045 360)

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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.

The *Battalion* is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods.

Mail subscriptions are \$17.44 per semester, \$34.62 per school year and \$36.44 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: *The Battalion*, 230 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111. Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Battalion*, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77843-4111.

BLOOM COUNTY
by Berke Breathed

Panel 1: A man is sleeping at a desk. A TV set is on the desk showing CBS News. A speech bubble says: "HUP! HUP! EVENING NEWS TIME. ATTENTION."

Panel 2: The man is still sleeping. The TV shows CBS News. A speech bubble says: "MAYBE YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND... THIS IS THE CBS NEWS... WITH 'GUNGA DAN.'"

Panel 3: The man is still sleeping. The TV shows CBS News. A speech bubble says: "HEY! THIS IS LIKE THE FOURTH BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT! LISTEN UP!!"

Panel 4: The man is still sleeping. The TV shows CBS News. A speech bubble says: "AND THAT'S THE WAY I WAS TUESDAY FEBRUARY 23, 1987. CONGRATULATIONS BUSH IS WINNING!"