

# Opinion

## Robertson is perfect to continue the Reagan legacy

Ah, presidential politics. As the primaries roll past, the pace starts getting more frantic and the candidates start getting a little, well, wacky.



Sue Krenek

George Bush appropriates Bob Dole's "I'm one of you" slogan and then claims he meant it as a joke — a joke, unfortunately, that no one got.

The contenders spend more debate time perfecting their jabs than persuading their audience. In the Dallas debates, Richard Gephardt tells Albert Gore, "Lately you've been sounding more like Al Haig than Al Gore." Not to be out-snided, Gore shoots back: "That line sounds more like Richard Nixon than Richard Gephardt."

Pollsters and pundits have to wonder how this lunacy will affect voters who are trying desperately to find a potential president amidst all the squabbling.

The surprising success of Pat Robertson in the Republican primaries may convince them that the voters have decided to be as weird as the candidates. But Robertson's good showings merely demonstrate that America's voters have new priorities. Gone is the insistence on Reagan-era ideology. Americans want the Reagan-era image.

That image is, of course, based on Reagan's status as a master of the misstatement. Televised speeches or news conferences inevitably are followed by news stories "clarifying" the president's statements. Some comics have suggested Reagan establish an official Office Of The Person Who Tells You What The President Really Meant To Say.

And most of Reagan's truly tragic

quips come when he's doing what his handlers hate for him to do: shooting from the hip. Who doesn't remember the infamous "We begin bombing in five minutes" joke. Boy, what a knee-slapper.

Reagan is quite an act to follow. But he pales in comparison to the candidate who makes the foolish, shoot-off-at-the-mouth statement into an art form: Pat Robertson.

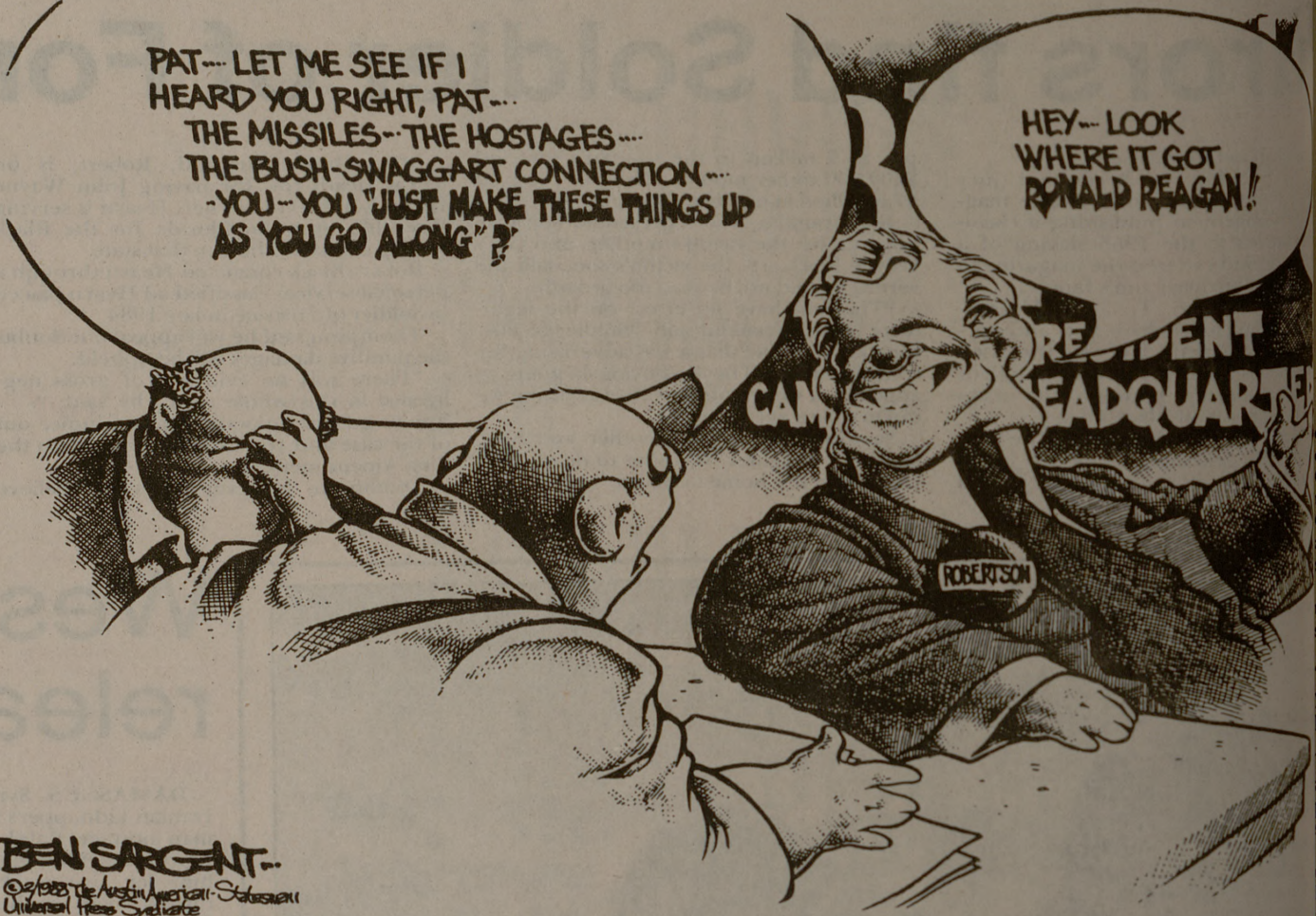
The first glimpse of Robertson's genius came when the candidate, a former television evangelist, decided he didn't want to be called a former television evangelist. Those who called him one, he declared, were religious bigots.

Next up was the assertion that there were Soviet missiles in Cuba. Washington, Havana and Robertson's campaign staffers all quickly corrected the error. But then Robertson showed his potential to outshine even Reagan. In the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the man who moves hurricanes stood by his statement.

The Gipper himself got into the act when Robertson proclaimed his CBN network had had information on the location of U.S. hostages in Lebanon. The attempt to sully the Reagan Administration's handling of the hostage issue backfired when Reagan pointed out that no one from Robertson's network ever saw fit to pass along any of this information to the government.

Still, Robertson's ever-present grin never wavered.

Until, of course, television evangelist Jimmy Swaggart's indiscretions came to light. Swaggart, who was instrumental in the downfall of PTL leader Jim Bakker, admitted to "having sinned" in some way involving a prostitute and a hotel room but no actual sex. After a year in which Jim and Tammy left PTL



BEN SARGENT  
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and Oral Roberts revealed that God is an extortionist, the Swaggart fiasco seemed like fairly tame stuff.

Except to Robertson. As a former television evangelist who doesn't want to be called a former television evangelist, he was worried that the scandal might not do much for his campaign's image. And he found it too much of a coincidence that the scandal broke right before the Super Tuesday primaries.

Who's responsible? Could it be... SATAN?? Not according to Robertson, who put the blame firmly on George Bush.

Robertson says the Bush campaign conspired to suppress evidence against Swaggart until releasing the stuff would do the most harm to Robertson. Cynics pointed out that Bush's organization is good, but not that good.

And so Robertson rolls merrily. The campaign staffer who said she's most afraid to open the paper and has it wrong. The reverend is probably the first person since P.T. Barnum to understand the philosophy that Ronald Reagan a success.

There's a sucker born every minute. Sue Krenek is a senior journalist and editor of The Battalion.

## Some preachers have all the luck

"If I had it all to do over again," Slat Grobnik said, "I think I'd have become one of those TV preachers."

I've never thought of you as having religious convictions.

"Nah, that's not why," he said.

Ah, then it's the money that interests you. All those little old ladies sending in contributions.

"Yeah, that would be OK. I like a Rolex watch and a private jet as much as the next guy. But there's something even better than that."

Such as?

"Well, I was watching this guy Jimmy Swaggart on TV, with his lips trembling and his nose running, crying his eyes out and blubbering about how he had sinned because he was with a hooker in a motel."

Yes, a sad and humiliating display.

"Sad? What was so sad about it?"

Well, the poor man had to stand up before a nationwide TV audience and confess that he had been guilty of a weakness of the flesh.

"Yeah, but then did you see what happened next?"

No, my eyes were blurred with tears of compassion.

"Then I'll tell you what happened. His wife walks over and gives him a big hug."

Yes, I do remember that.

"Well?"

Well what?

"Who do we know that ever gets a

hug from his wife when she finds out he's been messing around?"

Now that you mention it, I can't think of anyone.

"You bet you can't. If I did something like that, the only thing my wife would hug me with would be a piece of piano wire when I had my back turned."

But if you explained that you realize it was a sin and you repent, she might be understanding.

"Oh sure. Guys do that all the time. A guy comes home and the wife yells: 'My friend Gladys saw you going into the Betty Bye Motel with a hooker when you were supposed to be bowling.' And the husband says: 'Oh, Lordy, the devil made me do it. But I repent, so let us pray together. Now, what's for dinner?'"

It's possible. The devil works considerable mischief.

"Sure. Then the wife says: 'OK, you tell the judge the devil made you go to that motel. But my lawyer is going to tell the judge that I want the house, the furnishings, the car, the kids, your paycheck, and you can go get a room at the YMCA, you creep.'"

I suppose that Swaggart's wife is more understanding than most.

"Yeah, and so was Tammy. The was Tammy acted, you'd think little Jimmy had not done anything more than get caught peeking at a copy of Penthouse. Hey, you know what my wife told me after we got married?"

As I recall, she said you'd have to take more than one bath a week.

"Besides that. She said that because she loved me so much, and I was such a great guy, if she ever found out I was playing around, she'd wait until I was sleeping before she let me have it with an ice pick because she wouldn't want me to suffer."

She's always had a kindly nature.

"And remember what happened to lover boy Charlie with the skinny moustache when his wife found out about him and Pearl the waitress?"

Yes, he had that unfortunate accident.

"Accident? Who ever heard of a woman accidentally spilling a pot of hot coffee on her husband at 3 o'clock in the morning when he's in bed sleeping. And remember where she spilled it? He walked like a duck for about a year."

But you must keep in mind that these TV clergymen and their followers believe in redemption through prayer.

"Yeah, I noticed that. Jimmy and Tammy say they are praying for Swaggart, even though he blew the whistle on Jimmy. He even said little Jimmy was some kind of wart."

I believe he said that Bakker was a cancer on the body of Christ.

"Right. So if little Jimmy was a cancer, what's that make Swaggart?"

In fairness to Swaggart, he says he did not actually have sex with the harlot. He simply sat there in his jogging suit watching her do something or other.

"Okay, we'll give him credit for that. Maybe he's not a cancer, but just some kind of a peeping eye."

Fair enough. But I still think it is touching that his wife would be that forgiving. As Swaggart said of her on TV: "God never gave a man a better helpmate, a companion to stand beside him."

"Yeah, but if my wife ever catches me, I'm gonna pray that I have a wonderful helpmate, a companion to stand beside me."

And I'm sure your wife will do exactly that.

"Wife? I'm talking about a lawyer who knows the judge."

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## Mail Call

Free, free, they'll be free

EDITOR:

On Wednesday, Taylor Sealy wrote to *The Battalion* his views of the apartheid system as being justifiable because "they (blacks) will drag the country down." He asserted that America would also benefit from such an "intelligent" system. I must admit that I was quite surprised to read such deeply rooted racist remarks by way of the pen of a "good ole Ag."

Apartheid is intelligent, you claim, Mr. Sealy? So then, it is "intelligent" for a people to be economically oppressed simply because they are not of the "elite" race? Is it the "intelligent" system that financially and socially robs the majority of its inhabitants to fill the bellies, the pockets, and the egos of its greedy and hateful minority? It is "intelligent," you say, Mr. Sealy, to imprison blacks for committing the unspeakable crime of being unemployed when it is the laws of white South Africans that cause blacks to be unemployed in the first place. It is the "intelligent" system that neglects, pardon me, degrades, prostitutes and abuses the lies of more than two-thirds of its population?

I dare say, Mr. Sealy, you stand corrected. I do realize that you speak of ignorance, but the remarks you have submitted are the remarks of a paranoid racist who, like many others of your deranged mentality, reluctantly witnessed the progress of black Americans and fear the same will fall upon the system of legalized segregation and racism of South Africa. The intelligent system, sir, is one that heeds to the conscience of ALL of its citizens, not just the few who are blessed to reap the ascribed benefits of the rich ancestors, be they black or white.

The anti-apartheid efforts are not simply some "black thing." In fact, the majority of the members of Students Against Apartheid are white. Moreover, the majority of the officers of this organization are not people of color. Mr. Sealy, these activities are multicultural efforts that seek to rid the world of this devastating political monster that bleeds the world of basic freedoms and liberties.

Much to your dismay, Mr. Sealy, South Africa will one day be free.

France B. Brown Jr. '89

## Posing for porn

EDITOR:

I am writing this because I know there will be much controversy on the Playboy ad subject. So before people spend so much time writing about the opinions on the topic, why don't they think about approaching more serious topics.

Who cares if *The Batt* publishes the ad? True, I oppose any censorship completely. However, I try to keep an open mind.

Wake up, Aggies! If girls feel they have to pose for a porn mag to get noticed, pity them — but don't waste your time fighting it!

Carol Martin '90

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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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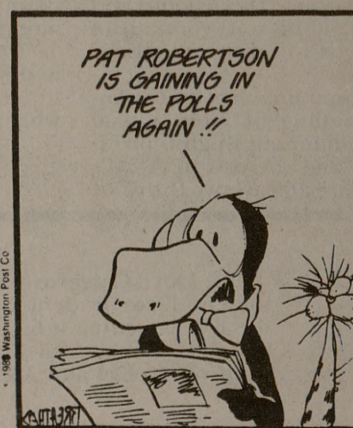
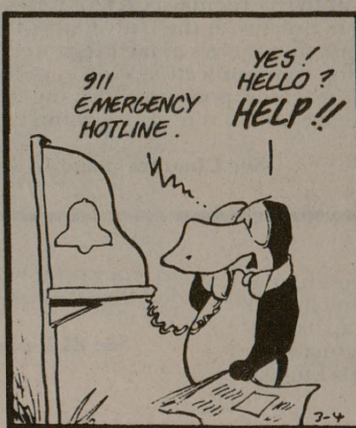
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## BLOOM COUNTY



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combined with the mature

Jenny Harstone, a freshman history major, answers the telephone at the Student Government office.

Photo by Eric Rodson