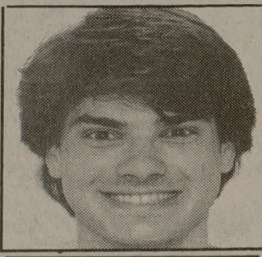


# Opinion

## Time to run — it's the New Diet Cola War

To stay fit and healthy (and to ensure that one day I will most certainly be a manly man just like my hero, Sly Stallone) I keep to a strict and rigorous diet consisting mainly of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, Nutty Bars and gallons and gallons of Classic Coca-Cola. Imagine how upset I became, then, when I learned of World War III: Return of the Cola Wars. And we all thought we were safe. HA!



Mark Nair

You see, one of the rare times I was watching TV this summer, I happened to stumble across a commercial starring the He-Man of the boxing world, Mr. 91 seconds himself — Mike Tyson. He was telling me something or other about how the fight was over before it started and et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Much to my chagrin, though, I soon found that he was NOT talking about his big fight but about the war between diet Coke and Diet Pepsi. And then the commercial hit me: in taste tests, more people prefer Diet Pepsi to diet Coke.

(Personally, give me sugary drinks anytime. I can't stand that diet stuff. Tastes like something you'd expect to find withering on the floor of Sbisla praying to be put out of its agony. I need the kind of drink where you just look at it and expect your teeth to fall out. Vanilla Coke, I loves ya.)

OK, I took the news in stride. Since I don't drink the stuff, I didn't care. But a mere thirty seconds later another commercial interrupted my glucose induced reverie. This time, Coke was the sponsor. And this time I found out that, in taste tests, more people prefer diet Coke to Diet Pepsi.

What a conundrum. What do you believe?

Now, the Coca-Cola company is asking ABC, NBC and CBS to stop running Pepsi's ads because, as Coke puts it, "... our research unequivocally confirms the taste superiority of diet Coke over Diet Pepsi." Meanwhile, Pepsi comes back with the witty retort that Coke's ads are "misleading..." (and factually inaccurate.) Pepsi, following in the footsteps of its carbonated rival, is

asking the three networks to stop running Coke's ads.

So, I, as the shopworthy and consciences consumer, am faced with a problem. If, at any time in the next few millennia, I suddenly have the urge to engorge myself on DIET anything, I will more than likely have to choose sides in the NEW! and IMPROVED! Cola Wars. But with whom do I side? Where should I pledge my allegiance? Whose survey methodology is better?

Scene: The Mall

Time: Unknown

Strange voice from behind a multi-colored, very patriotic display booth: Pssst, buddy, wanna take a taste test? Huh? Come on, be a sport."

Me, the unknowing, naive, and somewhat bemused spectator/consumer: Hmhmhmhm.

Voice: Aw, come on. Which would you rather drink, this nice, frothy, delectably delicious sample of heavenly sweetness or this completely disgusting, bordering on noxious, putrid cup of reurgitaton?

Me: I have a choice?

Voice: Oh, let's not be existential. Try one.

Me (picking up the crystal diamond-studded goblet filled with brown fizzy liquid): Hmhmhmhm.

Voice: OK, that's good. That's good. Make a note of that, Marty.

Marty (popping out from under the counter): Yeah huh.

Me: Now you want me to taste the other drink?

Voice: Well, you don't have to if you don't want to. But in all fairness...

Me: But it's in a paper cup covered with green slime.

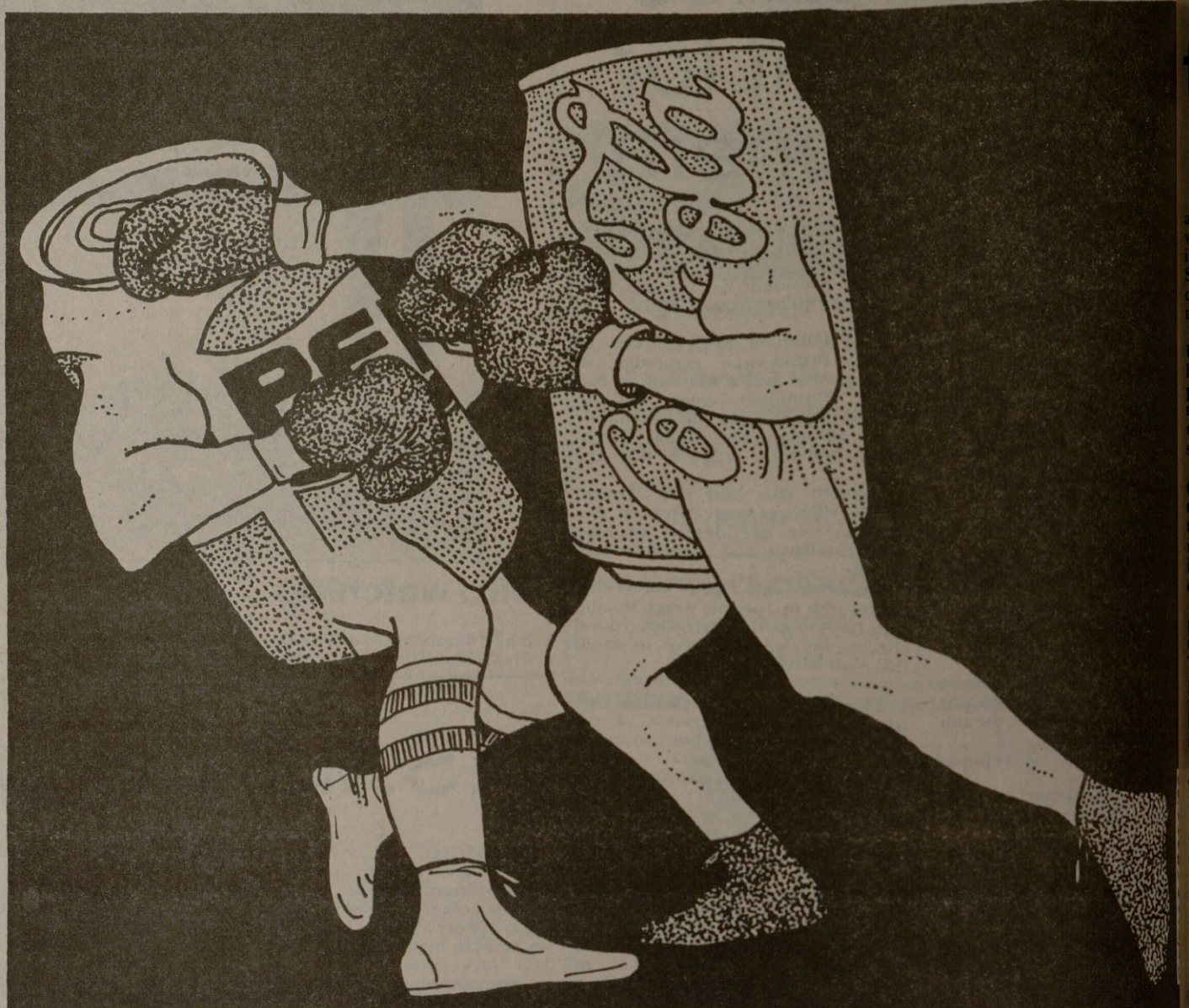
Marty: And carbuncles. Don't forget the carbuncles.

Voice: He worked very hard on those carbuncles. He's very proud.

Me: I don't want to drink anything out of a cup like that.

Voice: AH HAH! Make a note, Marty. Once again, consumers prefer the taste of (CENSORED) to (CENSORED).

Me: Hey, I didn't say that. (Mustering up all known courage, takes a drink from the carbuncle, slime covered paper cup.) Hmhmhmhm.



Voice: Don't make a note of that, Marty.

Me: I like this one. I like it better than the other.

Voice: Oh.

Marty: Oh.

Voice: Well... ah... oh, yes. You are wearing a red shirt. Today, people with red shirts cannot be included in our survey. Sorry.

Me: You can't do that.

Voice: We can do anything we want. We're (CENSORED). And now (victory

in his voice) we have proven that, indeed, more consumers who don't wear red shirts prefer the taste of...

Me (stomps off in disgust.)

Another strange voice from an almost identical multi-colored patriotic booth: Pssst, buddy. Thirsty?

Me (yelling loudly) Aaaaaah! Give me I.B.C. root beer, vanilla bean ice cream and a good M\*A\*S\*H episode or give me death!

Applause erupts from the crowd of people in the mall. Both taste test booths are overrun by irate, fed up soft drink

addicts who chant, "Root beer, root beer, give us root beer."

And then — soft drink anarchy. Beer feudalism begins. The dark age R.C. Cola and Dr. Pepper get off a running start. Everyone puts cans Coke and Pepsi in their freezers a watch them explode.

The world is permanently changing for the better.

And I, of course, am crowned king. But that's another column.

Mark Nair is a graduate student at opinion page editor for The Battalion.

## Learning our language and culture isn't a bad punishment

Most people would probably say that Judge Michael Jordan was being lenient, even compassionate, when he passed sentence on two Laotian immigrants.



Mike Royko

All he told them to do was to learn English and familiarize themselves with the culture and heritage of this country.

Last year, they whacked some guy with a tire iron when he beeped his horn after they cut him off on a Chicago expressway.

Apparently they didn't like being beeped at. So on an exit ramp they blocked the guy's car, got out and left him with a 13-stick gash in his head.

When he passed sentence last week, Judge Jordan took several unusual factors into consideration.

Both Laotians, Ching Xiong, 71, and his son, Bravo, 38, had a hard life. They're from a remote tribe. They helped our troops during the Vietnam War and were wounded. After the war, they lived in refugee camps. When they came here, they were penniless and in a society that was strange and foreign to them.

So rather than throw them in jail, which he could have done, the judge told them to learn our language and our

ways.

Now, I ask you, was he and cruel?

But that wasn't the way a Northwestern University professor say it. The professor, a neighbor of the Laotians, thought that ordering them to learn English and study American culture was terrible. As he put it: "The ultimate outrage."

As much as I respect college professors — especially those fortunate enough to teach at Northwestern, which is renowned for the beauty of its coeds — I have to disagree with his view that the sentence is "the ultimate outrage."

If the judge had thrown them into the notorious, violent Cook County Jail, insensitive inmates might have used them as volleyballs, and that would have been far more outrageous.

On the other hand, I don't believe we should demand that immigrants entirely abandon their own cultures and folkways.

For example, in his younger days, my maternal grandfather was a cavalry officer in Eastern Europe. His duties sometimes required him to gallop his horse after uppity peasants and give them a few whacks with his sword.

However, when my grandfather came to this country, he understood that he could no longer get up on a horse and whack people with a sword.

So he became a house painter. In

truth, he enjoyed riding a horse and

chasing peasants more than painting a ceiling.

Yet he didn't completely abandon every aspect of his European culture. In the old country, he drank a lot of vodka. When he came here, he drank a lot of vodka. It was not a difficult adjustment.

And even after learning to speak English, he could still swear eloquently in his native tongue. By being bilingual, he could swear at one of his fellow immigrants or at an Irish cop, and be understood by both. So he broadened his horizons.

To be honest, I'm not familiar with Laotian culture and customs. So I don't know if it is considered acceptable be-

havior to crease someone's skull with a tire iron after they beep their horn at you.

But I don't think the judge is being overly demanding when he tells Ching and his kid, Bravo, that they must learn that hitting someone with a tire iron is frowned upon here.

Nor is he unreasonable to ask that they learn English. It could help them avoid needless confusion. It's possible that they will hear a car beeping at them again. And if they can't understand English, they won't know that the other guy is saying: "Sorry, fellas, my horn has a loose wire or something."

So I think that Northwestern profes-

sor should calm down and take some positive steps, such as helping neighbors learn our customs.

I can even suggest lesson one:

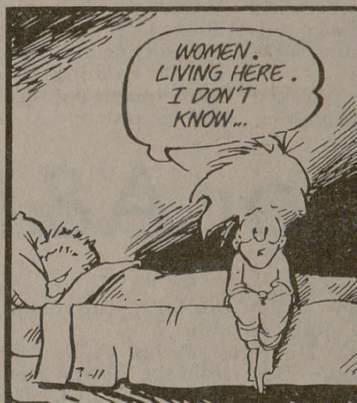
You cut someone off in traffic, angrily beeps his horn. You roll down your window, stick your arm out, extend your center finger and jab it towards sky.

Lesson two: Don't pay attention to any professor who tells you what "ultimate outrage" is.

Just wait till you income tax return audited.

Copyright 1988, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

### BLOOM COUNTY



### BLOOM COUNTY



**Personals** by Berke Breathed

**NUDE CHICKENS**  
All types, \$14.95, \$16.95 with dewlap. Mailed discreetly in plain brown paper. Must be 62 or over. 255-9886 evenings.

**WOMAN WANTED**  
To join all-male ensemble. Age 5 to 90. Should provide own liners. Must not make men look like twits. 555-43

**CLASSIC COME HOME**  
is forgiv



### The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

Member of Texas Press Association Southwest Journalism Conference

### The Battalion Editorial Board

Richard Williams, Editor  
Sue Krenek, Managing Editor  
Mark Nair, Opinion Page Editor  
Curtis Culbertson, City Editor  
Becky Weisenfels,  
Cindy Milton, News Editors  
Anthony Wilson, Sports Editor  
Jay Janner, Art Director

### Editorial Policy

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.

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.