



HEADLINE: PARTY OFFICIALS TAKE A PASTING IN FIRST CONTESTED SOVIET ELECTIONS.

## A lesson in public etiquette

When people are alone in the privacy of their own homes, bedrooms, and bathrooms, they often do things they wouldn't ever do in public.

However, some people are under the impression that the same kind of privacy is afforded in the cab of their car. I really hate to burst their proverbial bubble, but we know what you're doing in there!

When I see people like this, my first inclination is to honk and yell:

"Are you aware they make Kleenex to take care of that problem?" But I don't.

I think the reason they behave this way is because they secretly always wanted to do something socially unacceptable in a public place — but they're chicken.

So they compromise by doing something socially unacceptable in their cars, where they feel somewhat sheltered.

There are other people whose "automobile etiquette" does not necessarily include socially unacceptable behavior, but they frequently embarrass themselves anyway. This is the category to which I sometimes belong. On more than one occasion I've had friends say:

"I saw you driving to class the other day. Do you always sing in the car?"

I try not to get embarrassed about it. After all, I'm not the first person to sing along with the radio. But sometimes I get a little overzealous. If it's a really good song, I may accompany my vocals with an instrumental, usually an air guitar or drums. That's why when someone says they've seen me in my car some-



**Stephanie Stribling**  
Columnist

where, I generally request the date, time, and location of the sighting, just to be sure I wasn't in the middle of my Joan Jett imitation.

Other people do embarrassing things in their cars. Some people are on-the-road-eaters — people who end up wearing more of their lunch than they ingest. They are the ones always finding ketchup in mysterious places in their car.

Women who make a hit-or-miss effort to apply makeup using their rear-view mirror often embarrass themselves in their car. These are the ones who try my patience. I refuse to be run off the road because some woman forgot to use lip-liner before she left home. Unfortunately this phenomenon occurs with increasing frequency because cosmetics no longer belong exclusively in the feminine domain.

Another way people embarrass themselves is by blasting their car stereo at stoplights. This may not seem like an obvious embarrassment on the surface, but it is. It's a boast — not a very successful one I might add. When they crank up the stereo to 300 decibels, they're making a potent statement to those around them:

"Not only can I afford a speaker system that would hairlip the pope, my music is cool too."

Well, I'm certainly impressed.

My favorite embarrassing "automobile etiquette" is "teeth checking." The people who do this use their rear-view-mirrors to make sure they're not carrying what's left of lunch on their front grill.

Now, there may be some of you out there saying:

"I do those things in my car, but I'm not embarrassed."

I know, and your daddy is Clint Eastwood.

It takes an exceptional person to ignore being laughed at. And people will most assuredly laugh. It's like Candid Camera — the laughter is inescapable. People laugh because they're relieved it's not happening to them.

I go to great lengths to avoid being laughed at. Idling at a stoplight, I am painfully aware of my behavior. I don't eat, I don't put on makeup, and I turn down the radio. I even manage to restrain my singing. Heaven forbid someone should think I was talking to myself. I have even perfected the singing-through-your-teeth-without-moving-your-lips method when I feel the overwhelming urge to burst out in song.

I don't recommend this for everyone. If it doesn't bother you that people are laughing at you, by all means keep it up.

The rest of us could use the laugh.

*Stephanie Stribling is a senior journalism major and a columnist for The Battalion.*

## Mail Call

### New words getting out of hand

EDITOR:

Stephanie Stribling's column of March 28 struck a well-deserved blow at the maddening proliferation of new words in the English language.

In her article, however, she described the term "pro-life" as a nice-sounding substitute for "the philosophy subscribed to by individuals who harass and degrade pregnant women."

I suggest that the term "pro-choice" provides a more outrageous example of a misleading modern-day euphemism. An appropriate description of this term would be "the attitude that individuals have the right to terminate the life of (i.e. kill) an unborn child when the existence of such a child is deemed inconvenient or otherwise undesirable."

In common usage today, the term encompasses belief in the right of individuals to terminate a pregnancy well into the final trimester and the implied right to abortion on demand (for any reason).

The word "pro-choice" was obviously coined as a substitute for the messier, though more accurate and descriptive, phrase "pro-abortion." True, "pro-choice" sounds much nicer, but changing the word does not change the reality of what takes place within the cold, sterile walls of an abortion clinic.

I agree with Ms. Stribling that the invention of nice-sounding, but often misleading, new words is getting out of hand. Perhaps we ought to reverse the trend by eliminating euphemisms like "pro-choice" from our vocabularies.

Michael Merchant  
Graduate Student

### Corps Center not fair

EDITOR:

This is in response to the lead article in Tuesday's Battalion. The article mentions the Corps of Cadets Center site approval in Spence Park.

This center is going to cost \$2 million and is going to take away yet some more of our precious green space. The article fails to mention either the source of funding for this center or its function. If the center is to be paid for out of the University's general fund, building fund, or with Permanent University Fund money, I would like to know where the approximately \$34 million "Non-reg Center" is to be built. (For that is what a proportionally funded building for non-regs would cost; approx \$1,000 per student.) If, as I hope is the case, the center is funded out of private funds, aren't there better things on which our former students could spend \$2 million.

Before everybody gets too upset with me, I want you all to realize that I am not anti-Corps, in fact, I think that the Corps is vital to maintaining the A&M that we all know, both good and bad. It just seems to me and many others that the cadets get partial treatment in almost every aspects of life at our school. Call me what you will, but it seems that "the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few." But that seems to get overlooked when the few wear uniforms.

John Monroe '90

### Boycott Exxon

EDITOR:

Exxon has demonstrated a great deal of irresponsibility in dealing with the Alaskan oil spill. Their negligence has severely damaged the environment and has crippled U.S. fishing industries. Hopefully, it will hurt Exxon, too.

The oil has spread over 600 miles across one of the nation's most productive fishing regions. It is a major threat to all marine wildlife including whales, dolphins and birds. The oil is washing up onto beaches and has been blown into the tops of trees. Cleanup procedures have been slow and ineffective, and the oil is continuing to spread.

Every couple of years, someone dumps oil into the ocean, destroying the ecosystem, killing wildlife and destroying industries. This is the biggest in U.S. history. Something needs to be done to prevent future assaults on the environment.

One thing we can do is write Congress about legislation regarding oil transportation and accidents. There needs to be a detailed plan of action to control the spread of such a spill. There were not enough trained personnel to respond to the situation, and there were no barges or booms to contain the slick. The ship was not double-hulled. Also, Exxon needs to hire responsible captains and allow only skilled navigators to drive the ship.

I would like to suggest boycotting Exxon gas and products. A local boycott may seem ineffective, but it may spark a communitywide or even statewide awareness. More than hurting them financially, a boycott would affect Exxon's public image. Perhaps this would help prevent future disasters.

Sean Bush '92

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.

## Women can play golf, too — just not at this club

SOMEWHERE IN SOUTH FLORIDA — There is this place. I can't tell you the name of it or exactly where it is, but there is this place in South Florida where they have figured out the problem of women on the golf course.

I don't have any problem with women playing a little golf occasionally, but I always have thought it would be better if women had their golf courses and men had theirs.

Before I catch the wrath of the female golfing populace, allow me to say upfront there are women who are much better golfers than I am.

**Lewis Grizzard**  
Columnist

But about this place. The reason I'm not going to put a name or location on it is that some flared-nostril feminist might read this and decide to file suit and I might never be invited back as a guest.

Quite obviously, the place is a golf club. But not only are women forbidden from playing the course — under any

circumstances whatsoever — they aren't even allowed on the grounds except once a year.

For the annual Christmas party.

Phone calls from women are even discouraged.

"And you can play gin rummy naked," a member explained to me.

I'm not certain I'd want to play gin rummy naked, but I saw the member's point.

There aren't any women within miles of the club, so you're safe to belch or curse or make funny noises with your armpit or, if you so desire, play gin

rummy naked.

"When will men ever grow up and get over things such as this?" flared-nostril women readers perhaps are saying.

Most of us never will because of the Treehouse Syndrome. When men are boys, they build treehouses, or other assorted edifices, in order to have a secret place to go with their friends where there aren't any girls to tell them how stupid they are.

We need this getaway all our lives in order to gather our wits and share the goodness that is brotherhood. And play gin rummy naked if we

want to.

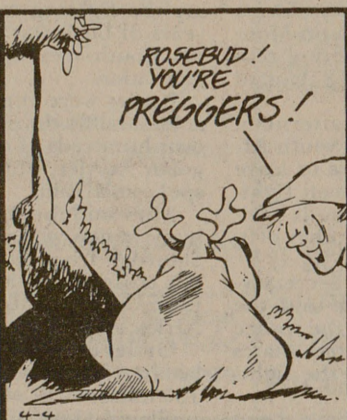
Men have given up so much of what was once their exclusive space as it is. And some of it we needed to share. Like boardrooms and mastheads and offices on the top floors.

But at this club, at least, men have drawn the line at golf.

"What I like most about this club," said a friend who was also a guest, "is there aren't even any ladies' tees. You can hit from all the way up front and not feel like a wimp."

Indeed.  
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## BLOOM COUNTY



by Berke Breathed

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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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