

Americans modify Ten Commandments

Rationalization of actions becomes commonplace

As intelligent human beings, we realize the importance of re-evaluating concepts which have been around for years. Consequently, people took a closer look at the Ten Commandments and modified them to fit the 90s.

To the one that says "no stealing," we wisely added "unless nobody is using what you desire."

Dare leave your wallet or your backpack at some unprotected area, and you will soon find out today's commandment is "finders, keepers."

"No murdering," another commandment proclaims. Even though we have not yet reached the point of running around killing everybody in our way, the United States does have the highest homicide rate in the developed world. There's something to be proud of!

Thousands of years ago, God commanded: "Tell them Moses! They are to have no other Gods!"

Sure enough, we had to find something new to believe in. After all, this is the land where new is worshipped.

So we came up with a new God, a God that is much closer to us, one that gives instant gratification — a good time right here on earth.

This God is called Money, and the Money cult is quickly spreading around the world.

The commandment about not bearing "false witness" also has been modified. We see nothing wrong with lying today.

As a matter of fact, 91 percent of us lie regularly. And the majority of us believe it's OK to lie to protect our own interests.

As for using God's name in vain, this is completely passe'. The expres-

sion "Oh! My God!" is interwoven in our speech patterns.

We will swear to God about something while we know we are lying, and two-thirds of us think there's nothing wrong with it.

For all these sins, God ordered a day of prayer and meditation, the Sabbath. But even though 90 percent of us believe God exists, still 50 percent of us have not been to a religious service in 3 months, 33 percent of us have not been to a religious service in a year, and a strong 77 percent of us see no point in observing Sabbath.

We either use it to work or to have fun using our new Money god. Who needs prayer and meditation!

In the United States of the 90s, we don't hate our neighbors, but we cer-

tainly don't love them either.

With 72 percent of us not even knowing the people next door, how can we be expected to love them?

"Honor your parents" is a commandment we follow at least for the years our parents provide us with financial assistance.

Once they are old, however, and they need us the most, only 54 percent of us think they are our responsibility.

The rest of us think our parents are the responsibility of the government, the community or charitable institutions.

The "no adultery" commandment has also gone out of fashion. In today's world, it is OK to have extra-marital affairs as long as the spouse doesn't find out about them.

For the unfortunate incidents when the spouse finds out, we have devised elaborate rituals of repentance accentuated by tearful requests for forgiveness.

Once forgiveness is granted, a brief period of wooing and cooing follows, while on the side we are looking for our new affair partner.

The realization "everybody else does it too" helps us accept this behavior.

Therefore 31 percent of all married couples have had an affair. And of these, 62 percent think there's nothing wrong with the affairs they are having or have had.

Related to the anti-adultery commandment is the one prohibiting going after your neighbor's wife/husband.

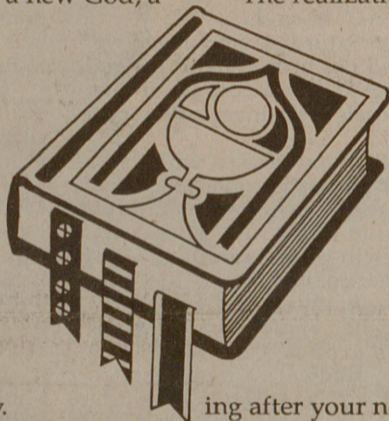
Sadly for Moses, 15 percent of adultery committed is with a friend of a spouse.

We figure "friends are for sharing."



Christina Maimarides

Maimarides is a graduate student in business administration.



"Surveys show that only 13 percent of us believe in the original Ten Commandments. The majority of us are receptive to change. It is no surprise, therefore, that we took the Ten Commandments, examined them under the light of the 90s and modified them accordingly to better suit today's world."

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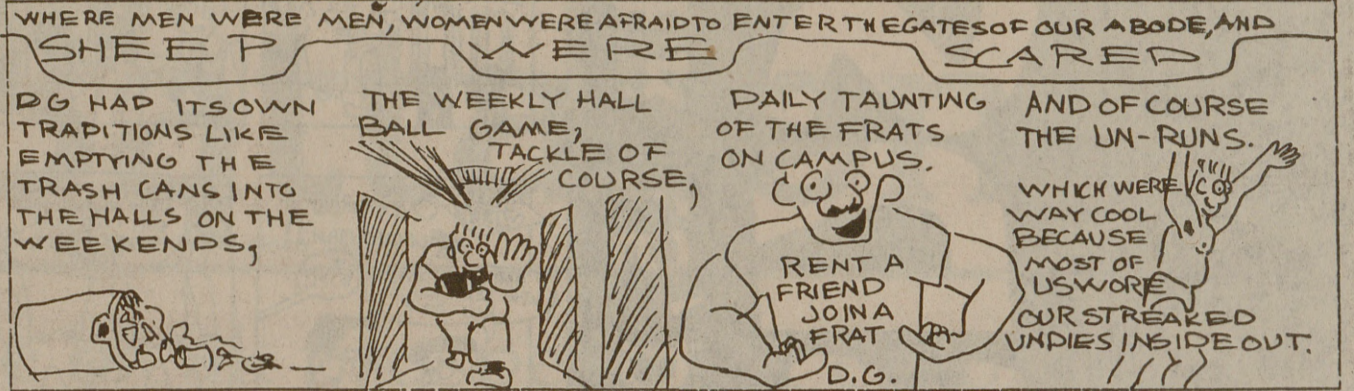
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Davis-Gary, The Olde Years

by Bingo Barnes



Hunting serves ecological function

Humans retain instincts

Recently, I have been amused about some letters regarding the shooting of pigeons and hunting in general. Like all columnists, I fear that there has been a misunderstanding and I am come to set everyone straight on this and related issues.

A few years back, I was managing an historical restoration project in El Paso. It was a large beautiful building downtown, it was horribly neglected and plagued with pigeons. Pigeons are the second nastiest creatures (next to humans) that I am aware of.

They tell me buzzards and vultures vomit for a living but I've never seen it nor have they ever done it on my car or my house or my shoulder or my construction project.

They're gross. So I called the local humane society to find out how to get them off of my building. They informed me they knew of nothing but some mild deterrents and they recommended a birdseed cocktail laced with arsenic. It was gross too, although only for a month or so until every pigeon in El Paso and Juarez that was born or raised in my block was exterminated.

Juarez and El Paso are home to skidillions of pigeons. The local authorities are aware of it and authorized me to take whatever measures I thought most appropriate. I suppose I could have killed millions by seeding the plazas and parks (it would have been gory indeed) but because they're territorial, I was satisfied with just cleaning up that one block.

I see no problem whatsoever in using captured pigeons for target practice. It's considerably more humane than arsenic. Plucking the heads from the undead is also normal and humane. While I am one of those who prefers to eat what I kill, I must confess in this same breath that I rarely eat snakes — mice and bugs never.

Shooting trap and skeet and other targets is fun. Live animals are even more challenging and fun. There are very sound, well thought out, ecological reasons for hunting seasons and bag limits and such. Dove are among the toughest to shoot (pigeons are a lot like dove) and if you're lucky and a good shot, you get home with

groceries from the outing.

Darwin would really be proud of pigeons. I don't know where the little devils used to live before we invented towns, but they have since learned to thrive on the garbage that humans generate in such abundance. That's why they aren't generally eaten.

I almost never see them out in the wild and I spend lots of time out there. There's no place I'd rather be ... but they don't offer degrees out there unfortunately. Many more generations have made their living by their hunting than by studying literature or economics. It is the nature of our species. Just look at our teeth. Only a fool disavows the past.

It's a mistake to assume we (as a species) have outgrown our instincts and our heritage. Concepts like society and civilization and refinement are anthropologically recent and a thin veneer over our true animal nature.

Take a look at Saddam Hussein, Hitler, Stalin and other well-publicized mass murderers. Surely morals and ethics and standards are something we need to work on, but not because they are natural. It is because they are foreign to our animal natures. Many among us have had the misfortune of visiting their raging primitive sides and while I sincerely hope never to dwell there again, it is nevertheless completely real.

I am clearly an animal. I eat like one, breathe like one, fart like one, copulate like one, sleep like one ... Should my children be threatened, I assure you I can attack like one. A varmint among my babies will be tried and convicted (instinctively), sentenced (as quickly as possible, by me, their only relevant peer) and deterred from their unacceptable ways for ever and ever (amen).

It's a funny state of affairs we have created. We've destroyed most of the predators because losing livestock (and the occasional small child) is so offensive to us. At the same time, various narrow-minded groups want to interfere with any additional hunting. My advice to those who are offended is don't hunt, or fish or buy bug bombs.

Still the nastiest creatures thrive. Weird.

Reader's Opinion

Joe Huddleston is a senior economics major.

Mail Call

Protect victim from publicity

As a close personal friend of someone who knows "too much" of the cavalry incident and its effects, I am at the same time close enough to the situation to respond publicly without directly appearing to represent anyone or any organization involved in the horrible incident.

It is very frustrating for us all to hear about something as unacceptable as a young lady attacked by young men.

We are left with feelings of anger, disbelief and insecurity. It is very natural to look for an "aggressor" (in general, since we cannot know the specific individuals themselves) at whom or which to direct our feelings.

But now is not the time for finger-pointing or blame toward people or organizations which are trying very hard to figure out exactly what happened and what must be changed in order to make sure this never happens again, all the while protecting a very frightened young lady, the victim herself.

Now is the time for us all to try to put away our baseball bats of our natural self-defensive "let's go beat some heads" instinct and instead concentrate on supporting as much as possible the victim and the organizations (A&M University, University police and the Commandant's Office) which are trying to figure out what is the best course of action.

Instead of being suspi-

cious of their silence toward the press and general public, we should support their quiet thoroughness since it will take time before they have enough information to make intelligent, informed decisions.

Last, but perhaps most important, we must remember that none of us knows how the victim feels.

We can only support those we are able to and pray to our God for His intercession and guidance for all those involved.

Rachael A. Colvin '90

Hunting similar to shopping

I am writing in response to Eddy Wylie's letter on hunting in the Sept. 23 issue of The Battalion. Hunting is indeed a time-honored tradition.

Mankind has hunted to sustain himself since the beginning of time, although these days you no longer have to pick up your spear to get a Big Mac.

Assuming Wylie is not a vegetarian, where does his meat come

from?

He walks in the store, picks out some steaks, pays his money and presto! Dinner is served. Hunting is no different. Just because you don't have to watch the cow die doesn't make it more "moral" than shooting a deer for venison stew.

Man's true instincts? How did primitive man eat then? Was Neanderthal man a vegetarian?

As opposed to his point, hunting (if done ethically and properly) can be very aesthetic and enjoyable. And if Wylie has really been hunting, he should know that.

Of course, just as obsession and lust is love gone bad, hunting can be twisted into "killing."

Certainly there are no aesthetics involved in walking into the woods with a shotgun and shooting everything you see just to kill it. This, I believe, is terrible and wasteful.

Unfortunately, this is also what so many young hunters are inclined to do. And you are right Wylie, this is immature and ugly.

But to enjoy nature at its finest, to watch the sunrise from a frosty duck blind, to reflect upon the finer things in life while waiting for your shot, to test your skills against the wild, surely this is not wrong.

Perhaps it seems shooting an animal dead is a terrible sin, but it is no more evil than killing a chicken or a fish, if you intend to eat it. If you hunt in good company, if you kill what you shoot, and if you eat what you kill, then hunting is not wrong.

Dave Thomas '93 accompanied by four signatures

Have an opinion? Express it!

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The Battalion reserves the right to edit all letters for length, style and accuracy. There is no guarantee letters will appear.

Letters may be brought to 013 Reed McDonald, sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111 or can be faxed to 845-5408.



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"I am not a crook!"