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EDITORIAL

Face the challenge

UH student wasting court's time

Upon entering college, students who cannot perform academically in certain areas should be able and expected to learn how while they are there. That has always been a simple goal of higher education ... and kindergarten.

But University of Houston student Jennifer Silverman disagrees. She cannot understand college level math, and she isn't hiring a private tutor. She's suing UH and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Silverman, who is 30 hours away from a journalism degree, failed the math portion of the Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP) test because, she says, she has been diagnosed with dyscalculia — a learning disability which can cause a student to have trouble with arithmetic beyond simple math.

Silverman says she is a victim of discrimination and argues that the Americans with Disabilities Act should protect her right to graduate without taking math.

Students with learning disabilities in larger universities are offered alternative ways to learn and understand challenging materials. They require extra help, and they accept a greater challenge, but they never try to escape without learning the material.

How can anyone expect to earn a degree without taking math? A student who picks a university over a trade school or specialized college is expected to receive a well-rounded, "universal" education.

Silverman does deserve credit for being so creative in her efforts to get through UH. Last year she published a magazine article in which she described her experiences as a topless dancer. She used her \$250 a night to pay her way through college. But this most recent creative survival technique is ridiculous and a waste of the court's time.

Universities should not drastically change academic requirements to accommodate students who are weak in certain areas. It is the students who should change their choice of schools if they don't feel up to the requirements. And isn't college a time when students should challenge themselves to overcome their educational weaknesses?

Just who was the genius that said that? Contrary to old cliché, love and war anything but fair

All's fair in love and war. I don't really know how old this saying is, but whoever uttered it first was dead wrong. Webster's defines "fair" as being just and according to the rules, and it is with this definition that a contradiction begins. I'll start with Love because it's more fun than War.



FRANK STANFORD Columnist

"Lust," "lovers," "mine" and "partners" are all words that connote what I'll call "soap opera love." This is sometimes a slightly cheapened version of love — regardless of whether or not the relationship in question contains actual "true love." For our purposes however, true love will remain only theoretical.

Any of you who have been in some form of relationship with a member of whatever sex you're into, perhaps even as far back as elementary school, are aware of at least some of the basic unwritten rules of romance. These rules are important because without them there would be no scale on which to judge fairness. Although unwritten, "love rules" are still quite universal, and considered to be somewhat official.

These rules are numerous and range from "Don't have an affair or even glance favorably toward your honey's roommate, friend or sibling" to "Don't say anything that could ever be misconstrued or used against you later."

(This rule's very existence is unfair because of impossible avoidance.)

I don't happen to have my statistics handy, but it seems females tend to act in more of a judicial capacity than men regarding these rules of love. This is probably a good thing, because women seem to be so adept at the legislative aspect of the rules as well. As a result, most men in relationships are lucky enough to learn new legislation each and every day. It's a bit like law school, I think.

Now according to definition, adherence to all of these rules — especially the fidelity ones — qualifies a person as being "fair." But even if both individuals are fair and abide by the rules, one may lose feeling for the other and justly terminate the relationship. Although both people acted fairly, the saddened person has received an unfair outcome.

So, from complete and total fairness may come unfairness, and this is contradictory. The saying "All's fair in love ..." is also incorrect because in order for "all" (everything) to be fair, there would have to be no rules to break, and this is clearly not the case. Therefore, there is no way to understand love.

Are you people catching all of this? Have I finally lost my mind?

Well, lost mind or not, the issue of fairness in war looms before us. The statement, "All's fair in ... war" implies there are no rules in battle. This is very untrue. Along with ruthless slaughter and seemingly reckless abandon, war tends to follow both written and unwritten laws.

I assume most everyone is somewhat familiar with the Geneva Convention. In sim-

plest terms, a bunch of guys got together and wrote some rules for the game of war. Don't shoot medics. Cease-fire on ejecting parachutists — blast away on armed paratroopers. And don't steal your POWs' boots, to name a few. The Convention was extensive and included many other provisions, all of which concerned the guidelines of war.

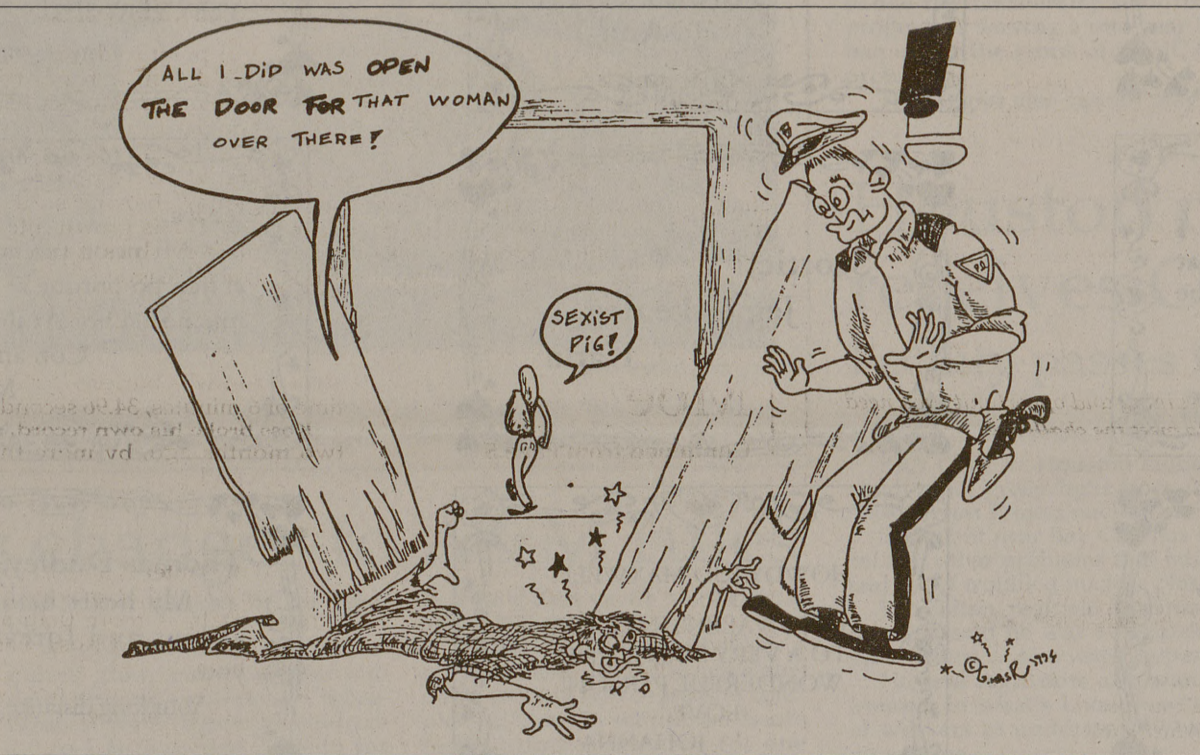
So — using Webster's definition of fairness — if both sides of a war recognize and remain in accordance with the rules, we have ourselves a "fair" war. If the rules are violated, perpetrators are arrested and tried for "war crimes."

This term means is that if a soldier gets up in the morning and has a long hard day dismembering and killing enemy soldiers with grenades, bullets and bayonets, he is playing by the rules, and all those enemy grunts have "fairly" lost eyes, limbs and lives. On his way home, our boy purposely runs over and kills an unarmed enemy soldier, and "A Current Affair" gets it all on tape. After legally killing men all day, he is suddenly a criminal.

Although this scenario is a little far-fetched, the point is that a dead man is still dead. Whether rules are followed or not — a "fair" war or not — he is still dead. After learning of recent heinous occurrences in battle-torn Bosnia and being aware of the Serbian political rationale behind the fighting, I find there's just no way to really understand war.

I also find there's just no way to really understand love.

Frank Stanford is a graduate philosophy student



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Gather 'round kids! It's Valentine's Day with Uncle Cappy

Now, boys and girls, it's time for Uncle Cappy's Playhouse. Today's story is "A Very Special Love."

Once upon a time, in a land far away, there lived Edward and Penelope. The two were very much in love and could not stand to be apart from each other. They spent every day playing games, riding horses or sitting by the shallow brook talking.

One day as they were walking through the town square, Edward noticed a crowd of people standing around a man in very fine clothing.

"I have been sent here by King John to ask a favor of you good people," the messenger shouted. "It seems our arch enemy

to the east has kidnapped the lovely Princess Jacqueline. The king is asking that every healthy man that hears this message go and fight for the safe return of the princess."

"I'll go," a burly man shouted as he made his way to the front.

"The king assures me that all members of his royal army will be paid handsomely," the messenger shouted.

A whole chorus of men then pushed their way through the crowd to sign up. Others followed until almost every man was a soldier.

"Penelope, my darling," Edward said, "I think it would be best if I joined."

"But I won't be able to live without you," Penelope replied. "I beg you not to go."

"It would be a good thing for us, Penelope. We need money so that we can continue to live the way we are. We must not become beggars."

"I guess it is for the best but it still breaks my heart to see you go."

"Remember my love, I will be back. Never stop believing that one day you will

see my face again."

Edward then joined the other men as they began their journey east to fight for Princess Jacqueline. After three days and nights of traveling, they came upon a hill overlooking the castle where the princess was being kept. They were joined there by men from all over the kingdom hoping to rescue Jacqueline.

The next day, King John's royal army

"Remember my love, I will be back. Never stop believing that one day you will see my face again."

— Edward, young lover

launched an attack, but was soundly defeated before it could reach the castle. Hundreds of soldiers died on the battlefield while the rest retreated.

As soldiers began to return home and

tell stories of the battle, Penelope began to weep. All that survived had returned home, but her Edward was not among them. Instead, a badly wounded Edward had found his way to the home of a kind old woman. It took him five years to be nursed back to health and in return he worked the old woman's crops for another ten. Every night he fell asleep thinking of his lovely Penelope.

As Edward prepared to leave for his trip home, the old woman told him that Princess Jacqueline was still being held captive in a cottage not far from her home.

After following the woman's directions, Edward sneaked past the guards and rescued Jacqueline. After five days the princess was safely returned to her father.

The king was so happy he offered his daughter's hand in marriage, promising Edward that he would one day become king.

"I am very flattered your majesty, but I cannot marry the princess," Edward apologized. "I have only one true love, and her name is Penelope."

Edward then went on to explain how

and he and Penelope felt about each other. The king was so touched he gave Edward enough money to last ten lifetimes.

The next day Edward left to find Penelope. When he arrived at the town square, he immediately saw his love and called to her.

"Penelope," Edward shouted, running towards her.

"Edward," Penelope screamed, seeing Edward coming towards her.

Meeting in the middle of the street, the two lovers hugged and kissed for what seemed an eternity.

"Penelope, I love you. I'm sorry I've been gone for so long, but I now have enough money for us to get married."

"I never lost faith in you, Edward. I just knew that you would return."

Edward quickly grabbed Penelope for another long kiss. Then they were killed by a runaway ox cart.

The moral of this story? Never turn down a chance to be king, even for love.

Dave Winder is a sophomore journalism major

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MAIL CALL
1994

Civilians should show respect for flag

For those of you who frequently walk to or from the Commons area in the early morning or late afternoon, you may have noticed a small block of cadets headed to and from the Systems Building, carrying nine American Colors with them. There is not a cadet in the Corps that hasn't helped care for the flags by taking part in "flag detail."

Etiquette around the Stars and Stripes

for military personnel is highly regulated — however, for civilians, actions are at the discretion of the individual. I bring this up because as I was part of the detail assigned to secure the flags back in the Quad one evening, a rowdy group of 30 to 40 non-reg men passed us on the sidewalk. Most did not pay much attention; others decided to shout out insults aimed at the "Corps turds" marching to their mindless cadence. To these men: your opinion of the Corps is yours and you have a right to it. I do not have a problem with that. But to act so disrespectfully towards people as they carry the colors of

your country is inexcusable.

Flag detail is a dignity that I and my compatriots are honored to bear; please acknowledge that. Almost half of those cadets will go on to serve. Some may even fight in a war and die for others' freedom; this includes myself. I do not care to give my life to those who do not bother to understand why, or could care less.

Before I leave the Corps, I want to give one tip to the student body. If ever you come across the detail bearing the Colors, or a formation on the Quad as the Corps is saluting, simply stop where you are. And as a sign of extra reverence, hold your hand over your heart. It may not be convenient, or even "cool," but try to understand why it is correct.

Chad Kirchner
Class of '95

Accompanied by 155 signatures

Persuasive argument alters reader's view

I am writing in response to the pro-con in the Feb. 4 issue of The Battalion. I personally have a deep respect for the South, so I was expecting to agree with Robbins' pro argument. However, I was surprised when I read both articles. I personally found Stokes much more valid and persuasive. She examined both viewpoints, conceded the validity of the opposing argument, and made me more closely examine my viewpoint. I do not think the Confederate flag should be taken away, but I can now see how some African-Americans would be offended. It appeared to me that all she wanted through her article was not to ban the flag totally, just to remove it from public places. The flag, like any other, is a piece of history, not a symbol to be displayed everywhere.

Robbins, however, felt it was necessary to defend the Confederate by defaming other historic American flags. He brings up the instances of American hostility and brutality both during the War Between the States and toward American-Indians. Apparently Robbins does not realize that those flags are no longer flying over our country.

No one is saying that the United States' history is perfect, but symbols should not be held up to remind us all of our forefathers' mistakes. We as the future generation have a responsibility to make life as decent and comfortable for everyone that lives around us. It seems to me that only displaying the "Stars and Bars" in private is a way to be considerate, nothing else. I would like to complement Stokes on opening my eyes to her view through her very persuasive article.

Christopher D. Scheer
Class of '97