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MAIL CALL

Reporters include opinions in news

Regarding Jon Apgar's Oct. 15 column "Media stereotyping shows irresponsibility":

Anybody who believes that a front page news story is incapable of conveying opinions should purchase a copy each of The Washington Times and The Washington Post on the same day and compare.

Similar words arranged differently while stating the same facts can have startlingly different implications.

As often as not these nuances result directly from the perspective of the reporter.

Whether most reporters are liberal or conservative is up to debate. Hopefully someday a Gallup Poll will settle the question.

To assume that a reporter's ideology cannot influence the direction of a news story, however, is naive.

Jon S. Beeler
Graduate student

Biases inserted in choice of wording

Regarding Jon Apgar's Oct. 15 column, "Media stereotyping shows irresponsibility":

Suppose Bill Clinton and Bob Dole were to be the only two participants in a 100-meter race, and Clinton won.

If I told you that Dole came in second and that Clinton came in next-to-last, I would be reporting with a bias. Even though I told the truth and nothing but the truth, I didn't tell the whole truth.

According to Apgar, conservatives tell you the media is liberally biased and will offer as proof editorials, reports of misdeeds by government officials, and awkward questions asked of Republicans.

This may be true of some conservatives, but all that is really needed to demonstrate media bias is their tendency to leave our important facts that don't agree with their world view.

One example of this is the tendency of the media to report over and over how the deficit went up in the '80s, proving that Reagan's tax cuts were a bad idea.

What they leave out is that revenue actually went up — way up. The deficit increase was due to out-of-control federal spending — whoever you wish to blame for this.

This phenomenon is not confined to the op-ed page, either. There are many other examples, but I believe this one makes the point.

Jason Knott
Class of '00

Foul mouths won't improve professors

Regarding H.L. Baxter's Oct. 16 column, "Foul language will animate boring class":

I am certain that there are many people out there who find foul language to be an excellent outlet for stress and frustration. This is a far cry, however, from incorporating it into our everyday vocabulary.

I curse quite often myself, but I have the self-control and tact to limit my vocal outbursts to situations and surroundings that are appropriate.

The classroom is not an appropriate setting.

Baxter does concede that there are situations where curse words should not be used, such as a professional setting like a board meeting.

Why is it OK, then, to use it in a classroom?

If he does not consider this professional environment, then he had better re-evaluate his motives for going to college.

Baxter claims that foul language is the savior of education and will make lectures less boring.

Some professors are not good lecturers, but I guarantee that presentation and articulation are the keys to successful lectures — not cursing.

He accuses professors of being bypassed by contemporary language.

If that is what "contemporary language" has come to, then I commend them for having the fortitude to maintain common decency.

I find Baxter's "free-love" attitude toward classroom lectures distasteful and disrespectful.

Jim Dick
Class of

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. **Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class, and phone number.**

The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to:

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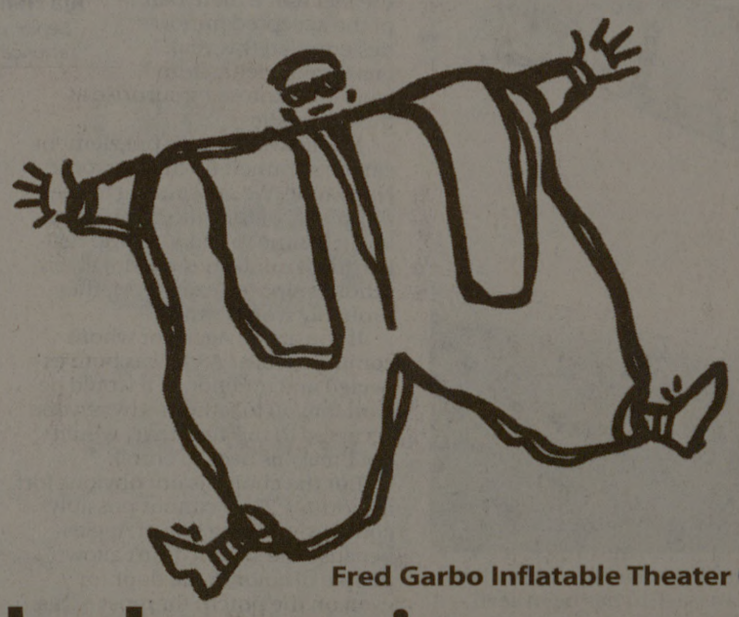

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