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# THE BATTALION OPINION

## The Monthly Visitor Men make menstruation taboo topic

Oops! That's not a pen. And a Tampax product doesn't exactly write well. So often women suffer the embarrassment of mistakenly pulling out feminine hygiene products in public.

But why all the red faces and hot flashes? Because "the curse" is a taboo subject toward which men's attitudes are "see no evil, hear no evil." The subject has become hush-hush between the sexes.

Women are wrongly embarrassed about their periods because men act so disgusted by it. Granted, there are certain situations in which speaking of any private bodily function would be inappropriate, so women must use their best judgment. But in casual situations, girls should not be made to feel embarrassed about their monthly cycle.

Men — or, in this situation, boys — should grow up. Perhaps if they understood some details about menstruation, they would realize how hypocritical it is for them to label it as disgusting.

Everybody knows "Aunt Flow" visits women once a month. Yet every 28 days, boys act as if women are infected with some venereal disease. When a woman mentions she has cramps, boys cringe and respond, "Ooh. Too much information."

Even as this column was under construction, another female staffer mentioned she didn't use tampons. The Batt boys shrugged, squinted and a couple exclaimed, "More information than I needed to know."

Furthermore, boys can't even look at feminine hygiene products without covering. The almighty tampon is more powerful than an assault weapon. Supposedly, it's not the actual product, but rather the idea of how it is used. To boys, the thought is revolting.

However, they can freely "adjust" themselves, watch television with their hands down their pants and pick up a magazine and head for a twenty minute venture in the bathroom. They can burp, scratch, gawk at dirty movies and magazines — and no one says a thing. It's normal.

But should a woman mention it's "that time of the month," boys are thoroughly grossed out. Please. Boys constantly hawk loogies. That's gross.

However, boys obviously have this mental picture of blood gushing like a stuck pig because they constantly remark, "Thank goodness I'm not a woman."

Specifically, senior David Taylor said, "I'd rather be an outie than an innie."  
But to us "innies," menstruation is merely a fact of life — similar to a headache. It's natural, it's going to happen and a few pain killers will usually solve the problem. And — surprise — it's extremely neat and clean thanks to cotton, cardboard/plastic, and dry weave. Plus, menstruation is rather reassuring; it lets women know that everything is A-OK, giving them an edge over men.

Aside from the ability to control the human population, women can get out of almost any situation of which a male is in charge simply by bringing up anything to do with their period. Usually women don't even have to finish: "Uh," (boy holds hand up motioning to stop), "that's fine."

Women can even get out of potentially dangerous or regretful situations. When a boy continues to sexually pressure a girl to go further, all she must do is grab his hand, open her eyes widely and say, "I think you'd better stop ... for your own good." Suddenly, the excitement dies and the boy's body goes limp, as if it is contagious.

Now, for the boys who from this point on will question a woman when she says this, don't partake in the trial and error process. One thing or another motivated a woman enough to use this excuse, and that should be enough.

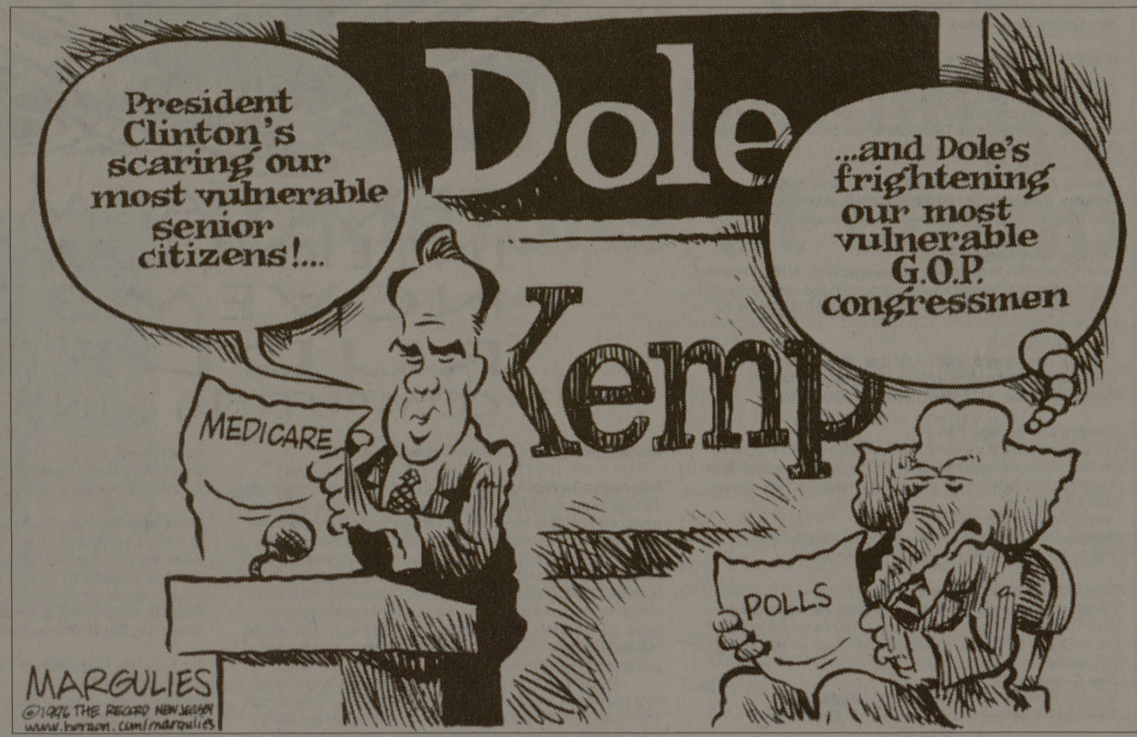
On this serious note, the question is now raised as to whether or not it is beneficial that the topic of menstruation is so taboo. Would it be a good thing if boys were to grow up and stop behaving so hypocritically? Yes. If they did, women wouldn't be made to feel embarrassed about their period and they wouldn't need to use menstruation as a sexual obstruction. Then maybe everyone could speak without using as many euphemisms about menstruation as did this bloody column.

Then again, this might be a futile argument. That's all right, though — I'm suffering from PMS.

Assistant  
Opinion Editor



Erin Fitzgerald  
Senior political science  
and English major



## MAIL CALL

### Argument about rivalries ignorant

Regarding David Boldt's Oct. 30 column, "Mean-spirited rivalries block understanding":

Boldt suggests that we interpret rivalries between various campus groups — such as those he terms "the Corps," "Aggie Band," "Greeks," and "non-regs" — in terms of "brothers" who are "making fun" of each other; he claims, "It's not personal."

But Boldt's potentially positive message is tainted when he grounds such camaraderie in animosity toward the University of Texas: "These groups may harass each other, but see what happens if some t-sip messes with a guy wearing an Aggie ring ..."

In short, Boldt intimates that Aggies are united only by mutual dislike for a different university, but is this true? Moreover, how can Boldt consistently maintain that "looking down on someone because they don't have the same experiences is ignorant" when it comes to other Aggies, but not when it comes to students of other universities?

Given Boldt's argument, isn't it a mistake to look down upon or exclude UT students simply because they have different experiences? Why shouldn't one imbue the Aggie/UT relationship with the same meaning Boldt discerns among different Aggie student groups?

Michael W. Allen  
Graduate Student

masses. Religion is not a commodity. The church is not a business. The Church does not cater to society and is not governed by its whims. A "user-friendly" Church would not be a moral guidepost; the quicksilver morals of such a church could be made to justify anything.

The Church is not above criticism, and has been wrong on multiple occasions before. However, an honest appraisal will show that most of the time, it has been above the latest trends, and that is why it has lasted for time immemorial. When the Church begins catering to its followers it will no longer be a religious institution. It will simply become a hollow shell of lies, without belief, rotting from within.

Chris Huffines  
Class of '00

I am a Catholic, but I do not consider myself a "customer" of the Church, nor do I expect to be treated as such. Why would anyone place faith in an institution that continuously "catered" to the whims of every generation?

The Church has, for some time now, allowed for belief in evolution. That is why it is taught in parochial schools, so I'm not sure I get the point of the article. As for the Church's praise for women who stay home to raise their children, is that such a bad thing? Last I looked, society wasn't exactly in top form, and maybe this has to do with the rise in the number of children being raised by day-care centers.

There are no women priests because Christ didn't set up the Church that way, and the Pope cannot change a rule because he feels like it.

The world has always been "ever-changing" and the Church has maintained itself fine. If Pace doesn't have the same beliefs, then she can join another church. But do not criticize Catholics for theirs.

God made the rules and the Pope is there to reinforce them. He is, however, human, and does not hold the power to go around changing rules just because a few people decide the rules aren't modern enough. Without stability and a strong hold on its beliefs, the Church loses respect and faith in its teachings, and that is what loses "customers."

Jennie Whitman  
Class of '99

If the purpose of Pace's column was to upset every Catholic Aggie on campus ... then congratulations. But, if she was trying to say something about the Church and explain the Pope's statement, then it would have been nice if she had spoken with a knowledgeable Catholic during her research.

First, the Pope, in a statement to the Catholic Sciences Council, said that theories of evolution may be more than a

hypothesis and that they can be useful in education.

Basically, he edited the statement of Pope Edward VII, who said that evolution was a hypothesis. In no way did the Pope endorse evolution. The Church has always held that God gave man a soul and therefore life. This position was unchanged by the Pope's statement.

Second, the largest single group of people in the United States, save classifications of male or female, is Roman Catholics. By this standard, the Church need not "compete" with nor "cater" to the whims of the uninformed masses.

Third, the Church considered ordaining women and has decided against it. Women have an important place in the Church. Probably the most respected woman in the modern world, and one who will be canonized for her work, is a Catholic nun ... Mother Theresa.

Fourth, every time a sperm mates with an egg it is a gift from God. To prevent that "miracle" would be to deny a gift from God. For this reason, the Church has always been against birth control. If a member would like to remain childless, they can abstain.

I, and every other Catholic, would appreciate it if Pace looked a little deeper when stating opinions. Much of her column is simply not true.

Bryan Nelson  
Class of '96

The world is indeed an ever-changing place, but there is one thing that remains constant and unchanging: God.

He is the same now as He was in the beginning of time.

Just because people and society change, does not mean that the Church should.

Admitting to injustices and mistakes is a positive thing, but changing one's beliefs and fundamental values just to appear more enticing to the population at large has never been a characteristic of the Church.

Its message and teachings have remained constant over time, and it has never followed the path of other denominations in trying to "cater" to its "customers."

On the contrary, the Church does not view its members as "customers" at all, but instead as parts of the body of Christ on this earth.

Pace's column about the Church is an obvious distortion of the facts, and the writer's lack of knowledge on the Church is quite apparent.

Kristen Lawrence  
Class of '98

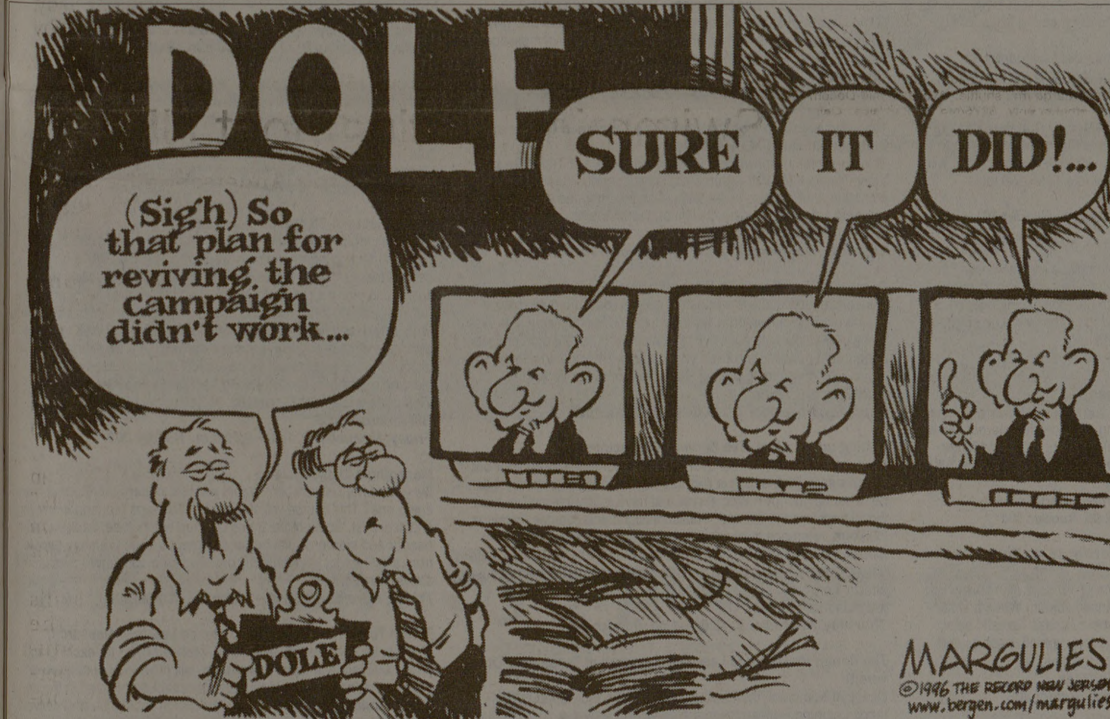
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## Television should rate shows

Good news for all the television violence alarmists out there.

According to a UCLA research report, television violence is down this year compared to last year. Fewer television series and movies contained violent themes. Not surprisingly, both presidential candidates are taking credit for the reduction.

Clinton boasted that the drop in violence on network television is a direct result of his efforts, including the introduction of the V-chip — otherwise known as "another excuse for parents to be less responsible in raising their children."

It is said that our government must provide a chip to block certain television programs from corrupting the young minds of America. It is the parents' responsibility to monitor what their children see, not Bill Clinton's (or, possibly, Bob Dole's). Clinton should have proposed the "R-chip" — "R" standing for remote. Parents need only to use the remote control to change channels if something offensive comes on television. It's a smarter, more responsible way to control viewing of television programs by children.

Of course, parents aren't monitoring their children around the clock. It is up to parents to instill values and morals in their children regarding what is appropriate to watch.

Network television stations should not be subject to endless

Columnist



Jon Appgar  
Sophomore  
journalism major

deem offensive. Just because a person sees violence on television does not mean he or she will imitate the act. I don't recall having the urge to blast anyone with a shotgun after watching *Terminator 2*.

If someone acts violently as a result of a television program, he or she most likely does so because of an underlying violent tendency that would manifest itself sooner or later, regardless of what he or she sees on an Itchy and Scratchy episode during *The Simpsons*.

No doubt the violence this person witnesses on television may persuade his or her violent tendencies to surface.

However, a V-chip is not going to stop this violence from occurring. Other factors besides television will cause a naturally violent person to act out his or her aggressions.

The government needs to focus on the root of the problem and figure out a way to help these individuals. Instead,

regulation by government concerning the material of programs. Adults are quite capable of keeping their children from viewing programs they

politicians like Clinton waste time and money creating censorship chips in a feeble attempt at championing "family values."

Unlike the Communications Decency Act from last spring, another moronic Clinton effort to censor the media, the V-chip will probably not be contested in court as a violation of the First Amendment because having the V-chip installed is a voluntary act.

What does this say about our society? It says we must have an elected official create devices to raise our children morally.

If Congress really wants to control viewing habits, the furthest it should go is to implement a ratings system for television similar to the ratings system for movies.

Movie ratings are not the law. They are simply a way for parents to determine if a movie is appropriate for their children.

More importantly, a ratings system for television programs would leave children's viewing habits in the hands of the parents, where it belongs.

People would most likely support a television ratings system, as they seem to now support a ratings system for video games.

It doesn't take a slick politician to figure out a plausible policy concerning violence on television. It merely takes a little common sense and, more importantly, the belief that the American people can think for themselves.

### Teachings of the Church justified

Regarding Heather Pace's Oct. 30 column, "Catholic Church's policy evolves slowly to present day":

First and foremost, I must point out that capitalism wasn't created until about 200 years after the Protestant Reformation. Early Protestants were dead by the time capitalism was created; they didn't abandon Catholicism because of it. This is merely the first of Pace's mistakes.

Equating the debates over evolution, female clergy, and birth control into anything approaching similarity is foolhardy at best. Evolution is so hotly debated because it is being taught to the exclusion of creationism (which Pope Pius XII feared). The question of female clergy is a topic I am not familiar with, but am willing to accede the point that the Church may not have chosen correctly in that area. However, failing to promote birth control is not an attempt to weigh down the Third World with children; it is a statement of the Church's adamant refusal to promote anything that could lead to what it considers immoral behavior (i.e. extramarital sex).

The Church's place in society is as a conduit to a higher power, something larger than ourselves, and as a moral guidepost for the