

The Daily Nebraskan

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Managing Editor NEWS EDITORS Oscar Norling Dwight McCormack CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Lincoln Frost Robert Lauch Evert Hunt ASSISTANT NEWS EDITORS Gerald Griffin Mary Louise Freeman BUSINESS MANAGER T. SIMPSON MORTON Asst. Business Manager Richard F. Vette Circulation Manager Milton McGrew Circulation Manager SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 1927. WHITE LIEC White Lies—the campus is full of them—nobody believes them—And Yet, everybody tells them. That's the case in short for this lubricating feature of life. Probably nowhere else is this art so well developed as on a college campus. At least everybody on this campus seems to believe in the practice. (The Nebraska staff tried for three days to find some one who does not believe in the custom, and the nearest approach was a person who preferred to dub the whole thing fact.) There are White Lies and more White Lies. We've all heard about them from childhood days up. The classic example in ethics books is the one about the theater manager who tells a woe of a white one while the stage is burning behind his back; and that way prevents a panic while the audience marches out with orderly dispatch. The theater always burns to the ground as soon as the last child gets out. Then we are all familiar with the one about the "wonderful party, etc., etc." That one is so common it's like "yours sincerely" at the close of a letter, you try to find pleasing variations to relieve the monotony, and if you leave it off, you're mighty liable to become persona non grata. On a college campus, though, especially a coed campus, there is a line of white lies all its own. It's an innocent professor or instructor, indeed, for instance, who believes everything that every student tells him about how wonderful, entertaining, and interesting his course is. It's an even more innocent and naive professor who thinks his jokes are funny just because the class goes into convulsions about them. Then there is an equally good line of white ones about this time of year at senior recitals. And in a few weeks when their yearly efforts leave the press, the Cornhusker staff will be deluged. Every fraternity and sorority has a line of white lies all its own when it comes to estoteric discussions between members and pledges, without mentioning the great white way (and some times great black way) of white ones during rush week. But the best line of all white lies is orthophoned in the twilight hours of evening when swains call maidens, and maidens call swains. There's a technique to that all its own. Perhaps the most common of all white ones in this department is the one when a swain asks a maiden for the pleasure of her company, a "date" in other words. But that's so common, it's in the elementary stages of the game. The real technique is displayed at the other end of the game when either the swain or the maiden wants to cancel, postpone, or otherwise break the compact for the date aforementioned. And the finest stages of the game are reached in the case of two who have been "going steady", if the "going steady" is not really so steady after all. This graduate stage calls for the highest exercise of the art of coining white ones, and any one who becomes adept at it might consider himself a fit candidate for a Balkan diplomatic post. So much for the blithesome side of all these white lies. They are an established institution here at school, back home, and everywhere. And there really is very much of a reason for their existence. They are a salving balm to ease over situations embarrassing or potentially embarrassing to some one else. Sometimes as in the case of the theater manager and his fire, they are agents of real good. And as mentioned above, practically everybody agrees with the practice. But the great danger lies in the over use of this simple, ready, and quick expedient. Before a person knows it, he finds himself white-lying out of every troublesome situation. And then before a person knows it, he has destroyed in great part all faith that people have in him. The dividing line between a pure white lie and a real one is often quite shadowy. And it is a delicate conscience indeed that does not become dulled in time. It is no wonder then that a great many are quite cautious in their trust of other people, preferring to distrust a person until they are sure the person can be trusted, rather than the other way around which would be the more natural and sociable way. White-lying to excess has still other dangers in it. It undermines even the confidence of those to whom no lies have ever been spoken. For instance we know of the case of two young men who have been pals since high school days. Both of them tell white lies aplenty, to other people. They do this often while they are together, and most of the time they confide in each other their true feelings after telling the white lie to the other person. Now consciously or unconsciously, there has arisen between these two friends just a mere shadow of reserve and caution. They have seen each other white-lie to others in all degrees so much that sometimes they are not quite so sure but what the other one of the pair is white-lying to them. There is a real self-interest, then, in using white lies sparingly, and sticking to the truth as much as possible. It's like credit at the bank. You can get out of paying a debt once or even twice, but the temporary gain is far outweighed by the permanent loss of credit and confidence. SLAVES Well, only about seven weeks more of slavery for the freshmen. In less than two months now the term of servitude in the fraternities will be ended. It has been a long, hard year, hasn't it? Not only for the freshmen, either, who have had to wash windows, repair screens, sweep sidewalks, shovel snow, cut grass, polish floors, dust furniture, scrub automobiles, sharpen pencils, light cigarettes, press trousers, shine shoes, and hang curtains; but the freshmen are not alone in their servitude, for that exact body of upperclassmen who have been treated to the limits in seeing that the

freshmen do the work. In fraternity meetings there have been countless solemn conferences regarding the laxity in freshman labor. Committees have been formed, supervisors appointed, and general investigations conducted into this serious matter. I everything the one objective has been to see that the freshmen work.

Isn't it silly? After all, there are only two accidental circumstances which sentence a young man in the university to the humiliation, slavery, and servitude of being a fraternity freshman. Those two conditions are first, that a man happens to be a freshman, and second, that he happens to be in a fraternity. From these premises is supposed to follow the conclusion that a man shall give up his self-esteem, his freedom, and his respect for upperclassmen.

There are times when one wishes devoutly that the gods who rule the fraternities had a mite of sense about them. If those exalted rulers did have sense, they would see the futility of slave-driving in trying to make nice men out of promising boys. If they had just a grain of intelligence they would perceive that the only way to make a fraternity what every good fraternity aims to be is through whole-hearted and complete co-operation of all the members, freshmen, sophomores, seniors, and juniors. This idea of enslaving freshmen is really laughable, but one finds it hard to laugh at such a startling example of blindness.

MOVIE STUFF

Two university students spent the latter part of Friday night in jail and were hailed before the municipal judge Saturday morning. They were well-dressed, typical students. Two circumstances had contributed to their arrest and subsequent arraignment in court. Those were, (1) the fact that they were sauntering down Eighteenth street at 1 o'clock in the morning; and (2) the unfortunate accident that one of them carried across his shoulder a heavy "No Parking" sign, which was legally and morally the property of the city of Lincoln.

Surprising, wasn't it? It was odd that such a thing should happen right here in prosaic Lincoln, when that kind of an event can usually be seen only in the movies, or, possibly, in those story books that are sold at magazine stands three for a dollar. Doubtless Lincoln itself did not know that it had such romantic, fantastic happenings going on right here in this typical college city.

When one goes to the movies, he expects to see, in a college scene, a student's room decorated with all manner of signs: No Parking, Do Not Spit on the Floor, No Loafing Here, and a host of others which might not look so well in print. Of course, the movies have a perfect right to present such scenes, for the public likes to think of its college boys as playful pranksters getting into all kinds of scrapes and having all kinds of fun. But in real life! It simply will not do.

Back in the dim days of 1902 and 1903, the yellowed files of college publications tell us, students frequently broke into riots and fraternity factions did their political wrangling with bricks, kidnappings, and clubs. Students met in front of dear old U Hall to fight it out in glorious fashion, and class presidents were spirited away to vacant houses, et cetera. And those were the days when every up-to-the-minute student had his rooms decorated with appropriate signs appropriated from various parts and places of the city.

Well, they may have been the good old days, but it is certain that they are gone, gone forever, as the phrase goes. Colleges and universities are acknowledged (by the liberal and optimistic critics) to have outgrown those puerile tactics, to have bettered themselves in that one line at least. The college today is generally accepted as a better thing than that of twenty-five years ago, what with prohibition and student councils and such improvements over the old order.

Yet here in this year of our Lord 1927 are two fraternity men dragging in such old, stale, moit-worm ideas as stealing parking signs. What does it mean? Is there nothing new under the sun? Is there no originality among our fraternity men?

Or is it just another example of weary college boys seeking diversion?

In Other Columns

THINKING BY PROXY

The college undergraduate is affected today just as youth in any period is affected by the things which have been done and said by other men rather than by what he himself has originated or conceived.

There is no period in the life of an individual when he is more conventional and conformative to the opinions of the world and civilization than when he is young. He reads books and accepts the ideas of the writers without a struggle if they are at all logical. He reads Schopenhauer one week and becomes convinced that it is impossible to be happy in the world and that he must not expect it, or he will be a frightful dolt. He reads Newman another week and decides that nothing in life is worthwhile unless it be published, refined, idealistic, scholarly. He reads the novels of Joseph Conrad still another time and can conceive of satisfaction from no life except one of adventure, travel, freedom from convention, and excitement.

He is forming his own mind gradually from what he chooses and selects to retain from his reading. But in the meantime he goes from one extreme to another, undecided, immature, and helpless. He has no original ideas. He is afflicted by the thought "I am young, incompetent. No one will listen to me if I do get up and bray. It would be foolish of me to express my own ideas on this subject rather than to accept the ideas of this famous man, who of course is right, because everyone says he is." In his conversation he takes pride in being able to relate what someone else has said about such and such a subject. If he talks of a play, and has read Nathan's views of it, he dares not put his own in opposition to them. It would be a felony, a felony against the established beliefs of the critical world.

Of course he is right to some extent in his reasoning, and his own ideas would ordinarily be inferior to those of older and more experienced men. It is inevitable that he should feel this way until he has acquired a maturity of mind which will render him capable of originating sound ideas and give him the confidence to stand on his feet and let the world hear his opinion. But until then it does no harm for him to attempt to use his own mind instead of conforming unthinkingly to what the world believes is right.

—The Minnesota Daily.

Less "Society"

In spite of the dictum of Arthur Brisbane that a dog biting a man is not news but that a man's biting a dog is news, the evaluation of news is not merely a matter of "play it up" the unusual or the which will be talked about. No doubt tabloids most nearly carry out Mr. Brisbane's remark; college papers, on the other hand, should and do—the best of them—recognize the fact that news is of two sorts—that which creates much gossip, conversation, and somnolent but which really does not report an event affecting the lives of many people and that which, though it may pass almost unread, is a report of an event fundamentally changing the mode of life of many people. —Colorado Silver and Gold

The Campus Pulse

Letters from readers are cordially welcomed in this department, and will be printed in all cases subject only to the common-sense exercise of pruning out all libelous matter, and attacks against individuals and religious.

To the Editor and Campus: I am taking this opportunity to promulgate the beginning of a series of articles which I believe in the end will materially alter the existing inequality of social relationships on this campus. The social status problem has been an oft discussed one, and as I see the thing, it is still a live issue.

By a live issue I mean an issue which is right now and always has been in the minds of most of the students who are not within the rather limited yet not exactly exclusive domain of fraternal life. A fraternal organization is all O. K.—some of their motives and laws are all well and good—yet their general attitude towards those who are not one of them, their sweeping, grasping, and monopolizing of every field of social expression on this campus is both tyrannical and unwarranted.

Now may I ask why this is possible? Why this subservency of the non-frats to the all domineering power grasping of the fraternal machine? Why this lamentable tendency on the part of the majority of students to recognize this rule of the minority, who seem to have such a satiric effect on all their minds and actions? The answer lies with the rather lowly non-frat mob, who are nothing but "Barbarians"—at least that is what they are termed by the most refined and cultured fraternity man.

How many of the parents of said "Barbs" would stand to be thus labeled by a small group of organized individuals who are really not a whit different? How many United States citizens would stand for this? One might really concede the fact that he or she probably could do more in the way of becoming a higher civilized being, yet to be proclaimed a "barbarian" by a group of intellectuals who are no more, in most cases, than their equals. It should be appalling—it is appalling and yet the so-called "Barbs" acquiesce cheerfully to this abominable situation and proform the occurrence of being termed a non-working, socially unfit cog in this wheel around which revolves the school affairs.

How much longer is the undemocratic condition going to exist?—this glaring present group of collaborated fraternal units which have succeeded in absolutely obliterating all semblance of opposition from the majority of less favored and lesser endowed individuals—individuals whose fathers are paying just as much towards operating this university of which we are all members. The answer is—just

as long as the so-called "Barbs" sit with their hands folded and their heads bowed to the all would be powerful fraternity man and the affiliated sorority sisters. Wake up "Barbs". —I will say more— signed D. N.

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