

Nebraskan Editorials:

The Wrong Atmosphere

Eighty-seven years ago the University of Nebraska was a single building—University Hall—stranded in the middle of a raw prairie and a hardy frontier village of 1000 citizens.

Cows and horses were tethered nearby as their owners slipped into the downtown general store for provisions to last out the month. Sioux Indians lurked about, muskets were always kept in readiness, times were perilous and the young college men drank hard whiskey and won their women in fist fights and wrestling matches.

Today, 87 years later, some 50 buildings are sprinkled about the prairie; the automobile and the bus have replaced the horse and carriage; the clack of the IBM machine, the steady hum of complex administrative machinery, the fantastic web of departmental red tape has succeeded the 17 subdued classrooms and laboratories of old; clean, red brick displaces the moss and ivy of past traditions.

But through it all, through 87 years of constant change and innovation, the single thread which holds all universities together has been but partly preserved here at Nebraska. This universal thread?

Simply, that the university is an imaginative association with life, an institution that deals with the imaginative consideration of learning, a place which welds experience, knowledge and imagination into a whole, a refuge for the thoughtful student who is interested not in facts per se but in facts as they relate to ideas, not

in knowledge as it is transformed by imagination, and not in imagination per se but in imagination as it is grounded by experience and polished by intellectual discipline.

A good university should impart these things or at least a consciousness of these things, and it should do it forcefully, yet imaginatively. It should create an atmosphere of excitement; it should challenge the intellect; it should stimulate all its citizens—faculty and students alike.

A university is, essentially, alive. The question is: "Has Nebraska, since its inception 85 years ago, retained the vitality of spirit with which it—along with every other university—has been founded?"

Physically, Nebraska has taken huge strides, recently unfolding a multi-million dollar building program which will be completed in the next few years. Its enrollment is approaching 8000, with a predicted rise to 15,000 within the next ten years.

The University faculty has kept abreast of the times; which was indicated in statements by Chancellor Hardin and Dr. Adam Breckenridge recently when they said that our present instructional personnel is the best in ten years.

Recent appointments of Karl Shapiro, Pulitzer-prize winning poet, and Pete Elliott, much sought after football coach, indicates that the University is capable of attracting top notch faculty members.

Important discoveries by Dean Miltzer, Dr. Georgi and Dr. Arnold point up the fact that Nebraska is doing its share in valuable scientific research.

But there is one area in which Nebraska has not kept in step with many of her contemporary institutions. And this is the general tone residing with the majority of its student body.

The general tone of our student body—to be in no way confused with the attitude of the faculty or the policies of the administration—is not, for the most part, influenced by nor preoccupied with the ideals of a higher university education.

And it's hard to define—this tone, this attitude, call it what you will. It's more of an atmosphere or a feeling almost defying description or logical analysis.

Perhaps, for the student, it comes from emphasizing grades rather than the substance behind the grades; valuing the activity points before the activity, and, in general, putting appearance before value, technique before knowledge and practicality before experience.

Perhaps it is derived from the influence of a predominantly activity-wise campus, the importance of Mortar Boards and Innocents, the social consciousness of a strong Greek system, the influence of a Midwestern, agricultural environment.

More likely, it is a combination of these factors. But nevertheless, whatever the reasons, it cannot be denied that the student body does not breathe too deeply nor perspire too freely within its academic environment.

The University of Nebraska has come a long way since its origin in 1869; it has more students, more buildings, more professors, more administrators, more books in the libraries, more sidewalks to shovel in the winter time, more grass to mow in the spring, more ferns to water in the summer—but it has not as yet—through no fault of its own but more through a combination of circumstances—effectively impressed the stamp of higher learning and the importance of the pursuit thereof upon its students.—B.B.

An Enjoyable Season

The presentation of "La Boheme" by the University Theater Tuesday night was a good thing for the University in two ways.

First, it was a good presentation of a good opera, and will perhaps do a little toward satisfying the usually gnawing hunger of the people on the campus who are continually bemoaning, and rightly so, the lack of cultural enlightenment here.

Second, it was the third of five productions the Theater is presenting this year, although it is the only opera to be given. If the other two presentations are anything like the first three, theater-goers still have an enjoyable season ahead of them.

Next on the list is "The Inspector General," by Gogol, which will run from March 12 through the 17th. Finishing up will be another play, "Mary of Scotland," by Maxwell Anderson, which will be presented from May 8 to the 12th.

These productions, like "La Boheme," "Stalg 17" and "Elithe Spirit," will be well worth seeing by University students and faculty alike. They are purely University presentations, produced by and starring the students, with the help of the faculty. They form a part of University life that is little noticed and sometimes criticized, but without which this or any other school would dwindle into an educational assembly line.

The University Theater should be proud to bring such fine artistic material before its campus public. Although the big names are not there, the students are. This makes them all the better.

These productions should not, however, be likened to something presented by the senior class of a high school on a hot May night. A decided sheen of professional polish can be seen, both in the actors themselves and in the sets and overall production. Talent, sometimes overlooked in other phases of the campus world, becomes quite noticeable on the stage.

Thus, by no real effort of the students as a whole, the University has in its midst a semi-cultural body dedicated to presenting good productions to a usually blind student body.

These presentations are often lost in a haze of football frenzy or such other institutions as activities or campus politics. It sometimes seems that attendance at the productions is almost wholly faculty members or people involved in the theater who don't happen to be in that particular presentation.

But, for their own reasons, this small collection of campus culture bounces merrily along. Whether or not anyone else cares very much who has the starring role in this production or that means little to them. There is no firing of drama coaches spread across banner headlines. There is certainly no aid to deserving actors from an alumni "slush fund."

The University is basking placidly on its academic-athletic-athletic nest. Underneath, "La Boheme" is being hatched. And the hen didn't even cackle.—F.T.D.

Afterthoughts "Pink Tape"

If business managers tend to be a confused lot it may be understandable. In the Nebraskan business office, where bills and receipts often run into big money, one of the January bills, despite its efficient look, caused some puzzlement.

It read like this: University Regents Bookstore, University of Nebraska. Terms: net 30 days; balance 30 cents.

Typed underneath was the name of one of the reporters who had been sent out for copy pencils one day in November.

LITTLE MAN ON CAMPUS by Dick Bibler



Charlie's Trip To The Moon

By JACK PHINNEY

One of these days, we may expect to hear of scientists dragging some dumbfounded ape from the peaceful confines of his cage, strapping the beast into the pilot's seat of a rocket ship and dispatching him on a round-trip flight to the moon.

Charlie (we shall assume that to be the ape's name) will have nothing to do, of course, but enjoy the trip. His course will be determined by remote-control equipment in some laboratory and his progress observed by scientists from their relatively safe position on terra firma.

Assuming that the jaunt is successful and Charlie gets safely back to earth, another flight will be shortly arranged. This time, however, Charlie will be passed

tually impossible for a visitor to determine where the surface of these planets end and their atmospheres begin.

Mars and Venus, on the other hand, resemble the earth in many ways, and undoubtedly will receive special attention by future space explorers.

Mars has little moisture, even less oxygen, and severe cold at night and winter; however, it does have a considerable carbon-dioxide atmosphere, great deserts, a 24-hour day, reasonable midday temperatures and probably some primitive vegetation.

Venus is still much of a mystery to scientists, as it is enveloped by such a hazy atmosphere that the planet's surface is invisible to us. The little green men of science fiction might indeed live there, but if they do they're mighty thirsty chaps and more likely have leafy branches than arms.

The Venusian atmosphere, like that of Mars, is mostly carbon dioxide and no trace of either oxygen or moisture has yet been discovered.

Whether planetary colonization will follow exploration will depend primarily, I suppose, on human ingenuity. If our neighboring planets prove rich in raw materials, factories may someday dot their surface and a space-freight service inaugurated.

Naturally, we will be faced with the inevitable territorial disputes and disagreements over the "social goals" by which the activity of our space-colonists shall be patterned.

Looking further ahead, we wonder if exploration will ever push beyond the limits of our solar system. Someone has observed that if the sun-to-Pluto distance were reduced to a scale of one mile, the nearest star would be 5,000 miles away.

In an atomic-powered rocket travelling at near the speed of light an explorer could reach this star in about four years.

But when one speculates on man travelling at near the speed of light—well, it would be awfully hard to see where you were going.

The Left Bank

over and one of his human counterparts (some scientist) will take the wheel.

Now there are several aspects of space travel which I should like to mention here. Can you imagine, first, how the rump of a rhinoceros would look to a flea? If so, you might be able to visualize how the surface of the moon would look to a human. Bleak, pock-marked plains and lowering, jagged mountains—a silent, airless world under black skies and a broiling sun: this is the moon.

Or, consider the planet Mercury. Here one might attain a suntan which would make the Palm Springs variety look sick. Hot enough to fry an egg? It gets hot enough on Mercury to melt lead. Moreover, if a person reached this hotspot on, say, Tuesday, he would wait in vain for Wednesday. Why? Simply because the planet always presents the same face to the sun. Consequently, on one side there is no day, and on the other no night.

The giant Jupiter and its twin sister, Saturn, have characteristics all their own. Not only are they composed chiefly of frozen gases, but the gases which surround them are so dense that it would be vir-

The Challenge Leahy Suggests Cure For Habits

By FRANK LEAHY Former Notre Dame Football Coach

Thank you ever so much for your letter of Nov. 25. I regret that an extended business trip forced the postponement of an answer to you until this time and that heavy business commitments make it impossible for me to devote sufficient time in preparing an article such as you requested.

However, I should like to enclose with this letter an article (I'm sorry I don't know the author) which I have had in my possession a long time which concerns something which is of paramount importance to each and every one of us and from which we can all derive much.

"Habits are at first cobwebs, then cables."—Spanish Proverb. "Rip Van Winkle, in Jefferson's play, excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying, 'I won't count this time!' Well, he may not count it; and a kind heaven may not count it, but it is being counted nonetheless.

Down among his nerve cells and fibers, the molecules are counting it, registering and scoring it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is in strict scientific literalness wiped out."

Persistence Increases Power

The above words are from "The Laws of Habits," by William James, Harvard's long celebrated psychologist and philosopher. And he adds: "Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state.

As one unknown writer wrote: "That which we persist in doing becomes easier to do; not that the nature of the thing has changed, but that our power to do has increased.

Habits Not Hopeless

This may seem to offer little comfort to those who already have habits that they want to be rid of. But fortunately, bad habits aren't hopeless. A habit can be cured the same way it started: By starting the habit of not doing it—by doing something else instead. "A nail is driven out by another nail," wrote Erasmus, and "Habit is overcome by habit."

Bucking a bad habit is usually much more difficult than acquiring one. It takes more effort to get out of a rut than it does to get in.

Brownell Airs Old Grudges

There is a dearth of really important campus events suitable for comment this week. Apparently some people failed to take heed of the splendid advice I offered last week, and are still worried about their courses. Well, it's good enough for them. They should have learned to listen to me by now.

I do want to thank them for one thing, though. Their lack of activity in other spheres has given me a

Jess Jesting

chance to use this space for a few personal comments. There are a couple of things I'd like to get off my chest.

First of all, I want to take the editors of this newspaper to task. Last week my column was cut to bits in order that they might print two poems written by some fellow named Shapiro. Who is this Shapiro, anyway? And where did you get the idea that his work is more important than mine?

My readers are not a notably militant group but when their leader is insulted they thirst for blood. I managed to contain them last time, but if it happens again, you had better watch out.

Another thing about that. You could easily have cut Henkle's column, which appeared on the same page, and which was even worse than usual. Everyone knows that anything, even poetry, is better than Henkle's work.

I trust that my editors are now properly cowed and that I shall have no more trouble with them, so I may safely turn to another matter.

I have long wanted to make a few remarks about an obvious deficiency in the ROTC department. No doubt this department has many

fine attributes, but I fear that a sense of humor is not to be counted among them.

At the slightest hint of criticism, they bring their heavy artillery to bear and boom out protests. If they suspect that they are being laughed at, they draw up to their full military height and, intoning the name of Black Jack Pershing, charge fur cover.

Now being caught without a sense of humor on a college campus is like being without a suit of armor in a Robert Taylor movie; you're an easy mark for the first black-guard who comes along.

I certainly don't want to be considered a villain by anyone, and I assure you that this is just intended to be a little friendly advice.

But gentlemen, if you can't learn to laugh at yourselves, at least try to be stoical about being laughed at. Stoicism is a good military virtue.

I feel much better having these things off my chest. If someone would only help me to get the monkey off my back, I would be content.

Letterip

Thanks

To the editor: My thanks to The Nebraskan for being so generous to Dr. Georgi, Dr. Arnold and myself in the Tuesday issue of The Nebraskan. I am not quite sure that we deserve so much recognition, but it is nice to have you think that we do.

My appreciation also for your handling of the Shapiro story. W. E. Miltzer Dean of the Arts and Sciences College

On Campus with Max Schulman (Author of "Barefoot Boy With Cheek," etc.)

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF ROOM-MATES

Today we take up room-mates, a delightful phenomenon of American college life. Having a room-mate is not only heaps of fun; it is also very educational, for the proper study of mankind is man, and there is no better way to learn the dreams and drives of another human being than to share a room with him.

This being the case, it is wise not to keep the same room-mate too long, because the more room-mates you have, the more you will know about the dreams and drives of human beings. And that's what we're all after, isn't it?

So try to change room-mates as often as you can. A recent study made by Sigafos of Michigan State shows that the best interval for changing room-mates is every four hours.

Now let us discuss how to go about choosing a room-mate. Most counselors agree that the most important thing to look for in room-mates is that they be people of regular habits. This, I say, is arrant nonsense. What if one of their regular habits happens to be beating a great gong from midnight to three a.m.? Or growing cultures in the tooth glass? Or reciting the Articles of War? Or peanut brittle?

Regular habits indeed! I say that beyond quibble, far and away the most important quality in room-mates is that they be exactly your size. Otherwise you will have to have their clothes altered to fit you, which can be a considerable nuisance. In fact, it is sometimes flatly impossible. I recollect one time I roomed with a man named Tremblatt Osage who was just under seven feet tall and weighed nearly four hundred pounds.

There wasn't a blessed thing I could use in his entire wardrobe—until one night when I was invited to a masquerade party. I cut one leg off a pair of Tremblatt's trousers, jumped into it, sewed up both ends and went to the party as a bolster. (Incidentally, I took second prize. First prize went to a girl named Antenna Wilkins who poured molasses over her head and went as a candied apple.)

But I digress. Let us get back to the qualities that make desirable room-mates. Not the least of these is the cigarettes they smoke. When we borrow cigarettes, do we want them to be harsh, shoddy, and disdainful of our palates? Certainly not! What, then, do we want them to be? Why, we want them to be gentle, delicately-reared, and designed to suit the tempo of today's broader, easier life! And what cigarette is gentle, delicately-reared, and designed to suit the tempo of today's broader, easier life? Why, Philip Morris, of course! (I'll bet you knew it all the time!)

To go on. In selecting a room-mate, take great pains to find someone who will wear well, whom you'd like to keep as a permanent friend. Many of history's great friendships first started in college. Are you aware, for example, of the remarkable fact that Johnson and Boswell were room-mates at Oxford in 1712? What makes this fact so remarkable is that in 1712 Johnson was only three years old and Boswell had not been born yet. But, of course, children matured much earlier in those days. Take Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart who wrote his first symphony at the age of four. Or Titian, who painted his first masterpiece at five. Or Hans Otto McGrath, who was in many ways the most remarkable of all; he was appointed chief of the Copenhagen police department at the age of six!

(It must be admitted, however, that the appointment was less than a success. Criminals roamed the city, robbing and looting at will. They knew young McGrath would never pursue them; he was not allowed to cross the street.)

The makers of Philip Morris, who sponsor this column, cordially invite you and your room-mate to try today's new, gentle Philip Morris. It's always welcome!

