

Editorials

Commentary

Two wrongs make a blight

State Senator Henry Pedersen of Omaha has joined Terry Carpenter in the idiocy race.

Terrible Terry came forth with his standard stupidity this weekend, claiming that the University would be shut down if current demonstrations escalate into violence.

Mr. Carpenter, for all his vast perception, doesn't realize that the demonstrators of last week conducted themselves with greater intelligence and dignity than he usually does. He also reflects the historic social disease: *Nebraskensis paranoia*. The symptoms of this affliction — which is common to native Cornhuskers — are complete overreaction to things beyond the victims' comprehension, and extreme fear that the future may interrupt the course of events in this state.

MR. PEDERSEN, not content to let Carpenter share the stage by himself, came forth with this gem:

"This feeling (of the legislature) I know is that the Board should run the University, and not give in to the pressure of the militant few who seek only to disrupt and not improve the University."

The sublime irony, of course, is that Sen. Pedersen could not have provided a better descrip-

tion of himself and Carpenter. They, in truth, are the "few who seek only to disrupt and not improve the University."

(The last phrase is especially fitting.)

Any intelligent person, any informed person knows that the Regents do run the University. And the day that the Board refuses to listen to the concerns of those involved, is the day they should no longer run it.

BOTH PEDERSEN and Carpenter fail to realize that the student demonstrators are (1) seeking to improve the University; (2) obviously still believers that democratic methods can effect change, even in Nebraska; and (3) led by a man (Wayne Williams) who is obviously more concerned about education than either of them.

The thought of these two threatening and intimidating the University community would be comical — if they weren't in a position to actually harm the University.

These two — who seem to have an urgent need to make comment on everything that happens — should try explaining how the hell they ever got in positions of responsibility.

Ed Icenogle

Campus Opinion . . .

The strange case of Nacirma

Dear Editor

An article, published several years ago in the "American Anthropologist," by Horace Miner, described the exotic body rituals of those strange people from Nacirema. Miner's investigation revealed the extent to which magical notions permeate Nacirema thought and custom.

To consider only one example, it was related that it is legend among these people that their spiritual leader, ot-Gni-hsaw, had felled a great cherry tree in which the spirit of truth resided. Inspired by his investigations, many other scientists have gone into the field, and, as a result, many additional aspects of Nacirema culture have been elucidated.

From the early returns of these investigations, it seems clear that Miner had greatly underestimated the prevalence of magical thinking and rite de passage within the culture of Nacirema.

THERE IS ONE rite de passage which, it seems, totally eluded the keen eyes of previous investigators — the ritual of *Nollaudarg*. Participation in this ritual was long reserved for the most elite of Nacirema society, however, in recent years, ever increasing numbers of Nacirema "untouchables" (referred to as *Stneduts*) have been permitted to undergo the tortures of *Nollaudarg*.

The more informed, and objective, person should find that this ritual embodies the very essence of ignorance and superstition and that, therefore, a very careful study of the thought and custom surrounding it should greatly enhance our understanding of the way primitive minds work. Fortunately, a number of scientists have also realized this. Some interesting facts concerning *Nollaudarg* are now available, and can be related to the reader.

The most impressive, but difficult to comprehend, feature of this ritual is the great disgust that Nacirema hold toward it. It takes many years to reach the highest rung, or step, which is frequently referred to as the *Srotcod Eerged*. In order to reach this final step, one must undergo great pain, and be the, "servant of many masters," and completely deny and reject ones self.

WHAT SEEMS incomprehensible is that large masses of Nacirema pursue *Nollaudarg* with great zeal.

This does, however seem consistent with the generally masochistic character of the modal personality of the Nacirema). It does become more sensible when one considers that, until the *Srotcod Eerged* is obtained, Nacirema (particularly, the *Stneduts*) are thought to have the mental capacity of rag weed, and that, upon reaching this final step, they become endowed with the wisdom of all ages. Furthermore, they are immediately accepted, as peers, by the society's highly regarded Shamans (referred to as *Scolobchs*).

This last point is very important in understand-

ing the zest and enthusiasm with which many undergo *Nollaudarg*. It is only the Shamans that are allowed to pursue Truth and Beauty; only they possess the capacity for independent, and intelligent, thought. Others in the society are strictly forbidden to think thoughts of which the Shamans, themselves, have not thought. Should a *Stnedut* attempt to dispute these sacred beliefs, or violate these ancient sanctions, he is immediately subjected to public castration. (Though it is difficult to tell to what extent it is related to this practice, it has been observed that few *Stneduts* possess any genitals at all).

Some of the specific aspects of the rite are even more interesting. For example, the Shamans reside in great temples, and periodically, each day, they leave their holy places to administer sacraments to the untouchables. These daily rituals involve sermons and anointings. Occasionally, during these services, the subjects of the Shaman are required to make strange scratches upon a very thin slate. From the pattern of these scratches, a Shaman is able to divine the destiny of the subject.

HOWEVER, OBJECTIVE study has revealed that there is no consistent pattern to these marks and, therefore, it would seem that the whole process is quite akin to palm reading — a magical practice that is still popular among the more primitive of our own culture. Even so, the Shamans are confident in their ability to discern whether the God's of Wisdom and Truth are pleased by the particular pattern that a subject was able to construct — which would certainly be an amazing feat, if it were possible. Incidentally, it is also from just such rituals that the Shaman is able to divine whether the *Stneduts* is worthy of becoming a Shaman, too.

Although space does not permit discussion of them, there are many aspects of Nacirema life and legend which all point toward the generally unrealistic character of their existence. Only the most primitive mind could, so naively, accept the culturally-conditioned beliefs that they hold about themselves.

To cite a few examples: they pride themselves on being peace-loving, but even wage war on their friends; they value freedom, but reinforce obedience and, even, conscription; they glorify objectivity, but can only understand subjectivism; they are proud of their realism, but live only in a world of electronic fantasy; they proselytize for universal equality, and brotherhood among all man; but promulgate hatred and bigotry.

In conclusion, it can be said that these are a truly amazing people, and the informed social scientist must wonder that their culture has survived so long.

Arnold Powell
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Slightly irreverent

... by John Fryar

Speaking of the next ASUN elections (somebody really should, you know,) there seem to be several trends to follow. And several things to remember. (Wake up, you ninny, you gotta vote.)

From the same people who almost gave you a faculty evaluation book and equal apportionment, we now have an exciting slate of new candidates who are out to make the campus safe for apathy.

Correction: the word should be atrophy. The only addition needed is the renewed candidacy of Dave Goecke, who ran two years ago on the Pure Water ticket. (Goecke offered to sell the University with all its buildings and distribute the money equally to students so they could go to the college of their choice.)

ALL IN ALL, there's something rotten in Greece this year. The candidates are playing "I'm more independent than you are," while they are whispering, "my supporters come from both sides of the fence."

(It's really kind of a shame the way independents have taken over Senate. At least, when the Greeks ruled campus they wore suits and ties to meetings. They slept, but they slept with class. Where are you when we need you, Joe Frat Rat?)

As for the dorms, they compose a large power block. If the candidates can figure out a way to set up booths at Pioneer Park, they could swing the election. It's a beautiful setup. The dorms vote for more dorms who move off campus right after the election where no one hears from them until they pop up to protest that they really haven't sold out to the administration.

VAVAK THE VINDICATOR seems to advocate abolition of everything: the Greek system, (wise up, fellows, there's gotta be some people around that everyone can hate), library fees, and maybe even tuition.

Sonofagun. Everyone can sit around on the grass under a shade tree and rap. Ain't no way: there's not enough grass, and most of the trees are dead. Better we should expand the parking lots, build a drag strip, charge admission, and buy everyone Great Books.

Bob Zucker found himself without a party. Dirty politics? No, because the party soon found itself without a president. See what a few drinks at a Kosmet Klub party can do? Do not pass Go and do not collect 200 dollars.

THE MAN who seems to own Boardwalk and Park Place right now is the Eisenhower candidate, Bill Chaloupka. He has no party, but he endorses candidates. Like the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. His politics is one of no confrontation, which he learned by leading the Harper Hall revolt last year.

What this campus needs is a little old-fashioned graft and corruption, or else a couple of candidates nobody likes. Schulze, Dreeszen and Naeve weren't glamorous, but you could count on them putting their foot in it every once in a while.

What the heck. Some of the senatorial candidates do look good: There ought to be some great parties next year. Whoever wins, chin up. You've got 19,000 students that are solidly behind you. Just leave them alone until next spring.

MY FRIEND BILL is a Fan. He is not an ordinary breed, one of the multitudes who save their obscenities and pints of sloe gin for the stadium

DAILY NEBRASKAN

Second class postage paid at Lincoln, Neb.
Telephone Editor: 472-2222 News: 472-2200 Business: 472-2200
Subscription rates are \$4 per semester or \$6 per academic year.
Published Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday during the school year except during vacations.

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Spring things

or the Coliseum. Bill is not just a fan; he's a Fan, next only in status to a Jock.

This time of year Bill can be found with the other Fans spending their spring afternoons on the slopes of the football practice field. They personally grunt at every dislocated elbow and go into orgasmic delight at each perfectly-executed play.

"I ALWAYS plan my spring class schedule so that I have afternoons free for practices," Bill says. "It means that I have to go to bed early to make those eight-thirties, but a Fan has to stay into training, anyway."

Part of this training involves reading the sports page religiously (including sending nasty letters to the Nebraska about its lack of coverage), clipping stories for their scrapbooks, knowing at least 10 players on a first-name basis, and praying to Mars that they will still be around to see that Next Bowl Game.

Like many of the Fans, Bill started out as student manager in high school. Some began as cheerleaders. They found their idols to plan game strategy in the Union or wangle invitations to Jock Parties. The girls chant, "A date! A date! My Shakespeare notes for a date."

Some observers feel that Bill is on his way to becoming a Super Fan, an All American. When that day comes, he'll be able to buy pizza for the boys and be awarded an embossed sidelines pass for the games in the fall.

"IT'S FUNNY," Bill muses. "Only last year I was third string on the Fan team. That meant that I had to watch practices from behind one of the pine trees."

"Then it happened. Jack missed a week of practice because of mono, and Tom ran into troubles with his Tuesday afternoon Chem lab. So here I am, on the steps. Breaks of the game."

Bill came to Nebraska because he could see that Fans were treated here as students first. "I have to keep my average up so I'll be eligible. Besides, I probably won't be a Fan forever, but I'd like to try. I was going to be a doctor until I saw how many of them get called away from a game."

"WE COULD have a good season this year," Bill says. "If we can make it past USC, we might go all the way."

He turns back to his binoculars. Fans always talk about the team in terms of "we."

"I'm pretty much of a defensive Fan, sort of a vicarious blackshirt."

Bill blushes when he realizes that he has used a big word. Fans do not like to seem to litterate. Hastily, he turns to a newcomer and mumbles, "Whuzhappenman?"

Fans are also defensive about charges of racial prejudice. They are quick to point out that blacks can sit by the columns just as much as anyone else, but that most blacks are on the team, where they should be.

IN FACT, Bill keeps in shape by watching Afro demonstrations. He also observes water balloon fights and never misses a good intramural game or ASUN election.

Bill does not feel that his college time has been wasted. And he has dreams of being rewarded by going to Fan Heaven.

"Someday I can come back here with a red cowboy hat and a red string tie. My wife will have a bright red dress. I'll have a box seat at games. Someday, God willing, I'll not be a mere Fan. I'll be an Alum."

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