

to the editor



Nonsmoker fumes

Dear editor,

Not long ago, the Daily Nebraskan carried a story about a possible change in NU's classroom atmosphere, due in part to the fuel oil crisis. It hinted at a possible rollback to 1867 University smoke levels within the classrooms in an effort to keep classroom air from getting any more stale. It seemed as though I'd finally be able to take a deep sigh of relief without fear of coughing, but both the article's author and I failed to recognize the massive strength of the campus S.H.I.T.S.

It would seem that the S.H.I.T.S. (Students Habitually Into Tobacco Smoking) has launched its second semester counteroffensive. Relying on heavy support from American tobacco growers and playing on the fact that they seem to be this campus' most powerful minority group, this subversive bunch plan to stain our ivory towers with tar and nicotine. Worst of all, they may addict innocent non-S.H.I.T.S. in the process.

While S.H.I.T.S. can be found in all racial, religious, sexual and political groups, all seem to gain a great deal of satisfaction from ignoring the establishment rule forbidding cigaret use within University buildings. Members of the S.H.I.T.S.' radical element, the D.U.M.B. (Desperate and Undaunted Maximum Burning) S.H.I.T.S. refer to the few professors that enforce this policy as "repressive fascists" and cite the violation of inherent student rights.

Recognizing that cigaretts are based on a purely capitalist motive (hook the masses on it, then charge what the market will bear), S.H.I.T.S. agents spew out a false Madison Ave. macho image along with their fumes. They try to sell all non-S.H.I.T.S. with the "Windedchester" man image and are convinced that our thighs will melt open at the first puff blown in our direction. If this be the case, the poor S.H.I.T.S. are full of something a lot heavier than smoke.

In any event, I realize that their grip on this University's throat is too tight to bring about a

change in the law's enforcement policy. In fact, it would seem that many instructors and administrators are S.H.I.T.S. as well. What we have here is a case similar to that of President Nixon promising to convict those guilty in the Watergate mess. Nobody jumps on anyone when it means they'll be standing on their own toes.

Rather than false promises, I propose a truce. I realize that many S.H.I.T.S. cannot stand the thought of a smokeless lecture or exam period. Fifty minutes is too long to be without their crutch or whatever function the cigaret serves. At the same time, however, their smoke is as annoying to non-S.H.I.T.S. as the thought of being without it is to them. Since the University is confronted with two different sides to a serious problem and does not wish to follow the laws, why not publish in the semester class schedules the sections which will allow smoking and which will not? That way, those of us who want to see things clearly will, and the S.H.I.T.S. can still go around in their cloud.

Randy Brown

Shuttlebus

Dear editor,

Regarding the article concerning the intercampus buses (Daily Nebraskan, Feb. 15) My main concern was how the three campuses made use of their vehicles; (the article did not point this out, but each campus runs one bus a day between all three. The one that left another student and I deserted that Jan. 28 was the bus operated by the NU Medical Center (NUMC) so I have no gripe to UNL about that since it had no control over that driver.) I realize that the system was set up to handle intercampus mail first and passengers second, and sometimes I have felt as though I would be better off if I was shaped like an 8 1/2 x 11 inch envelope. My suggestion would be for the University of Nebraska at Omaha and NUMC buses to be vans while the UNL bus could be a station wagon at the most, since it usually carries fewer people; once I rode in the 14 passenger UNL van when there was only the driver, me and 24 baby chickens. I think if the campuses are going to haul passengers it might help if more consideration is paid them.

Mike Whye

Helmet choice

Dear editor,

Unfortunately I missed "Hell-met on wheels" (Daily Nebraskan, Feb. 4), but I did read Dale

Yamamoto's Feb. 11 letter to the Daily Nebraskan.

I feel it's time for me to say something. I have been riding motorcycles for five years, and I believe wearing a helmet should be a matter of choice and not a command. Incidentally, I too have a \$65 helmet, but if I can possibly help it, I don't wear it to town.

Yamamoto states, "As for hearing and sight impairment, it's practically nil, if not improved." I don't know where he gets his information but I've yet to hear of a helmet that improves hearing and sight, let alone not impairing them. I think we should be afforded the full use of all our senses if we choose. Yamamoto further states, "...the wind blowing against your ears causes more impairment than a helmet covering them." Says who? What evidence is there to support this statement? I've used five or six brands of federally approved helmets, and every one of them impaired my hearing at any speed.

When California tried to pass a helmet law in 1972, California Highway Patrol statistics showed accidents and fatalities with motorcycles from 1965-71 were going up. It wasn't mentioned that there was a 148% increase in motorcycle use between those years. That probably had something to do with the 40% increase in motorcycle accidents. It was further shown before the California legislature that the fatal accident rate for motorcycles decreased from .10% to .07%. That was without helmets. Could it be better licensing requirements brought about better riders?

According to Ed Armstrong who testified before the legislature, a survey of six states showed every one of these states reported either an increase or an unchanged ratio in motorcycle accidents and fatalities after helmet laws were passed. Russ Sanford, (president of Motorcycle Owners, Riders and Enthusiasts) brought before the California legislature the fact that Federal Standard Z-90 approved helmets have to absorb only a 13.4 m.p.h. impact! What would happen to that unapproved \$12 helmet?

Here's an interesting fact: as of June 1973 not one country in Western Europe had a compulsory helmet law. Conversely every country behind the Iron Curtain did.

Recently a federal safety board report said that the added weight of 2 to 3 lbs. puts too much strain on the necks in collisions. The report said, "Furthermore, if a helmeted body strikes a barrier...the impact is transmitted almost entirely to the neck." What was that about a \$12 helmet?

Why not have better driver licensing and leave the choice of safety helmets to the individual.

W. David Wallman

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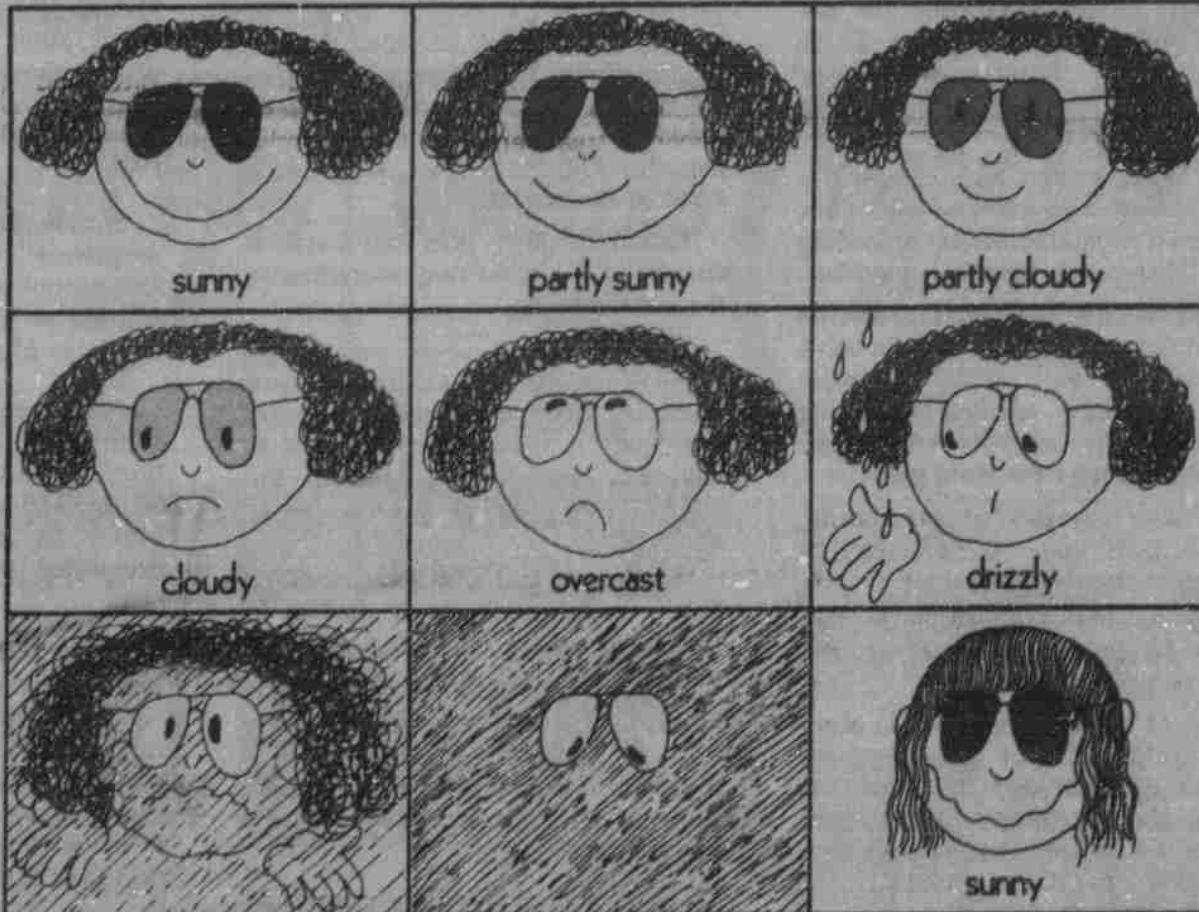
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