

Choosing the route to the top

With commencement less than two weeks away, some UNL graduating seniors—especially those heavily in debt or without jobs—will look back on their University tenure with bittersweet thoughts. Some undoubtedly will question whether it was worth it.

One as well might ask whether it will be worth it for younger siblings.

According to Editorial Research Reports, next autumn the annual price tag on room, board and tuition at a school like UNL will be between \$3,000 and \$4,000. At such prestigious schools as Harvard and Yale, the same package is estimated to cost about \$5,400. The College Entrance Examination Board estimates that the cost of attending some schools in the 1974-75 academic year will be 80% greater than in 1970-71, when some of this year's graduates entered.

A Stanford professor further calculates that attendance at a "name" school can cost a student and his or her family \$10,000 a year, if one assumes the student could earn \$5,000 a year working and not attending school. The professor questioned whether this is the best way to invest \$40,000. The amount, of course, would be inflated if the student could not meet the school's requirements for graduation in four years. At UNL, few students graduate in eight semesters alone—most take summer school courses or elect to hang around an extra semester or two.

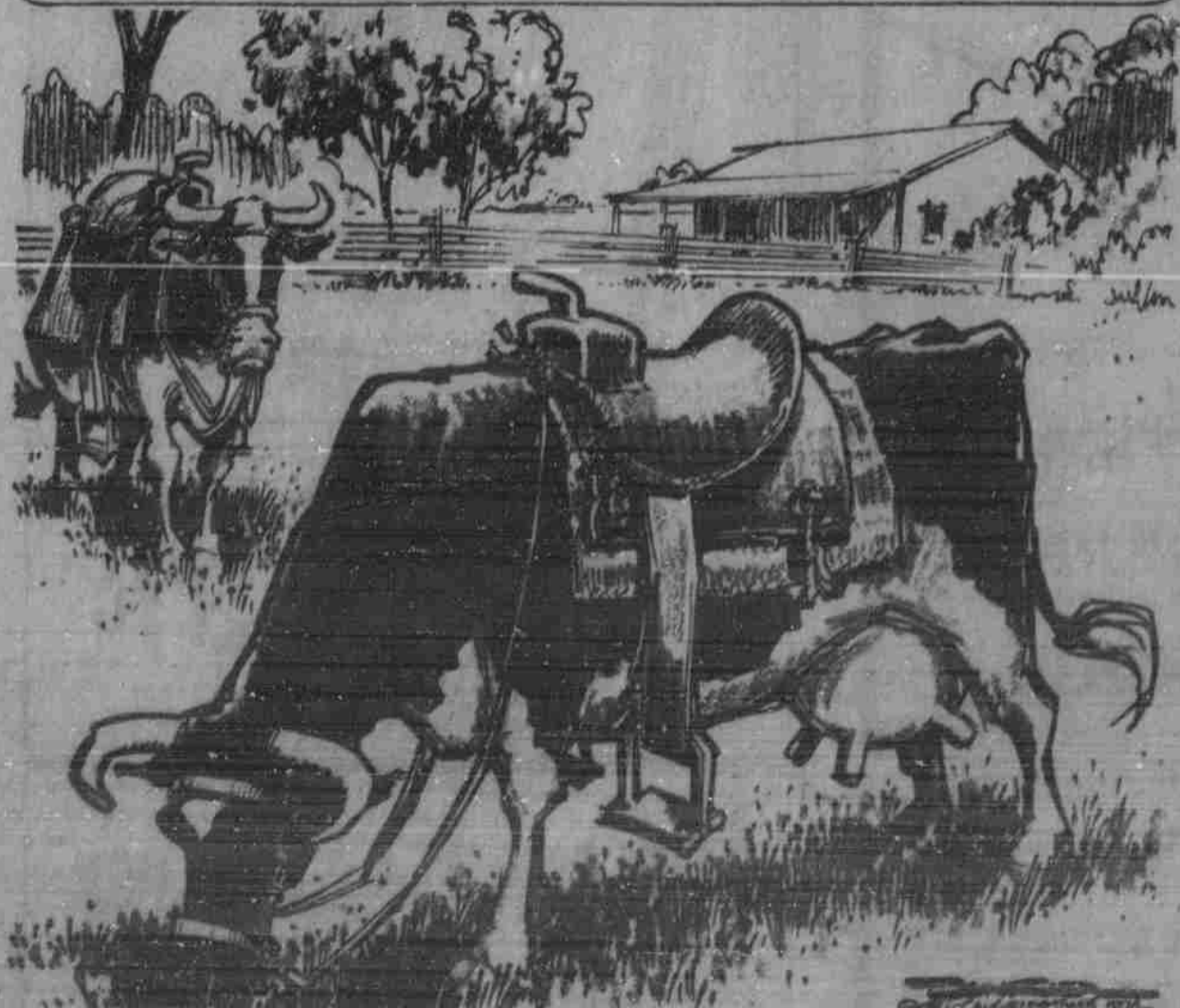
In any case, the costs of higher education for one child, let alone two or more, are out of reach of most middle income families. It seems the student sprung from the middle income family is being squeezed out of the academic arena, with spots at the more select universities going to the very rich and the very poor. If a poor student is bright enough, often he or she can obtain full tuition scholarships. Because of government cutbacks and tight money, in many cases financial aid has been cut off to the average income student.

After spending thousands of dollars, the graduate still is not assured of a job. The field most notorious for this is teaching, and a hiatus is not in sight. According to a recent Gallup Poll, nearly 25% of today's college students plan to teach when they graduate. This means there now are about as many college students planning to teach as there are the present number of teachers.

A college education is not to be taken lightly. It offers much in the way of broadening of one's perspective, learning and accepting different philosophies and different ways of life, associating with men and women of knowledge and distinction.

A college degree, however, is not the only ticket to happiness and security. High school students—and college students now in school not because they want to be out but because it's expected—should be made aware of other avenues that might better suit their needs. Such blue-collar trades as mechanics, carpentry and plumbing are as essential to American society as the professions.

Mary Voboril



The John Connally Ranch

O.J.'s insight wasted on befuddled O'Shea

To me, happiness presents itself in an aspect that is tripartite. To be happy (reducing the thing to its elementals) I must be:
a. Well-fed, unhounded by sordid cares, at ease in Zion.
b. Full of a comfortable feeling of superiority to the masses of my fellow-men.
c. Delicately and unceasingly amused according to my taste.
It is my contention that, if this definition be accepted, there is no country on the face of the earth wherein a man roughly constituted as I am—a man of my general weaknesses, vanities, appetites, prejudices, and aversions—can be so happy, or even one-half so happy, as he can be in these free and independent states.

H.L. Mencken

As this is my last column of the semester, I thought it appropriate to in some way summarize the collected wisdom of the past year.

With thought in mind I traveled to chateau haven, the known intellectual hangout, in search of Oliver James (O.J.), noted campus aficionado and Cassanova.

When I first met James, I found him more than willing to share his views on just about anything. In his home high above "Q" Street, we sat enjoying the breeze and a few Budweisers, discussing one of our favorite hobbies, the University.

john michael o'shea distant thunder

James: This is a campus full of unrecognized imbeciles. And it's time they are recognized. I mean, at a time when they're ready to throw the President out; what better time for the Greek Follies.

O'Shea: Whatever do you mean, "campus imbeciles"?

O.J.: For instance, people generally agree it's important how you look and that they are concerned with their appearance. Well, how often do you hear guys in the frat or dorm discussing laundry detergents? I can see these fellows crawling into bed with their honeys in grey underwear. How does it look to her, those clean white sheets, and his grey shorts. Some of these guys will spend \$25 for slacks to attract more girls to crawl into bed with gray shorts with. These are imbeciles.

O'Shea: I think I don't follow your drift.

O.J.: How many blacks have you seen at Farmhouse's watermelon feed? How many would really like to tap dance, but won't? How many freaks really don't like long hair? These are more imbeciles.

O'Shea: But . . .

O.J.: How many of us are really just hayseeds but are afraid to admit it. That's the real problem. And don't forget the great intellectual ability of accounting majors.

O'Shea: That's very nice, Oliver, but why don't we talk about the University itself. Having been a radical and all, if you were elected regent tomorrow, how would you improve this University?

O.J.: First, I'd dedicate a building to one of the University's finest economists, Stuart Hall. I'd call it Hall Hall.

Then I would move the space capsule to the top of Mueller tower with a mechanical shaker so you just put in a dime and it starts rocking like a horse at K-Mart. There should also be a Bible so people can read their favorite verses from "outer space."

Then I'd name the new health center the Ken Bader Memorial Band-Aid Box.

O'Shea: Thank you . . . What's that smell?

O.J.: Oh, they re-tarred our roof—it used to be really nice out there. Once I was caught on the roof by the police helicopter in a compromising situation. The bastards just flipped on the spot light. Is nothing sacred? You won't quote me on that?

O'Shea: Of course not, but back to the University . . .

O.J.: Then I'd review the so-called "relevant classes" like the rock lyrics class. Have you listened to the music lately? I'd like to know the rock significance of Helen Reddy singing "Leave Me Alone." But the real culprits are the idiots, John.

People in this town don't read enough to even support a decent independent bookstore. I went into Miller's bookstore and asked for something by Hemingway. And they said "Who? . . ." By the way, do you know how Eskimos french kiss?

O'Shea: Maybe we ought to be winding this up, Oliver. What thought would you leave with all of our "junior activist" readers?

O.J.: I'd just like them to remember that there are a lot of imbeciles around. We've mentioned only a fraction of the great unplumbed depths of imbecility. But the problem is tracking them. And once you find them, get 'em. What this campus really lacks are pranksters, but I just can't seem to think of any good pranks. But about the Eskimos . . .

O'Shea: Thank you, Oliver James. By the way, did anyone ever mention that you look like F. Scott Fitzgerald?