

Letters to Editor

To the Editor:

The purpose of this letter is to express my resentment and disgust over the ad appearing in the *Summer Nebraskan* by Backstage Ltd.

Backstage obviously thinks they are very liberal and express sexual freedom in their ads—however, they are still adhering to the stifling double standards. The woman in the ad is portrayed in a passive, subservient role—"something comfortable to be slipped into". Is this sexual freedom? Throughout history women have been conditioned into the sexually subservient role that is portrayed in this ad. When is this going to stop? When are stores like Backstage going to start using more good taste and creativity in their ads? When are newspapers like the *Summer Nebraskan* going to stop taking this offensive trash and start printing quality ads?

Mary Heppner

To the Editor,

Although naked bodies are beautiful, that beauty diminishes when used commercially. We are objecting specifically to the ads for Backstage Ltd. in the *Summer Nebraskan*. Why is a naked woman selling men's shoes? Why isn't a naked man selling men's shoes?

The double entendre 'slip into something comfortable' is the type of humor found at fraternity rush parties. We will make it a point to slip into some comfortable shoes from another store.

Mary Emanuel and Bill Ganzel

To The Editor:

As a reader of and advertiser in the *Daily* and *Summer Nebraskan*, I was disgusted by your acceptance of the advertisement for Backstage, Ltd. in the July 30, 1974 issue of the *Summer Nebraskan*.

In my opinion this is degrading to all women and shows a lack of taste and judgment on the part of the *Summer Nebraskan* staff.

I hope such advertising policies are corrected in the future.

Sincerely,

Kathy S. Smith, Director
Student Y

To: Backstage Ltd.--12th & Q
(c.c. sent to *Summer Nebraskan*)

The ad run by Backstage Ltd., on July 30, 1974 in the *Summer Nebraskan*, was in extremely bad taste. It is again using a woman's body as a reward gained from buying men's shoes. Women are tired of always being shown as bodies which are reward's for men's behavior. This is blatant sexism showing a man buying shoes and getting the "prize" of "slip into something comfortable"—a nude woman.

Backstage says they've run ads with nude men but there is a Catch-22, a man is given credit or praised for "scoring" a woman is still downgraded. No person - male or female - should be treated in this manner. The "open" contemporary attitude of sexuality doesn't mean that we should be openly sexist or demeaning to both sexes now instead of just one. It doesn't make it any better by running bad ads about men as sex objects. The sex roles expected of people are changing but this ad only reinforces the old double standards.

The people at Backstage Ltd. think that we, as women, should be laughing at ourselves—we are too serious all the time. But how often do they expect us to laugh—when we're the object of the joke—because ads like this are on TV and radio during all the on air hours; and magazines and newspapers during each issue.

Women have stopped laughing. Many of us are very angry.

From a woman who will never buy shoes at Backstage Ltd. again.

Sue Aitcheson

Editor:

In attempting to develop a new and different type of ad, Backstage Ltd. has fallen back on the old stand-by of exploiting the female. I would think that a supposedly young & progressive business would show young & progressive thinking. Such ads show poor planning on the manager's part. If he wants to sell shoes, he should advertise shoes, not the female body.

Jan Hicks

To the Editor:

A curse on Backstage Ltd. May its business shrivel into the small size of its manager's mind.

A disgusting ad in the July 30, 1974 *Summer Nebraskan* has precipitated a boycott against the store by members of these organizations and all feminist supporters.

Such senseless advertisements demean women and reflect poorly on the newspapers carrying them.

"Slip into something Comfortable" couched above a nude woman caressing the shoe of a fashionably funky male. Can anyone deny the implications?

Such sexual innuendoes have no place in newspapers, where the use of "hell" in news columns is an editorial decision. Do editors believe obscenities in advertisements don't offend readers, while those in the news columns do?

Future *Summer Nebraskan* ads, we understand, further emphasize women's sexual servant image. The ads include, we understand, a front view of a naked woman hugging a man's boots between her breasts, and another, a naked woman lying on the floor caressing the boot of a fully clothed male standing over her.

Don't men object to the suggestion that they must wear aviator sunglasses and a shag hair cut to "slip into something"?

Plastic people must be removed from ads. That's advertisers' responsibility. But newspapers also have a responsibility to resist blatantly offensive ads.

I'm sure few papers would consider an ad showing a nude black man pushing watermelons. Nude women pushing shoes is no more absurd.

We invite everyone to join in a boycott against advertisers guilty of stupid, sexist come-ons.

A copy of this letter has been sent to Backstage Ltd.

University Women's Action Group
UN-L Women's Resource Center

Wanted:

Waitresses and Hostess
Lunches 11:20-1:00 Mon. through Fri.
Waitress needed for Friday nights also.
Apply at Mr. Steak 56th and "O".
See Mrs. Price

To the Editor:

Backstage Ltd. in response to criticisms of its recent advertisement would like to thank those individuals who have taken time to present their views concerning "blatant" sexual exploitation of the once thought-of artistic beauty of the male and female physique. However, as with all present and historically famous art forms relating to "le naturel" we find it hard to interpret our ads as offensive or in bad taste. We are, in turn, most aware of the fact that the business of covering feet fashionably can be as aesthetically attractive as a well-formed sapien's anatomy in its own artistically appreciable sense.

We believe in this day and age that the culturally aware individual who is more conscious of the appreciable value of advertising in its public media takes a much lighter view of what is to be considered appealing to prurient interests. Also, in a ruling by the United States Supreme Court, *Roth vs. The United States*, a precedent was set defining obscenity. "(1) The material must be patently offensive and (2) must appeal to prurient interest." The opinions of the Supreme Court Justice, Mr. Brennan, and Mr. Justice Harlan reaffirmed the Supreme Court's long-held position that mere nudity was not enough to support a conviction for

obscenity. The girls in the Backstage ads were in fact, not even nude, but wore bathing suits and were covered by long hair or precise positioning of their arms. No part of their bodies was shown that would not have been in a lingerie or bathing suit advertisement.

Why is it that throughout this country, streakers are held on a higher level by onwatching youth than the conventionally dressed modern? Why are sculptures and paintings of masters such as Michaelangelo displayed in prominence for world-wide viewing without question. What manner of thinking is it that interprets sexual connotations from a headline advertising a fine fitting shoe.

We hope that our perspective has shed some light on our present advertising. We are appreciative of those persons who are in their own world, free thinkers, but are sorry that the beholder's eyes are often blind to beauty.

In consideration to our customers who are open-minded enough to view our ads in their proper perspective, we will continue using our judgment in future ads. And for those who protest only the fact that a male was not shown equally, we have an upcoming ad to prove we are not sexist nor that we maintain double standards.

Chris McLean
Backstage Ltd.



These are the two ads readers are objecting to.

Volunteers needed in the following areas:

As a big brother, as a tutor in basic reading skills, to work with crafts, or to be a friend to someone from the Regional Center. Interested students should contact Mary Dean, Student Volunteer Services, Room 200, Nebraska Union.

Weekly Calendar

Tuesday, August 6
Nebraska Repertory Theatre, "School for Wives", 8:00 p.m., Howell Theater.

Wednesday, August 7
Summer Film Safari, "Bi-Centennial and the Film", 12:00-1:30 p.m., student union.
Nebraska Repertory Theatre, "Cohan", 8:00 p.m., Howell Theater.

Thursday, August 8
Nebraska Repertory Theatre, "School for Wives", 8:00 p.m., Howell Theater.

Friday, August 9
Deadline for oral exams.
Sheldon Film Theater, "Burn", 7:00 & 9:00 p.m., Sheldon Art Gallery, Nebraska Repertory Theatre, "Birthday Party", 8:00 p.m., Howell Theater.

Saturday, August 10
Sheldon Film Theater, "Burn", 7:00 & 9:00 p.m., Sheldon Art Gallery, Nebraska Repertory Theatre, "Cohan", 8:00 p.m., Howell Theater.

Monday, August 12
Nebraska Repertory Theatre, "Cohan", 8:00 p.m., Howell Theater.

Summer Nebraskan

Editor Lucy Lien

Business Manager Jodi Kopf

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A Simple Solitaire

is often the prettiest for the simple uncluttered design of the mounting shows off the center diamond to its best advantage. We feature a large selection of simple (but effective) settings and invite you to select just the right diamond to complete the set.

Sartor Hamann

Serving Lincoln Since 1905
REGISTERED JEWELERS AMERICAN GEM SOCIETY

Gateway
Mon. Wed. Th. Fri. 10-9
Tue. Sat. 10-5:30

Downtown
Mon. - Sat. 10-5:30
Thurs. 10-9:00