

Panel discusses secretarial problems

The "rights" of secretaries and methods of overcoming what panelists called the "dehumanization of secretaries" were featured during the first program of the 1975-76 Women/Speak series held Tuesday.

"Too long, secretaries have been viewed as persons with no brains," according to Susan Bartow, an eight-year secretary for Planned Parenthood of Lincoln. She said receiving no recognition for ideas, doing jobs she said a boss could easily do for himself (such as sharpening pencils) and being an outlet for what she called the boss's frustrations are things "secretaries should not have to put up with."

Carol DeVere, a secretary for the Nebraska Union Administrative Offices, said secretaries should "sort out what they will tolerate" from a boss, and gave an outline she said are ways for secretaries to "be their own person."

"A secretary needs to have specific career goals in mind, such as whether they will remain in clerical positions, or seek posts in management," she said.

DeVere stressed what she called the importance of education not only for job opportunities, but for personal fulfillment. She said she is currently enrolled in a program which enables employes to take Free University courses.

Secretaries should be mobile, and willing to transfer to different positions within a company or to another organization, DeVere said. She said she thinks a secretary "limits herself" if she does the same work too long.

DeVere also said it is important for secretaries to keep notable accomplishments on file, as a resume for prospective employers.

Barbara Peters, coordinator of human resources at Bankers Life Insurance Co., of Nebraska, said unionization of secretaries is possible. She said that 98 per cent of clerical workers are women, and that women traditionally have been "reluctant to join labor unions."

She said that a study of women and labor unions at the University of Illinois cited lack of concern for problems exclusive to women such as child care and paid maternity leave.

Peters said that secretarial unions would pose problems between secretaries and their bosses and that it could threaten job security. She said that those who hoped for advancement would be less likely to join unions than career secretaries, as it would be "hard to transfer loyalties from labor to management."

"Women's Athletics and Sports Information-Old and New," with Aileen Swofford, UNL assistant athletic director and Jay Davis, UNL women's sports information director, is the Women/Speak topic Sept. 9.

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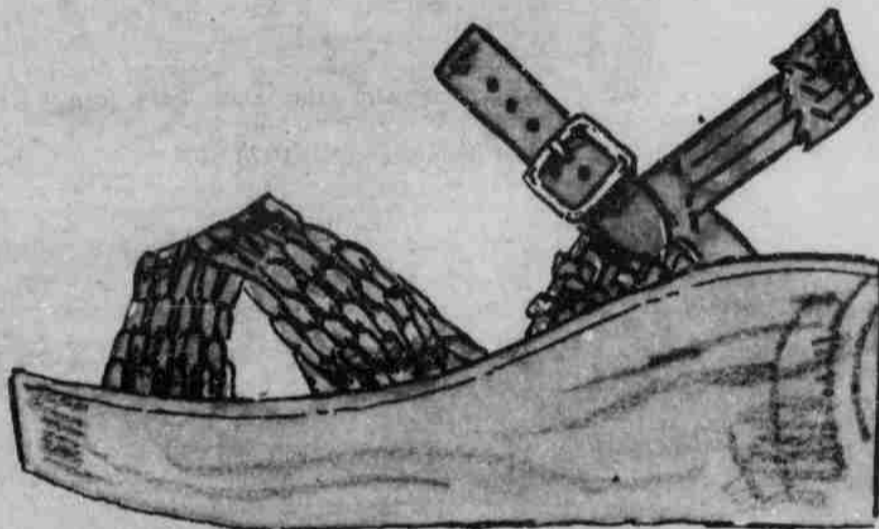
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