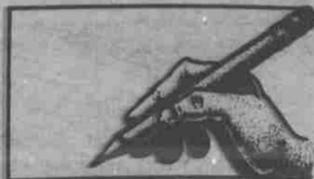


# opinion



## What reference to Mormons?

Gary Gilmore was supposed to be killed today. But the latest scene in the Gilmore drama is another stay of execution. The U.S. Supreme Court, which gave states the go-ahead last July to execute, wants to make sure Gilmore gets a fair finish.

If there is one good which possibly could come from the show-biz atmosphere surrounding Gilmore, it is that people will be jarred sufficiently to take notice of what they are condoning. (Americans approve the death penalty, two to one.) But his redeeming value has not been successful in surfacing.

Last Monday on this page Nicholas Von Hoffman chided the American people for capitalizing on a man's crime-packed life and impending death. Von Hoffman broadly hinted that this death would be an anticlimax to the melodramatic scenes leading up to it. The way to remedy that, he advised, is to have the execution at the Mormon Tabernacle.

A properly indignant and influential (his word) gentleman called to let us know that he was offended by the derogatory reference to Mormons in that column. What derogatory reference to Mormons? Von Hoffman wasn't talking about Mormons. He was talking about the absurdity of the death penalty.

Von Hoffman's remarks can be compared to

Omaha Sen. Ernie Chambers' suggestion earlier this year that we hold Nebraska's state-sanctioned executions in UNL's Memorial Stadium.

By suggesting that what is done usually in relative privacy involving only a few state employees be made public and involve those most directly responsible for allowing it to take place, Chambers intended to show the barbarity of the death sentence. Likewise Von Hoffman.

Von Hoffman was not speaking of Mormons no more than Chambers was talking about football. Both men selected a place of high reverence which is also a frequent gathering place for persons from the state because it served the point they were to make.

As long as men are more readily outraged by non-existent (or real) jobs at their religions than at state killings, nothing will be done about the fact that we live in a country which takes so few steps toward helping criminals that death looks good to them.

As long as men are more concerned about self-righteously defending their religions rather than practicing them, state-approved murders designed to avenge another murder will be allowed.

If enough people would give serious thought to what the death penalty means, it would not be so hard for them to understand why, when the states take care of their biggest problems by killing them, their citizens do the same.

### Are we afraid?

We have just experienced a rather impressive American phenomenon, the dethroning of a president. With that dethronement comes the hope of better things for a country bound to the democratic way. Jimmy Carter will take over the reigns of the government on Jan. 20, 1977, and supposedly have the freedom to exercise the rights of the free-will majority who elected him. He is the first Democratic president since Lyndon Johnson and the first elected from seeming obscurity. Gerald Ford became president after Nixon's downfall in the wake of Watergate. Lyndon Johnson became president following the assassination of John F. Kennedy. This article is about that assassination and the real state of the nation since that time.

Why in America are we so afraid to name the real murderers of Kennedy? Why is America so willing to accept the findings of the Warren Commission that L. Harvey Oswald acted alone? It was 13 years ago last November that the fateful day in Dallas took place. Have we forgotten that day? Have we blocked out of our minds what constituted the largest conspiracy in American history? Hope for America lies in the ability of our people to demand the truth. Kennedy was not killed by Oswald. He was killed by our very own military because he would not support their view of global militarism. These are hard facts to accept yet it makes them no less the truth. Kennedy vowed to have our troops out of Vietnam by 1965. Kennedy became the victim of a coup d'etat. We say to ourselves that things like that only happen in obscure countries in South America. Are we afraid to face the fact that in this 20 years since World War II our government has spent over a trillion dollars on armament? Kennedy saw that the foundations of our democracy were being undermined and that warfare interests had gained excessive power in our government.

I'm not saying believe me. I'm saying look at the facts. We can choose to allow this incident to go unnoticed and live with the illusion of freedom and democracy. We won't know if we have another choice if we don't at least try.

John Larsen  
Citizens Inquiry into the Death  
of John F. Kennedy



## Once a passport to life's goodies, college degree now another mirage

By Nicholas Von Hoffman

The advice to young people warning them off college continues to issue forth in a multiplicity of forms. One of the latest discouraging announcements appears in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (Nov. 8th), telling of a new study by psychologists which concludes "that the most outstanding students in college are the ones who are most likely to be unhappy 10 years hence. . . unhappiness is the only thing the new test shows to be predictable on the basis of a measure of academic success."

Ten years ago we were being told that life was over for the young person who tried to take it on "unequipped"

a professor of education at Stanford University, now talk about "the educated proletariat" and the "increasing disjuncture between the values and expectations of the educated worker and the realities of the workplace."

How did the disjuncture between educated worker and the workplace grow so great? Part of the explanation is the greed of the academics overselling their services to a gullible public. The taxpayers were and are being bilked for billions to pay for sloppily administered higher educational enterprises in which hard work is rare and intelligent hard work rarer yet.

Everybody is supposed to have a satisfying job; everybody is supposed to have a non-dead-end career. How can that work? It can't, which is why the academics rushed in with the idea of "the meritocracy." The academically deserving, the competent as determined by objective examination would get the goodies which would no longer be distributed on the basis of such things as social class, inheritance or sex appeal.

### Raising standards

The meritocracy was a mirage. Too many people qualified, which is why we're hearing the clucking about raising standards; beyond that the ability of the professors to instill merit, much less to test for it, is in dispute. The professors have been caught too often manipulating the game.

The other side of the coin is that there are less and less people to do the dirty work. In times past we've tried to recruit people by threatening them with starvation or appealing to up the status of the job. Garbage men become sanitation engineers, only nobody believes it.

Egalitarianism is the strongest single, operating political value in the United States. The love of liberty is rare; the love of quality is universal. Students imbued with egalitarian values won't give up their masters degrees to accept careers sweeping the streets, and, unless a way is found to get a closer match between expectation and reality, we are going to have some unusual and different troubles for ourselves.

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### sidewise

by college; parents with children who dropped out of higher education heaped guilt on themselves for their failure to do their job.

Now the newspapers tell us that the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that 180,000 college graduates a year will soon be in "over supply." We have Roy Forbes, director of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, quoted in the public prints saying, "I don't think education should say that if you go to college you are guaranteed a better paying or more satisfying job. . . We have to prepare people psychologically for the fact that the types of jobs they want aren't there at present." In that connection, Forbes' organization has determined that 44 percent of our 17-year-olds are looking forward to professional careers. That is about twice the number of professional and managerial jobs there are.

Something is badly amiss. The experts, educationalists and authority figures who have had control of higher educational policy and recruitment these past years obviously haven't known what they were talking about.

### 'Educated proletariat'

So many people have been so badly misdirected in career choice and education that men like Henry Levin,

### P.E. Dept. worthy discipline

My "In Praise of Average" (printed Thurs. Nov. 11) spoke critically about the use of university funds for the UNL Sports Complex, implying that would divert money from research, degrading our scholastic reputation and relegating us to a "Gays Ed Institute."

I learn, with regret and delight, that the Department of Physical Education is not a part of the athletic hierarchy at NU, but is instead a worthy scholastic discipline fighting for the same academic values and educational priorities that I do. My regret stems from having maligned this department unwittingly, I apologize!

But I delight in having found an unexpected ally in the enemies' territory! As the Department of Physical Education knows more precisely the merits and demerits of physical exercise as a component of intellectual endeavor, it is in a better position to demythologize the value of competitive athletics and the "macho No. 1 syndrome" as a "builder of superior persons" than anyone else. I look forward to documenting my critical positions on athletic scholarships and Big Red versus advanced research more explicitly, with their help.

Nels W. Forde  
Professor, UNL  
Department of History

### Dirty Sneakers

"Be it resolved that Mortar Board encourage and promote the formation and funding of women's collegiate athletic participation."

"Be it resolved that Mortar Board encourage and promote the awarding of athletic scholarship aid to collegiate women athletes."

"Be it further resolved that Mortar Board shall strive to eliminate the existing prejudicial attitudes toward women in athletics, thus encouraging and promoting the status of women athletes."

The Black Masque Chapter of Mortar Board would like to take this opportunity to recognize the talent and dedication of the Nebraska Women's Basketball team.

In trying to promote the status of women in all areas of the campus Mortar Board appreciates the positive recognition the basketball team and all women's athletic teams have given to women on campus.

We would also like to applaud the efforts of a group of sports enthusiasts who are organizing a spirit group to support the basketball team. The Dirty Sneakers Club is open to all interested university students. Contact Gary Loomis for further information.

The Black Masque Chapter  
Mortar Board